

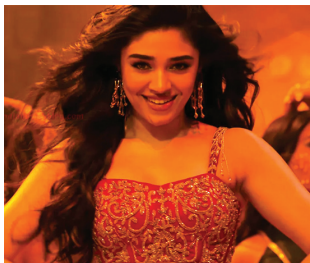


MMNA singles event of Bay Area

► Details on page 8

India should get rightful place in UNSC: UK PM

► Details on page 6



Krithi Shetty's belly dance for 'Abdi Abdi'

► Details on page 24

INDIA POST
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SURVEY
survey@indiapost.com
This week's question
 Will Ukraine & Russia agree to stop war?
Last week's result
 Will Hamas agree to Trump's ceasefire plan?
YES 92% NO 8%

DIWALI HOLIDAY

California Governor declares Diwali a state holiday

CALIFORNIA: California's Governor Gavin Newsom on Tuesday 7 October officially added Diwali to the state's list of holidays by signing Assembly Bill 268 into law.

The bill would authorize community colleges and public schools to close on "Diwali," as specified. The bill would authorize state employees to elect to take, and would authorize certain community



college and public school employees to be given, time off with pay in recognition of "Diwali," as specified.

The bill would authorize public schools and educational institutions throughout the state to include exercises acknowledging and celebrating the meaning and importance of Diwali, as specified.

Ajay Bhutoria, former advisor to President Biden for AANHPI Commission, a prominent Silicon Valley entrepreneur, philanthropist, and dedicated advocate for the Indian American community, lauded the judgment.

Details on page 5



Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a conversation with United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer at Raj Bhavan, in Mumbai on October 9. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

Details on page 6

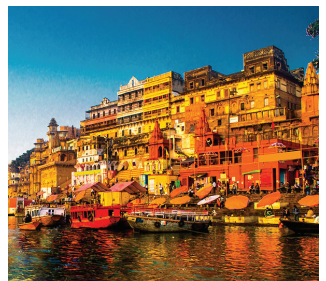


Modi dials Putin, wishes him on his 73rd birthday

► Details on page 5

US shutdown hits air travel as deadlock

► Details on page 7



India's spiritual capital with Ganga Ghats

► Details on page 31

CONTENTS

Bollywood	24-25
Classifieds	29
Community Post	8-12, 16
Cover/Top Stories	5-7
Edit Page	30
Immigration Post	20-21
Info/Highlights	4
Life Style	26
OP-ED	28
TechBiz Post	18-19
Real Estate	22-23
Travel & Hospitality Post	31
Wellness Post	13-15



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Jaswant Singh Gandam *Correspondent*

For editorial, contact: editor@indiapost.com

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California's Governor Gavin Newsom

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Ajay Bhutoria, former advisor to Presi-

dent Biden for AANHPI Commission, a prominent Silicon Valley entrepreneur, philanthropist, and dedicated advocate for the Indian American community, lauded the judgment.

In a post on X, he said, "Thank you Gavin Newsom, Governor for Making Diwali a California State Holiday by signing AB 268 Huge thanks to Assemblymember Ash Kalra and Darshana Patel for championing this bill and taking to finish line, celebrating light, unity and our diverse communities."

"Today marks a radiant milestone in California's journey toward true inclusivity and cultural celebration. As Governor Newsom signs AB 268 into law, we honor the tireless leadership of Assemblymember Ash Kalra and Assemblymember Darshana Patel, whose vision and bipartisan collaboration have illuminated the path for this historic achievement. Diwali, our cherished Festival of Lights, embodies the eternal victory of hope over hardship, unity over division, and knowledge over ignorance--a message that resonates deeply with the nearly one million South Asians who call California home and contribute immensely to its innovation, economy, and spirit," he said in a statement.

This recognition is more than a holiday; it's a powerful affirmation of the Indian diaspora's enduring legacy in the Golden

State. From tech trailblazers in Silicon Valley to healthcare heroes in Southern California, our community has woven threads of resilience and diversity into the fabric of American excellence. By granting state employees paid time off and empowering

"I extend my deepest gratitude to Governor Newsom for championing equity and joy in our multicultural tapestry. To Assemblymembers Kalra and Patel, your advocacy has not only brightened Diwali for generations but also inspired a nation



schools to observe this sacred day, AB 268 ensures families can fully embrace traditions like lighting diyas, crafting rangoli, and sharing stories of renewal--without the shadows of work or deadlines, Bhutoria said.

to celebrate our shared light. As we approach Diwali on October 20, let this moment kindle greater pride, belonging, and harmony for all Californians. Shubh Deepavali--may the lamps of progress continue to glow!" he added. ANI

PM Modi dials Putin, congratulates Russian President on his 73rd birthday

MOSCOW/NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephone conversation with the Russian President Vladimir Putin, during which he also congratulated him on 7 October, his 73rd birthday, and conveyed best wishes for his good health and success in all his endeavors.

The two leaders reviewed the progress in the bilateral agenda, and reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia.

PM Modi conveyed that he is looking forward to welcoming President Putin to India, in December for the 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit.

India and Russia marked the 25th anniversary of the Declaration of Strategic Partnership between both countries on October 3.

The Declaration on Strategic Partnership signed by former Prime Minister Atal

Bihari Vajpayee and Russian President Vladimir Putin on October 3, 2000, took the bilateral relations of India and Russia to a new level characterized by coordinated approaches towards ensuring international peace and security, addressing major global and regional issues, as well as close cooperation in economic, cultural,

The two leaders reviewed the progress in the bilateral agenda, and reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia

educational, and other areas.

"The year 2025 has already been rich with numerous bilateral exchanges and a particularly warm and substantial engagement of our leaders at the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in

Tianjin. Later this year, we look forward to the upcoming bilateral summit in New Delhi, which will coincide with the 15th anniversary of elevating our strategic partnership to the level of a 'special and privileged' relationship," stated Denis Alipov, the Russian Ambassador to India.

On the same day, Putin strongly

backed India's decision to continue its oil trade with Moscow, while praising Prime Minister Modi's leadership.

Speaking at the Valdai Discussion Club in Sochi, Putin praised PM Modi as a "balanced and wise leader" and emphasized

the unique bond between the two countries.

Putin dismissed any political motivation behind India's purchase of Russian crude oil, asserting that it is driven purely by economics.

"There is no political aspect here... If India refuses our energy supplies, it will suffer certain losses. Estimates vary; some say it could be around \$9-10 billion. But if it doesn't refuse, sanctions will be imposed, and the loss will be the same. So why refuse if it also carries domestic political costs?" he said.

Putin had further expressed confidence in India's resilience and its refusal to bend under external pressure, saying, "Of course, the people of a country like India, believe me, will closely monitor the decisions made by the political leadership and will never allow any humiliation in front of anyone. And then, I know Prime Minister Modi; he himself would never take any steps of this kind." IANS

'Opportunities waiting to be seized are unparalleled...': 125-strong delegation marks largest ever UK govt trade mission to India

LONDON: UK PM Keir Starmer's trade mission to India is set to boost ties with one of the country's most important economic partners, as a delegation of 125 of the UK's most prominent CEOs, leading entrepreneurs, university Vice Chancellors and cultural institutions are accompanying the UK PM on this historic visit, an official statement noted.

As per the statement, following the signature of the landmark UK-India trade deal in July, which will lower tariffs on British goods being imported into India, the door is now open for British businesses to turbocharge their trade with India, one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

As per the statement, major household names such as Rolls Royce, British Telecom, Diageo, London Stock Exchange and British Airways will join the UK PM's delegation as he promises to secure opportunities for them to grow and expand into the Indian market - delivering growth and supporting jobs at home.

Notably, growing SMEs and entrepreneurs from every region of the UK will also travel with the Prime Minister, recognizing that the trade deal will break down barriers and support businesses of all shapes and sizes to trade more easily with India.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer hold delegation-level talks at Raj Bhavan, in Mumbai. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

"The trade deal has been acknowledged as the best agreement ever secured by any country with India. Under current projections, the deal is expected to raise bilateral trade by £25.5 billion per year, with UK exports to India projected to grow by nearly 60%. It significantly improves market access for businesses in both countries, leading to cheaper products and services for consumers", the statement said.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said, "We signed a major trade deal with India in July - the best secured by any

country - but the story doesn't stop there...It's not just a piece of paper, it's a launchpad for growth. With India set to be the third biggest economy in the world by 2028, and trade with them about to become quicker and cheaper, the opportunities waiting to be seized are unparalleled."

The statement further noted that with the deal, India's average tariff on UK products will drop from 15% to 3% - which means British companies selling products to India, from soft drinks and cosmetics to cars and medical devices, will find it easier to sell to the Indian market.

"The deal particularly benefits SMEs, as improved customs and digital commitments will make trade quicker, cheaper, and easier. In addition, bespoke support for SMEs, such as dedicated contact points, will help them enter the Indian market", the statement added.

On the education front, "14 university Vice Chancellors will also join the delegation in recognition of the explosion in demand for higher education in India - with 70 million places needed by 2035, which has created a huge opportunity for UK universities seeking new funding streams", the statement said.

It highlighted that some of the UK's biggest cultural institutions such as the British Film Institute and the National Theatre will also join the trip - opening new doors for creative exports, co-productions, museum and heritage partnerships, talent exchange, and joint initiatives across film, fashion, sport, and digital culture.

In a post on X, the British PM said, "I'm flying the flag for British business in Mumbai, because growth in India for British businesses means more jobs for people at home."

Meanwhile, British Airways has confirmed it will introduce a third daily flight between Delhi and London Heathrow in 2026, subject to regulatory and capacity approval, and will look for further growth opportunities in the country as trade between the UK and India increases.

Sean Doyle, Chairman and Chief Executive of British Airways, said, "I am delighted to take part in this important trade mission. Our ties with India were established over 100 years ago and today we have around 2,500 British Airways colleagues based there. We've been steadily increasing capacity between India and the UK over the years and we're now operating 56 direct services from five Indian cities each week." ANI

India should get rightful place in UNSC: UK PM Keir Starmer

MUMBAI: UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Thursday said New Delhi should get its 'rightful place' on the UN Security Council, highlighting India's remarkable growth story and its potential to play a key role in global affairs.

In his statement after meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Raj Bhavan here, he made a strong pitch for India to get permanent membership in the UNSC.

"We want to see India taking its rightful place in the UNSC," he remarked.

His stance aligns with that of various nations, including the US, Germany, France and Japan, who have strongly supported India's UNSC bid.

The UK PM's statement also reflects a growing recognition of India's importance in global governance and its contribution to multilateralism. PM Starmer's support this afternoon echoes remarks from September last year, when the then US President Biden, French Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron, and he backed India,

within days of each other, to make the UN a "more representative body" by including India and Germany, Japan, and Brazil.

Russia has also backed India's bid last month after Russian Foreign Minister

"The UK and India stand side-by-side as global leaders in tech and innovation. We are announcing a deal to make Bollywood films in the UK after a fantastic visit to the studio yesterday, and with our deepening cooperation in education"

Sergey Lavrov said his country supports greater representation from Asia, Africa, and Latin America in the global body.

"The UK and India stand side-by-side as global leaders in tech and innovation. We are announcing a deal to make Bollywood films in the UK after a fantastic visit to the studio yesterday, and with our deepening cooperation in education," said the PM Starmer.

UK PM Starmer said he has brought "the largest trade delegation for a decade" to India, highlighting the major business and investment opportunities being explored during his visit. He added his visit to India aims to "double down" on the trade partnership between the two countries, calling the bilateral trade deal a key part of their growing relationship.

He also lauded the Gaza peace deal. "I strongly welcome the news that a deal has been reached on the first stage of the Peace Plan in Gaza. This is a moment of profound relief. The UK will support these crucial immediate steps and the next stages of the talks to ensure full implementation of the Peace Plan." IANS

US shutdown hits air travel as deadlock continues

WASHINGTON: The US government shutdown has entered its seventh day, with flight delays reported across multiple airports nationwide.

Flights were delayed at airports in New York, Denver and Los Angeles due to shortages of air traffic controllers. Staffing shortages are also being reported in Washington, DC, Newark, New Jersey, and Jacksonville, Florida.

A pilot was preparing to take off from Hollywood Burbank Airport in California recently and radioed the air traffic control tower.

Instead of the normal exchange about departure, the pilot was told, "The tower is closed due to staffing," according to audio recorded by LiveATC.net.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy blamed the Democrats for the crisis, saying that the opposition party is threatening the well-being of air traffic controllers and their families.

"Our air traffic control workforce deserves to go to work, get paid, and not have the distraction of a government shutdown threatening their well-being and the well-being of their families," he posted on X.

Military and civilian staff is not being paid during the

shutdown, while around 13,000 air-traffic controllers are working without pay. The DoT has halted additional activities like hiring and training of air traffic controllers.

Duffy announced that a federal program to subsidize air travel to rural areas would run out of funds by the end of the week if the shutdown persists.

"There are many small communities across the country that will no longer have the resources to make sure they have air service in their communities," he said.

US President Donald Trump indicated he's ready to negotiate with Democrats to reopen the government as another funding bill vote in the Senate failed to break the deadlock.

In a Truth Social Post, Trump said, "I am happy to work with the Democrats on their Failed Healthcare Policies, or anything else, but first they must allow our Government to re-open."

Earlier in the day, while speaking to the media, Trump asserted that said "negotiations on health care are underway with Democrats." "We are speaking with the Democrats, and some very good things could happen with respect to healthcare." *IANS*

"Our air traffic control workforce deserves to go to work, get paid, and not have the distraction of a government shutdown threatening their well-being and the well-being of their families,"

To navigate India-US ties, diaspora leaders call for a pragmatic approach

WASHINGTON: Prominent voices from the Indian American community have urged stronger India-US cooperation and a more active role for the diaspora in shaping policy conversations.

During a panel discussion organized recently by a diaspora-focused publication in the United States, Atul Keshap, the President of the US-India Business Council and former Charge d'Affairs at the US Embassy in New Delhi, argued for "quiet diplomacy" in the current challenging times.

"These moments are difficult. I think for the diaspora, looking at these last few months, the thing that they probably ask themselves is, how can they be effective? How can they be helpful? How can they be constructive? And sometimes, in moments like this, it's better to engage in quiet diplomacy," he added.

Keshap also spoke about the recent H-1B visa crackdown from the Trump administration, calling it a decision "driven by domestic politics."

"I think in a country as diverse and as layered as India, a democracy as well, Indians would understand that there are domestic political compulsions that may change how the United States interfaces with the world," he noted. *IANS*

हमें कैलिफ़ोर्निया से मोहब्बत है, और क्यों न हो?

आपने इस स्टेट को बनाने में मदद की है— अपना देश छोड़कर, अपनों को छोड़कर, और अपनों के बेहतरीन ज़िंदगी के लिए।

60 देशों के लोग एक स्टेट में – यह फूलों का गुलदस्ता, जहाँ हर एक फूल अपने रंग और खुशबू से इस जगह को महका देता है - वहाँ उनकी हिफाज़त भी ज़रूरी है।

आपको चाहिये थोड़ा सा प्यार, थोड़ा देखभाल – एक चैंपियन की, क्योंकि हर कैलिफ़ोर्निया-वासी को कारगर स्वास्थ्य सेवा मिलनी चाहिये।

आपको अपने या अपने बच्चों के स्वास्थ्य में चुनना न पड़े, या फिर अपनी ज़रूरी आवश्यकताओं को दबाना न पड़े, इसी लिए हम आपकी वकालत करते हैं। हम सौदा करते हैं ताकि आपको बेहतर स्वास्थ्य सेवा मिल सके।

हम स्वास्थ्य बीमा कंपनी नहीं हैं। हम इसमें आपके लिए हैं।



कलिफ़ोर्निया
के लिए
दिल से



CoveredCA.com

Oxford Bookstore hosts the launch of Hanuman Chalisa

NEW DELHI: Oxford Bookstore was abuzz with energy as it hosted the launch of Hanuman Chalisa, a new English translation of Tulsidas's timeless devotional classic by the acclaimed poet-diplomat Abhay K.

Published by Bloomsbury, the book brings the enduring verses of Hanuman Chalisa to contemporary readers in a lyrical and accessible form.

Despite the evening showers, an enthusiastic audience turned up in large numbers, braving the rain to be part of the memorable occasion. Their engagement and thoughtful questions enriched the atmosphere, adding depth and vibrancy to the discussions that followed.

The launch was followed by an insightful conversation between Abhay K. and noted cultural journalist and critic Murtaza Ali Khan. The dialogue explored the many facets of Abhay K.'s translation and broader literary journey.

Responding to Khan's questions, Abhay K. provided invaluable insights into his intricate thought process as well as his immaculate working approach. He spoke about what first inspired him to translate the Hanuman Chalisa, how he balanced fidelity to Goswami Tulsidas's original with contemporary resonance, and how devotional poetry can speak to values of courage, perseverance, and service for Gen Z.

The discussion also delved into Abhay K.'s poetic sensibility, his experiences translating diverse texts such as the first Magahi novel Fool Bahadur and Kalidasa's Meghaduta and Ritusamhara, and the threads connecting his poetry, prose, and translations.

The lively exchange, coupled with the audience's engagement, highlighted the enduring relevance of devotional texts and the power of translation in making them accessible to wider audiences.

The event reaffirmed Oxford Bookstore's role as a vibrant cultural hub that brings together literature, thought, and community. ANI

COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

8 India Post

www.indiapost.com

October 10, 2025



Satish & Yasmin Gupta

From Students to Benefactors:
Indian-Americans'
\$3 Billion Investment in American
Universities

Details on page 10

MMNA national hosts most memorable first in-person singles all day event in the Bay Area



India Post News Service

MILPITAS, CA: In a vibrant celebration of connection and community, the Maheshwari Mahasabha of North America (MMNA) hosted one of its most successful singles events to date, in collaboration with India Community Center (ICC) Milpitas. Held on September 13, the all-day in-person gathering catered to young adults aged 21-35 and brought together nearly 50 participants from across the country-including Florida, the Midwest, New York, and the Bay Area.

The event began with casual introductions over coffee, creating a comfortable environment for attendees to start engaging. A variety of indoor and outdoor group activities followed, tailored based on participants' preferences for the opposite gender to foster more intentional interactions. These activities were designed to encourage conversa-

tion, collaboration, and compatibility-all while keeping the atmosphere light and enjoyable.

Local MMNA matrimonial national lead Sumita Somani explained Meal times-including lunch, dinner, and an afternoon chai break-served as ideal op-

portunities for bonding in a relaxed setting. The event maintained high energy and inclusivity throughout the day, with a thoughtful structure that allowed attendees to engage meaningfully without pressure.

The event began with casual introductions over coffee, creating a comfortable environment for attendees to start engaging. A variety of indoor and outdoor group activities followed, tailored based on participants' preferences for the opposite gender to foster more intentional interactions

A notable highlight of the day was the presence of a few spe-

cial participants, including a Netflix show participant and an independent filmmaker. The event also attracted numerous highly accomplished professionals from the tech industry and other fields, showcasing a well-rounded group of well-educated,

ambitious individuals. Importantly, MMNA ensured that all attendees were thoroughly vetted before the event, maintaining a trusted and secure environment. Contact information was only shared with mutual consent, reinforcing the organization's commitment to

privacy and respect.

Participants-both first-timers and veterans of similar events-offered overwhelmingly positive feedback. "This was hands down the best singles meet I've attended," said one returning participant. First-time attendees echoed similar sentiments, appreciating the engaging activities and the natural flow of conversation throughout the day.

With a well-balanced gender ratio, a dynamic mix of regions and professions, and a clear focus on quality interactions, the event set a new benchmark for community-led singles gatherings.

Encouraged by the success, MMNA and ICC Milpitas are already exploring opportunities for future events to continue fostering meaningful connections among young Maheshwaris, Agarwals, Oswal and Jains with similar backgrounds in North America.

FIA/FOG Telugu grand Bathukamma festival celebrations

India Post News Service

FOG Telugu Organization Bathukamma festive celebrations held on September 28th Sunday @ Fremont Hindu temple was a huge auspicious success. This festive celebrations organized and led by FOG Telugu chairperson/Indian American actress Jo Sharma (Jyotsna) with support of FOG founder Dr. Romesh Japra Ji, FOG president Rajesh Verma Ji, FOG Telugu president Abhilash, Vice president Raghu, Vasu, Anu and cultural director Shubhada, co-Director Hemangini, Mayura, Harsha and FoG Telugu director Jyothi along with volunteers Sirisha, Mamatha, Mandar, Nandini, Teja, Keerthi make the event more traditional.



Indian American actress Jo Sharma Ji Distributed awards to Sirisha and Mamatha for making Goddess Bathukamma.

The Bathukamma festival honors Goddess Gauri Ma, which embodies the rich culture and community Spirit of Telangana state.

The festival is centered on women who prepare floral arrangements, sing and dance around goddess.

Women and girls dressed in traditional attire, gathered in temple, placed bathukamma goddess in center done Pooja and rituals conducted by Fremont Hindu temple priest. All women formed a synchronized circle keeping bathukamma goddess in center, dancing for folk songs dedicated to the goddess Gauri Ma. Some devotional kathak performances made by few kids before goddess was eye feasting. This festival gathers family, friends and neighborhood together promoting ethics, beliefs, culture, harmony and social interaction. After rituals with mantras, bathukammas are carried and immersed in water. This act is a farewell to the goddess bathukamma and nod to the ecological cycle.

At the end of event, Chairperson Jo Sharma Ji expressed her gratitude for Dr. Romesh Japra Ji for accepting to conduct bathukamma festival in temple premises, Special Thanks to Rajesh Verma Ji, Govind ji, Pandit Kumaraswami ji temple priest and management for the immense support and appreciated FOG Telugu team Members for their efforts to make event successful.

Big shout out to everyone who participated in the event and making festival successful.



From Students to Benefactors: Indian-Americans' \$3 Billion Investment in American Universities

From landmark donations to local colleges, a tradition of giving is unlocking innovation, strengthening research, and expanding access nationwide

SAN FRANCISCO, CA: October 2, 2025 | For years, Indiaspora has examined the far-reaching impact of Indian Americans in the United States, most recently highlighted in the 2024 Impact Report produced in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group. Building on that work, Indiaspora has taken a closer look at the vital role Indian American philanthropy plays in strengthening higher education across the United States. New research



Desh Deshpande

conducted by Indiaspora, reveals a powerful pattern: Indian Americans, many of whom credit their undergraduate and graduate experiences at U.S. universities as the foundation of their professional success, are giving back in transformative

"By investing in universities, Indian American donors who value education are "putting their money where their mouth is. They are also demonstrating a larger commitment to America, supporting Americans of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds to thrive"

ways. Through landmark donations to higher education institutions across the country, the Indian American community is not only honoring the institutions that shaped their lives but also ensuring future

generations have access to the same opportunities for learning, innovation, and leadership development. Notable findings include:

78% of Indian Americans hold a bachelor's degree or higher-far exceeding the national average.

Approximately 270,000 Indian students are currently enrolled in American universities.

Indian students contribute nearly \$10 billion annually to the U.S. economy, supporting an estimated 93,000 American jobs.

"By investing in universities, Indian American donors who value education are "putting their money where their mouth is. They are also demonstrating a larger commitment to America, supporting Americans of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds to thrive."- MR Rangaswami, Founder & Chairman of Indiaspora.

Yet, the most enduring influence of Indian Americans may be their remarkable tradition of philanthropy. Since 2008, Indian Americans have donated over \$3 billion to U.S. universities, creating a powerful "fly-wheel effect" that strengthens the U.S. educational ecosystem while reinforcing professional and cultural ties between India and America.

"Through philanthropic donations to

tions and ensures that American universities will continue to shape future leaders, foster innovation, and advance knowledge for the benefit of all." - Sanjeev Joshipura, Executive Director of Indiaspora.



Chandrika Tandon

These philanthropic pathways often reflect donors' professional roots, creating a self-reinforcing cycle that builds research capacity and strengthens workforce development in healthcare, engineering, and business sectors where Indian Americans excel. Beyond the major universities, In-



Kiran and Pallavi Patel

dian Americans are quietly supporting community colleges, state schools, and city universities, demonstrating a deep commitment to broadening access to education nationwide.

The vast majority of publicly known donations have gone towards Medical & Health Sciences, Engineering and Business Education. In addition to professional fields, \$140 million has been directed toward cultural programming. This includes a substantial donation by Sumir Chadha to Princeton University, which established the Chadha Center for Global India. Endowments for South Asian, Hindu, and Indian studies symbolize the community's dedication to preserving their cultural heritage while enriching America's academic landscape.

The scale of these contributions reflects not just financial investment, but a deep belief in the power of education to inspire innovation and uplift communities. As Indian Americans continue to emerge as leaders in academia, industry, and philanthropy, the collective impact on higher education is set to endure for generations to come.

Substantial philanthropic impact is visible across the Midwest and South, exemplified by major donors such as Monte Ahuja, who has championed Ohio universities, and Satish & Yasmin Gupta, whose generosity has benefited institutions throughout Texas. Dr. Kiran and Pallavi



Sumir Chadha

Patel have emerged as leading philanthropists in Florida, making transformative contributions that have reshaped medical education in the state.

In the Northeast, Chandrika and Ranjan Tandon's historic \$100 million donation to New York University's School of Engineering represents a milestone in higher education philanthropy. Indian American entrepreneur and philanthropist Desh Deshpande established an early benchmark in 2002 with his \$20 million gift to MIT, creating the Center for Technological Innovation, enabling America's leading scientists to pursue innovative research resulting in breakthrough technologies and new companies. More recently, Indra Nooyi's landmark \$50 million contribution to the Yale School of Management stands as one of the largest business school donations in history. Indiaspora is particularly proud to recognize substantial contributions from Indiaspora members to educational institutions, including those from Deepak Raj, Niraj Shah, Raj Gupta, and Venky Harinarayan.

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'Find your ally' legal lifeline for undocumented students at community colleges

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

As immigration debates continue to shape the national landscape, California Community Colleges are stepping up to ensure students and their families have the support they need to pursue their dreams. Through Find Your Ally (findyourally.com) and the Higher Education Legal Services Project, every student in our system whether full-time or part-time, enrolled in credit, noncredit, dual enrollment, or adult education has access to free, high-quality immigration legal assistance. This includes help with applications, family petitions, consultations, and even coverage of DACA renewal fees. This is the first state-funded effort of its kind in the nation, ensuring that no student has to navigate complex immigration challenges alone. It reflects our system's commitment to advancing equity, breaking down barriers, and creating pathways for students to thrive both inside and outside the classroom.

In the ACom briefing on October 2, cosponsored by the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) and the Foundation for California Community Colleges (FoundationCCC), college leaders and immigration legal experts highlighted the services making the biggest difference for immigrant communities and explored the ongoing legal challenges that shape their futures.

According to reports, there are 2.1 million students enrolled in California Community Colleges across the state, of which about 35,000 are undocumented immigrant students. The program is open to all community college students, whether full-time, part-time, credit or non-credit course learners, or even adult education or dual credit course students, regardless of immigration status. In addition, campus faculty and staff also benefit.

Alonso Garcia, Senior Manager, Equity, Foundation for California Community Colleges said this program is unique

to California and invests more than \$10 million every year to ensure that students can obtain legal aid without financial burden. Garcia pointed out at the press conference that the project cooperates with the Immigration Legal Resource Center and ten trustworthy legal

temporary exit permits, and related legal consultations. All consultation processes are strictly confidential. Students can make an appointment with a lawyer through a multilingual online platform, and some campuses also provide face-to-face services.

critical assistance to many international students and family members. "For many young people, this is the guarantee that they can continue to pursue their education and future dreams." In addition to legal assistance, the program works closely with mental health, financial aid and student affairs departments on campus to establish a comprehensive support network for students. For example, if some students encounter application fee problems during the application process, the project can provide fee reductions or subsidies to ease their financial pressure.

The Higher Education Legal Services Plan not only protects students' rights and interests, but also embodies the fairness and inclusion of California's higher education system. Yadira Gutierrez Vargas said, "I hope that through this service, every student, regardless of their status, can feel at ease on the road to pursuing their dreams."

According to reports, there are 2.1 million students enrolled in California Community Colleges across the state, of which about 35,000 are undocumented immigrant students. The program is open to all community college students, whether full-time, part-time, credit or non-credit course learners

aid agencies to ensure comprehensive and professional service coverage. To date, more than a thousand students have directly benefited. Specialized services include green card and naturalization applications, family reunification,

During the discussion, experts pointed out that California is the only state in the United States that provides such comprehensive legal support in the college system. This initiative not only helps undocumented students, but also provides

Assembly Bill 268 making Diwali a State Holiday in California

Indiaspora proudly congratulates California Governor Gavin Newsom on signing Assembly Bill 268, officially designating Diwali as a state holiday. This landmark legislation marks a historic moment for Indian Americans, especially in California, and is a powerful recognition of the community's rich cultural heritage and longstanding contributions to the Golden State.

For the more than one million Indian Americans who call California home, this is a moment of immense pride and joy. Indian Americans have been instrumental in shaping California's vibrant and diverse landscape-contributing to the economy, serving in government, enriching the arts, sciences, and civic life, and uplifting communities across the state. California, in

turn, has welcomed the community with open arms. Declaring Diwali a state holiday affirms that Indian Americans are not just participants in California's story-they are woven into the very fabric of its identity.

This milestone builds upon a legacy of advocacy and cultural recognition. In 2016, Indiaspora helped lead the successful campaign for the U.S. Postal Service to issue the Diwali Forever Stamp-an effort rooted in community activism dating back to 2001. The movement gained national momentum in 2009, when President Barack Obama lit a diya in the White House-a deeply symbolic act of inclusion and acknowledgment.

Indiaspora remains especially grateful to Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) and Rep. Ami Bera (D-CA), who championed the Diwali Stamp resolution in the House of Representatives, as well as Senators Mark Warner (D-VA) and John Cornyn (R-TX), who led the bipartisan effort in the Senate. Their leadership made the Diwali Stamp a reality, and helped catalyze a broader cultural shift toward recognition of Indian festivals and traditions, which in recent years, continues to grow.

In October 2024, Pennsylvania became the first state to declare Diwali an official public holiday. New York City took

a groundbreaking step by mandating public school closures for Diwali, with November 1, 2024 marking the first time schools were officially closed for the festival. Several school districts across New York State, beyond New York City, will also observe Diwali as an official holiday.

Today, with California-the most populous state in the nation-officially recognizing Diwali, Indian Americans celebrate a major milestone in the ongoing journey toward greater cultural inclusion and visibility. This recognition reflects not just the vibrancy of Diwali, but the enduring impact of the Indian American community across the United States. Congratulations to the Honorable Assemblymembers Ash Kalra (D-San Jose) and Dr. Darshana Patel (D-San Diego) who joint-authored the bill.

"This historic decision validates the contributions our community has made to this state for generations. The governor's leadership on this issue demonstrates the inclusive vision we need in America today. By elevating our community's most important celebration to official status, this administration has shown that diversity truly is our strength." - MR Rangaswami, Founder & Chairman of Indiaspora.

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Immigrant detention camps

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

Fifteen immigrants have died in immigration detention so far this year, ten of them between January and June, making that period the deadliest in recent history. Some of these deaths were suicides. More than 1,200 people are allegedly missing from the infamous and controversial Everglades facility dubbed "Alligator Alcatraz," with families and attorneys unable to locate them. Advocates report that children are being subjected to prolonged detention under harmful conditions, and that reports of overcrowding, unsanitary facilities, and problems with food and health care access are multiplying. There are currently close to 60,000 detainees, a record number, and the rapid expansion of arrests and detention, combined with diminishing transparency, signals a worsening situation for immigrants, most of who have not been convicted of

any crime. Our panelists today discussed these issues and provided the best information available. Heather Hogan, Policy and Practice Counsel, American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA) said she had served as an asylum review officer in detention cen-

oners." Hogan pointed out that many political asylum seekers have already experienced severe trauma, and detention has caused a rapid deterioration of their psychological conditions. She recalled that a young woman hanged herself a few days after completing the "Credible Fear (Cred-

name of protection. Detention has gradually become a tool of punishment rather than a means of immigration management. Andrew Free, Atlanta-based lawyer; founded #DetentionKills, to support families and communities affected by deaths in DHS custody pointed out that based on his comparison with the Deportation Data Program, 22 people have died in ICE custody this year, making it the deadliest year since the COVID-19 pandemic. He also found that at least five deaths were never announced by the government, and that more than 400 deaths may have been concealed since 2009. Free said Georgia's Stewart Detention Center has been the nation's deadliest facility for many years, and "many of those who died by suicide or due to delays in medical care. He added that although ICE releases death data more often than some prison systems, there is still a lack of transparency.

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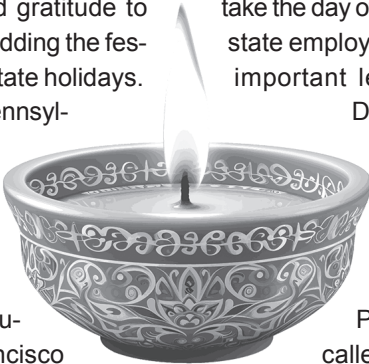
ters in Arizona and Texas and witnessed detainees being treated like criminals. "They were woken up at three in the morning, put on handcuffs and shackles, and orange prison uniforms, and were marched into the interview room like pris-

ible Fear) interview, which is a part of political asylum", which deeply shocked her colleagues. She pointed out that authorities often put people who have attempted suicide, transgender people or people living with HIV into solitary confinement in the

Indian-American community hails California's recognition of Diwali as state holiday

CALIFORNIA: Several members of the Indian-American community and advocacy organizations in the United States have voiced their appreciation as California officially designated Diwali-- the 'Festival of Lights'-- as a statewide holiday. The bill was signed into law on October 6, making California the third state to declare the festival a statewide holiday, following Pennsylvania in 2024 and Connecticut earlier this year. Extending greetings to all celebrating Diwali, the Indian Consulate General in San Francisco expressed gratitude to the State of California for adding the festival of lights to the list of state holidays. "California now joins Pennsylvania and Connecticut in celebrating this festival that symbolizes light, hope, and unity -- values cherished across communities," the Indian Consulate General in San Francisco posted on X. Meanwhile, advocacy group Coalition of Hindus of North America (CoHNA) thanked California Governor Gavin Newsom for recognizing the important festival and ushering in a new era of inclusion for Hindus in California. It also appreciated Assembly Members Darshana Patel and Ash Kalra for sponsoring the bill. Additionally, the Hindu American Foun-

dation (HAF) said the law sets a new precedent for the integration of Diwali into the holiday season in California. HAF and the Hindu American community expressed hope that other states will follow California's example. "We are grateful to Assembly member Kalra and Assembly member Patel for their leadership on this initiative, as well as the overwhelming support from the community," stated managing director of HAF, Samir Kalra. "The provisions that allow students to take the day off without repercussion and state employees to take paid leave are important leaps forward in making Diwali truly accessible to those who celebrate," he added. On the other hand, lauding California for the decision, Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America (VHPA) called it a proud and historic milestone for Hindu Americans. "We thank Governor Gavin Newsom and the California State Assembly for recognizing Diwali as part of the state's civic and cultural calendar. Diwali -- the festival of light, knowledge, and renewal -- speaks to values cherished by all communities. Its inclusion in California's official calendar reflects how these timeless ideals contribute to the state's vibrant and diverse spirit," VHPA posted on X. IANS



Indian Embassy in Doha assists repatriation of elderly man after in-flight stroke

NEW DELHI: The Indian embassy in Doha, in close coordination with the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), successfully facilitated the safe repatriation of an elderly Indian national who suffered a stroke mid-flight while transiting through Qatar. The man was travelling from the United Kingdom to India when he had a medical emergency during the flight. After landing in Doha, he was admitted to Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC) for treatment. "Embassy of India, Doha, in coordination with ICBF, is happy to report the safe repatriation of an elderly person (who had a mid-flight emergency) back to Bharat. This elderly person had a stroke in flight while he was on transit from the UK to Bharat via Doha, Qatar," the embassy stated. "Due to this emergency situation, he was admitted to Hamad Medical Corporation (HMC). Constant care by the Labor Wing of the Indian Embassy and ICBF during his entire stay in Doha made his life easy in a foreign land," the statement added. The Embassy thanked ICBF volunteers, doctors, paramedics and Qatar Airways for their support in this humanitarian mission. "End-to-end care by Embassy and ICBF included coordination with the insurance agency, assurance of im-

mediate financial support if needed, help in getting a fitness certificate to fly back to Bharat and facilitation up to airport immigration. We thank the Indian Community Benevolent Forum (ICBF), Doctors and Paramedics in Hamad and Qatar Airways for their support in this humanitarian mission," the embassy said. Meanwhile, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal is currently in Qatar, holding talks with leaders to boost trade ties between the two countries during his two-day visit to the Gulf country. He will also hold meetings with the industry and business community. "I have scheduled discussions on a wide range of topics with Qatar and meetings with the industry and business community," the Union Minister told reporters. During his visit, Goyal will co-chair a meeting of the Qatar-India Joint Commission on Trade and Commerce. The meeting will also be co-chaired by Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Qatar. ANI

More top stories
on page 16

'Ebola virus strain found in semen, breast milk months after infection'

NEW DELHI: US researchers have detected the Sudan Ebola virus strain in semen and breast milk among survivors, about eight months after infection, raising concerns about the potential for sexual and mother-to-child transmission.

Nearly 60 percent of the survivors of an outbreak in Uganda from 2022-23 reported ongoing and debilitating health issues, even two years post-infection that interfered with their daily lives noted researchers at Washington State University.

"This is the first time anyone has been able to closely follow Sudan Ebola survivors over the long term, and the results show the virus continues to affect people's lives well after an outbreak ends," said lead researcher Kariuki Njenga, Professor in the WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine.

"Just as concerning is the fact we detected the virus in semen and breast milk, which shows there is a risk survivors could pass on Ebola months after recovery," Njenga added.

Ebola is a severe, often fatal hemorrhagic fever in humans caused by four known strains: Zaire, Sudan, Bundibugyo, and Tai Forest. The Zaire and Sudan are the deadliest strains, with case fatality rates ranging from 75-90 percent for Zaire and 55-65 percent for Sudan. *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)

October 10, 2025

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India Post 13

West coast Sindhis genetically distinct from Pakistani Sindhis: Study

HYDERABAD: The Sindhi population on the west coast of India has a unique genetic makeup, which is different from Pakistani Sindhis, according to a study conducted by scientists at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad.

According to Dr. Kumarasamy Thangaraj, CSIR Bhatnagar Fellow at the CSIR-CCMB, who conducted the study along with his colleague, Dr. Lomous Kumar, Sindhis on the west coast of India show genetic affinities toward the Burusho or Hazara-like group from Pakistan, as well as recent genetic assimilation with local populations such as the Konkani.

Dr. Kumarasamy added that the existence of a unique East Asian genetic component in Sindhis of the west coast of India, compared to Pakistani Sindhis, can be attributed to minor admixtures occurring either directly through Mongolian migra-

tions or with contacts through Burusho and Hazara-like groups in present-day Pakistan, alternatively.



"Our genetic study also found that the Indian Sindhi group has a small, unique genetic component from East Asia that might have incorporated much earlier in the history"

Burusho and Hazara are population groups with Mongoloid features found in present-day Pakistan.

"Our genetic study also found that the Indian Sindhi group has a small, unique genetic compo-

nent from East Asia that might have incorporated much earlier in the history, likely reflecting imprints of Iron Age or later migra-

tions, possibly Mongols, in their genomes," said Dr. Lomous Kumar, one of the authors of the study and a postdoctoral researcher at DST-Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeosciences (BSIP), Lucknow.

"These findings conclusively demonstrate the demographic changes and population shifts in western India associated with multiple migrations. Some of these happened as early as the Iron or Middle Ages and some as recent as post-independence," said Dr. Vinay K. Nandicoori, Director, CSIR-CCMB.

The west coast of India is home to diverse human populations. This large region between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats has seen the movement of various West Eurasian groups, including the Portuguese, Middle Easterners, Jews, Parsees, and Christian missionaries.

Recent studies have focused on the genetic affinities of a few groups, such as Parsis, Jews, and Catholics.

However, the origins and genetic relationships of many southwest coast groups, often seen as remnants of later migrations, remain largely unexplored.

One such small community is the Indian Sindhis, who live on the west coast in Maharashtra. Due to the geographical proximity of the Sindh region in Pakistan, they have migrated to western India for centuries, but mass migration occurred during the partition of India, after independence.

Although Pakistani Sindhis have been extensively studied, very limited genetic information is available about the Sindhis living on the west coast of India, who are socio-culturally quite distinct from the Konkani coast.

The first high-throughput genetic study on the Sindhi population living on the west coast of India has now been conducted by CCMB scientists. *IANS*

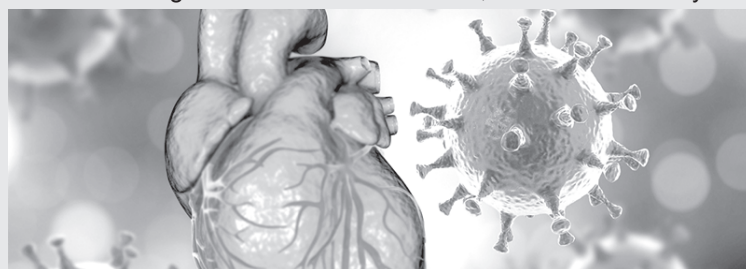
Long Covid patients more likely to suffer from unusual heart rhythm disorder

NEW DELHI: An unusual heart rhythm disorder, also known as Postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), is more common in people with long Covid, according to a study.

The study found that the condition, where the heart beats abnormally fast when changing position from lying down to standing up, is more common in middle-aged women than men.

For people affected with

POTS, standing up is a challenge. Their hearts beat faster than normal at rest and during exertion. Patients also experience fatigue and difficulties concentrating -- symptoms that are common in long Covid.



Researchers at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden found that POTS occurs in almost a third of patients with severe long Covid.

"Previous, smaller studies have shown that there is a connection, but now we can say with

certainty that POTS is a very common condition in patients with long Covid. This is valuable knowledge for both health care professionals and patients," said Mikael Björnson, doctoral student at the Department of Medicine, Solna, Karolinska Institutet.

The study, published in the journal *Circulation: Arrhythmia and Electrophysiology*, examined 467 patients with severe long Covid who had not been hospitalized for Covid-19. *IANS*

India's sex ratio at birth improved with 917 females per 1,000 males in 2021-23: Center

NEW DELHI: Strengthening the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act has led to an improvement in the Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB), with 917 females per 1,000 males recorded in 2021-23, said Aradhana Patnaik, Additional Secretary & Mission Director (NHM), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Speaking at a National Sensitisation Meeting on Strengthening the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994, here she highlighted the progress made in the SRB over the last decade.

"The country has recorded a positive improvement in the Sex Ratio at Birth (SRB). As per the Sample Registration System (SRS) Report 2023, the SRB has increased by 18 points -- from 819 females per 1,000 males during 2016-18 to 917 females per 1,000 males in 2021-23.



The National Sex Ratio at Birth for the period 2021-23 thus stands at 917 females per 1,000 males, reflecting the progress made through strengthened implementation of the PC & PNDT Act and related interventions," Patnaik said.

Patnaik emphasized that the PC & PNDT Act is not just a legal instrument but a moral and social safeguard against gender-biased sex selection.

"Women by birth are more resilient and have a stronger immune system,

hence the survival of a female child is more possible naturally than a male child."

"Instead of taking action against gender-biased sex selection, we should focus on the prevention part of the PC & PNDT Act. The focus of the society or an Individual should be on having a healthy child rather than the gender of the child," she added.

The meeting focused on reinforcing the effective implementation of the PC & PNDT Act in view of emerging challenges, with an emphasis on coordinated efforts to address gaps, ensure compliance, and uphold the objectives of the legislation.

It also highlighted the pressing issue of online violations and misuse of new technologies, reinforcing the urgent need for proactive engagement with digital intermediaries and stronger compliance mechanisms to uphold the spirit of the Act. *IANS*

Make in India booster: Eli Lilly announces \$1 billion investment in country

NEW DELHI: US pharma giant Eli Lilly announced plans to invest more than \$1 billion in India over the next several years for new contract manufacturing, boosting the country's Make in India goal.

The strategic investment is expected to expand patients' access to the company's key medicines, including those for obesity, diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer, and au-

the years ahead," said Nivruti Rai, Managing Director & CEO, Invest India, Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Lilly also plans to establish a new manufacturing and quality facility in Hyderabad. The new hub will offer advanced technical capabilities and oversight for Lilly's contract manufacturing network across the country.



"Lilly's continued expansion in Hyderabad highlights the city's emergence as a powerhouse in global healthcare innovation. From the recent opening of its innovation and technology site to a new manufacturing collaboration and the establishment of a manufacturing and quality hub, Lilly is moving swiftly to expand its presence in Telangana -- reinforcing the state's

toimmune conditions, around the world, the company said.

"Lilly's investment in India reflects confidence in India's skilled talent, robust infrastructure, and business-friendly policies, while supporting Lilly's journey as a global leader in life sciences. Together, we are shaping a stronger future for healthcare and manufacturing. We are proud to support Lilly's growth journey in India and wish them continued success in

position as a preferred destination for cutting-edge healthcare investments," said A. Revanth Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Telangana.

The company noted that it will "immediately begin" recruitment across roles such as engineers, chemists, analytical scientists, quality control and assurance professionals, and management positions, in a boost to India's highly skilled talent pool. *IANS*

Over 4.4 lakh chikungunya disease cases, 155 deaths reported worldwide in 2025: WHO

NEW DELHI: The world saw more than 4.4 lakh suspected and confirmed cases of chikungunya disease and 155 deaths due to it from January to September 30, this year, said the World Health Organization (WHO).

In the latest outbreak notice from 40 countries, Chikungunya virus (CHIKV) disease was noted in several countries, including some that had not reported substantial case numbers in recent years.

"Between 1 January and 30 September 2025, a total of 4,45,271 suspected and confirmed CHIKV disease cases and 155 deaths were reported globally from 40 countries, including autochthonous and travel-imported cases," the WHO report said.

The region of the Americas with 3,28,920 suspected and confirmed CHIKV disease, reported the highest number of cases followed by the European region (56,456 confirmed cases reported predominantly from French Overseas Departments in the Indian Ocean). The region also reported 40 deaths.

In India, between 1 January and 31 March 2025, a total of 30,876 suspected cases and 1,741 confirmed cases were reported. The states reporting the highest number of confirmed cases were Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil

Nadu. No deaths were reported, as per the WHO report.

Another recent study, published in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) Global Health, showed that more than 1.40 crore people worldwide could be at risk of chikungunya infection every year.

The global modeling study, led by researchers at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, stated



that India could experience the biggest impacts of chikungunya, potentially putting 51 lakh people at risk of the mosquito-borne infection every year.

Brazil and Indonesia might be the second and third most affected, with impacts due to the disease in India and Brazil accounting for 48 percent of the global impact on healthcare systems and individuals, the findings showed. *IANS*

US, Japanese scientists awarded 2025 Nobel Prize for Medicine for discovery on immune system

Photo: Reuters

NEW DELHI: A trio of Japanese and US scientists has been awarded the 2025 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for their discovery on how the immune system is kept in check.

The coveted prize by the Nobel Assembly at Karolinska Institutet was awarded to Mary E. Brunkow (US), Fred Ramsdell (US), and Shimon Sakaguchi (Japan). The prize money of 11 million Swedish kronor will be shared equally between the laureates.

"The 2025 #NobelPrize in Physiology or Medicine has been awarded to Mary E. Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell, and Shimon Sakaguchi for their discoveries concerning peripheral immune tolerance," the Nobel Assembly said in a statement.

The peripheral immune tolerance is a mechanism that prevents the immune system from harming the body.

The laureates identified the immune system's security guards, regulatory T cells -- which prevent immune cells from attacking our own body.

Their discoveries launched the field of peripheral tolerance, spurring the develop-

ment of medical treatments for cancer and autoimmune diseases. This may also lead to more successful transplantations. Several of these treatments are now undergoing clinical trials.

"Their discoveries have been decisive for our understanding of how the immune system functions and why we do not all

develop serious autoimmune diseases," said Olle Kämpe, chair of the Nobel Committee.

Born in 1961, Brunkow holds a doctorate from Princeton University in the US. He is currently the Senior Programme Manager at the Institute for Systems Biology in Seattle.

Ramsdell was born in 1960 and undertook a Ph.D in 1987 from the University of California-Los Angeles, US. He is the Scientific Advisor at Sonoma Biotherapeutics in San Francisco.

Born in 1951, Sakaguchi studied M.D in 1976 and Ph.D. in 1983 from Kyoto University, Japan. *IANS*



Mary E. Brunkow

Institute for Systems Biology,
Seattle, USA



Fred Ramsdell

Sonoma Biotherapeutics,
San Francisco, USA



Shimon Sakaguchi

Osaka University,
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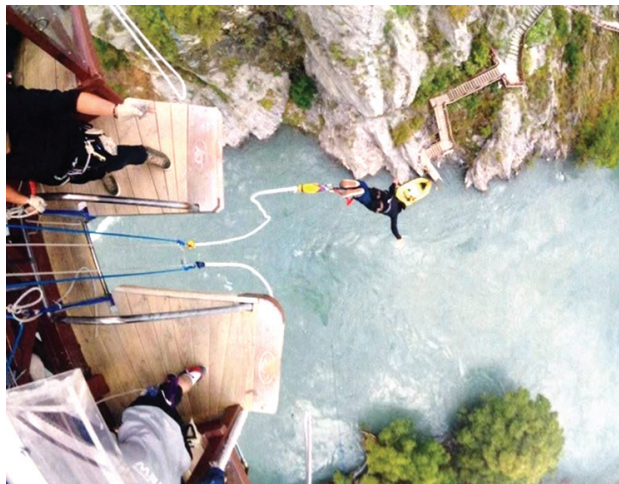


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This childhood cancer survivor seeks to 'live every moment'



Former St. Jude patient Darshana Magan paragliding, snorkeling, and bungee jumping

Darshana Magan felt nauseous before leaping off the cliff. She was strapped into a tandem paraglider with an instructor, and her fear of heights sparked a roiling anxiety she has spent her entire life wrangling.

On this sunny day in San Diego, she stared, wide-eyed and bold, at the view before her of the Pacific Ocean, stretched in endless blue before her.

She told herself: "I survived cancer; I can do anything. I don't live my life in fear." And she leapt.

In the 30 years since Darshana survived her childhood cancer, the Midwestern accountant has snorkeled in the Atlantic off the coast of Trinidad, despite her fear of the ocean. She has skydived in Montauk, New York, and bungee jumped off bridges in New Zealand, some 130 feet high. She has faced her fears with courage and fortitude because it's how she learned to survive cancer when she was 10 years old.

Darshana grew up on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi,

with her parents, brothers and a crew of Indian-American kids whose parents worked long days in the motel industry. It was a dreamy, unencumbered childhood until a sudden fatigue kept her on the couch, listless. She was too tired to play, and her belly was swollen.

Her mother took her to the pediatrician thinking it was a simple stomach bug, but a check of her abdomen revealed a swollen spleen. Then, bloodwork showed Darshana had chronic myeloid leukemia, a form of cancer in the bone marrow more common in adults than children.

"My parents were crying, and I was crying because they were crying. That was the first time I'd ever seen my dad cry," Darshana said. "I had no idea what was going on, what leukemia was."

She was immediately referred to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. St. Jude was founded in Memphis in 1962 by Danny Thomas, the son of immigrant parents, to treat children with cancer and other life-threatening diseases regardless of their race, ethnicity, beliefs or ability to pay. Families never receive a bill from St. Jude for treatment, travel, housing or food, so they can focus on helping their child live, regardless of the duration or the cost of care.

By the time they got home from the hospital, all the families in the tightknit immigrant Indian community had gathered at her parents' motel to process the news together.

Darshana watched them approach with questions and worry, and found herself in the same position, confused and uncertain. What was leukemia like? Would she die?

When her friend Angel approached her, Darshana told her she had cancer, without fully understanding what it was, and that she was going to Memphis for treatment.

"Will you be back?" Angel asked.

"I don't know," Darshana told her.

Now, more than 30 years later, something about standing on that cliff in San Diego, or on the edge of a bridge harnessed only by her ankles, taps into the same kind of feeling she remembers in the early moments of her diagnosis. Fear and worry of the unknown. But the need to face it anyway.

It was 1993 when Darshana was at St. Jude, and the treatment for her type of leukemia didn't have a set protocol because it was so rare in children. She underwent two months of chemotherapy, and one week of high-dose, full-body radiation treatment. She listened to cassette tapes of Kenny G and Aaron Neville to ease her anxiety. Doctors at St. Jude said she was a candidate for bone marrow transplant. Her younger brother, the donor.

"Bone marrow transplant to me was like a rebirth," Darshana said. "Every year I acknowledge the day I got my transplant more than I do my own birthday because without that day I would not be here."

In the 30 years since Darshana survived her childhood cancer, the Midwestern accountant has snorkeled in the Atlantic off the coast of Trinidad, despite her fear of the ocean. She has skydived in Montauk, New York, and bungee jumped off bridges in New Zealand, some 130 feet high. She has faced her fears with courage and fortitude because it's how she learned to survive cancer when she was 10 years old

It took a few months for her immune system to adjust and strengthen after the transplant. She lost her sense of taste and had to re-learn how to enjoy the texture and flavor of food. By the time she returned to her hometown that fall, doctors told her she had no evidence of cancer.

"Cancer doesn't define me, but it has changed my life in a huge way," Darshana, now 42, said.

Surviving cancer has helped her be grateful for simple moments, she said.

"I stop to look for butterflies, rainbows. I'm a sucker for sunsets. These little things are happiness," Darshana said. "Surviving cancer taught me to stop, sit back, listen, observe what's around me, remind myself to live every moment like it's special because it is."



Darshana Magan is a former patient of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital





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India, Brazil discuss roadmap to take bilateral trade to \$20 billion in 5 years

NEW DELHI: The seventh meeting of the India-Brazil Trade Monitoring Mechanism (TMM) was held here on 7 October, which underscores the commitment between India and Brazil to foster economic growth.

Rajesh Agrawal, Commerce Secretary, and Tatiana Lacerda Prazeres, Secretary of Foreign Trade at the Ministry of Development, Industry, Trade and Services for Brazil co-chaired the meeting.

During the meeting in the national capital, both sides extensively discussed matters related to bilateral trade and outlined a roadmap for taking it forward.

The discussions included the review of bilateral trade and investment relations, expansion of India-MERCOSUR PTA, market access issues, visa issues, sectorial collaborations in pharmaceuticals and healthcare, chemicals and petrochemicals, MSME, banking and finance, promotion of industries and internal trade, multilateral issues and other matters of mutual interest.

India and Brazil have been strong diplomatic partners for more than 75 years now.

The two countries have built a close and multifaceted relationship marked by shared democratic values and a commitment to development.

During the State visit of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Brazil in July 2025 and meeting with the Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, the leaders set a target to increase bilateral trade to \$20 billion over the next five years.

Brazil is the largest trading partner of India in the Latin American and Caribbean region. During the FY 2024-25, the bilateral merchandise trade stood at \$12.19 billion.

India's export story is clearly at a turning point. While the US will continue to be a vital partner, the extraordinary growth of exports to countries such as the Netherlands, UAE, Australia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Brazil, and Mexico demonstrates that India is no longer dependent on a single market. *IANS*

Make in India booster: iPhone exports hit record about \$10 billion in April-Sep

NEW DELHI: In a fillip for 'Make in India' and the production-linked incentive (PLI) schemes, tech giant Apple has registered iPhone exports worth about \$10 billion or more than Rs 88,500 crore from the country in the April-September period in the current financial year, according to industry estimates.

This is a 75 percent growth in iPhone exports from India compared to the same period last fiscal (FY25), the estimates suggested. *IANS*



Haryana CM holds key business meetings in Osaka, pitches state as global investment hub



Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini in a group photo with senior officials of Kubota Corporation tractor plant, in Osaka (@NayabSainiBJP/ANI Photo)

OSAKA: In a significant push to attract global investment to Haryana, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini held high-level meetings with top Japanese companies during his visit to Osaka, one of the largest port cities of Japan.

The Consulate General of India in Osaka-Kobe posted on X about the CM's engagements, highlighting the focus on business expansion and investment promotion.

"Hon'ble CM Haryana @NayabSainiBJP had useful one on one meetings with Minebea Mitsumi, Mitsui Kinzoku Company and Nitto Seiko in Osaka. The discussions aimed at inviting them to and expanding their business in Haryana," the Consulate posted.

The visit is part of a broader effort by the Haryana government to position the state as a preferred destination for advanced manufacturing and innovation.

Earlier, CM Saini also participated in an Investor Roadshow in Osaka, engaging with leading Japanese investors and innovators.

Taking to X, he shared: "It was a pleasure to interact with top Japanese investors and innovators at the Investor Roadshow in

cal Textiles, IT and emerging technologies - reaffirming Haryana's target to become a global hub for innovation and sustainable growth."

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister emphasized Haryana's focus on deepening ties with Japan, particularly in

"Haryana's dynamic investment ecosystem was showcased, along with its vast opportunities across key sectors including Electric Vehicles, Electronics, Semiconductors, Renewable Energy, Technical Textiles, IT and emerging technologies - reaffirming Haryana's target to become a global hub for innovation and sustainable growth"

Osaka, Japan. Haryana's dynamic investment ecosystem was showcased, along with its vast opportunities across key sectors including Electric Vehicles, Electronics, Semiconductors, Renewable Energy, Techni-

digital technologies and Industry 4.0.

"This partnership will help connect Japan's global innovation ecosystem with Haryana's young, skilled, and dynamic talent. The investor-friendly policies

of the Haryana government are well-suited to meet the global entrepreneurs' needs for establishing production, research, design, and innovation centers," he said.

The roadshow began on a culturally resonant note, with the CM greeting the Japanese audience in their native language: "Konnichiwa, Mina-Sama!" He also praised Japan's famed 'Ganbatte' spirit, describing it as an inspiration to the world for its relentless drive and dedication.

CM Saini underlined that the India-Japan relationship is not solely transactional but built on shared values and a "special strategic partnership" that underpins regional prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Japan, he noted that both countries have adopted a joint vision for the coming decade, strengthening bilateral economic and technological cooperation. *IANS*

Committed to boosting Mumbai's infrastructure, ease of living: PM Modi

MUMBAI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reaffirmed his government's commitment to enhancing Mumbai's infrastructure and the 'Ease of Living' as he is set to inaugurate Phase-1 of the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) and the Mumbai Metro Line-3.

In a post on X, PM Modi said, "On the way to Navi Mumbai to take part in the program marking the inauguration of Phase-1 of the Navi Mumbai International Airport. With this, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region will get its second major international airport, thus boosting commerce and connectivity."

"The final phase of the Mumbai Metro Line-3 will also

work in coordination with the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) to reduce congestion and position Mumbai among global cities with multi-airport systems.

Spread across 1,160 hectares, NMIA is designed to be one of the most efficient airports in the world, capable of handling up to 90 million passengers per annum and 3.25 million metric tons of cargo.

Among its standout features is an Automated People Mover (APM) system that will connect all four passenger terminals to facilitate smooth inter-terminal transfers. A landside APM will also link the city-side infrastructure, ensuring convenience for passengers and staff.

Committed to sustainability, the airport will include storage for Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), solar power generation of nearly 47 MW, and electric bus services for city-wide connectivity. NMIA will also become the country's first airport to be connected by a Water Taxi service.

In addition to the airport, PM Modi will inaugurate Phase 2B of the Mumbai Metro Line-3, which stretches from Acharya Atre Chowk to Cuffe Parade and has been constructed at an estimated



Prime Minister Narendra Modi inspects Navi Mumbai International Airport, in Thane. Maharashtra Governor Acharya Devvrat, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, State Deputy Chief Ministers Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde, and Director of Adani Airport Holdings Limited Jeet Adani also present. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

be inaugurated. We are committed to enhancing Mumbai's infrastructure and boosting 'Ease of Living' for the people of this dynamic city," he added.

Phase-1 of the Navi Mumbai International Airport, developed at an estimated cost of Rs 19,650 crore, will be inaugurated by the Prime Minister in line with his vision of transforming India into a global aviation hub.

The Navi Mumbai International Airport is India's largest Greenfield airport project, developed under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. As the second international airport for the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, it will

cost of Rs 12,200 crore.

With this launch, the Prime Minister will dedicate the entire Mumbai Metro Line-3 (Aqua Line) to the nation. Built at a total cost exceeding Rs 37,270 crore, this milestone marks a major leap forward in the city's urban transport infrastructure.

Mumbai Metro Line-3, the city's first fully underground metro line, is set to redefine commuting in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region by offering faster, more efficient, and eco-friendly transport options for millions of daily commuters. *IANS*

World Bank's BETI project empowering micro-level women in India to build businesses

NEW DELHI: The World Bank's project BETI (Business Enterprise Technology for Indian women) has trained micro-level women in the country in digital tools and financial management, enabling them to build businesses.

The pilot project, along with SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association), one of the world's largest organizations of informal workers, trained women in Gujarat to use mobile apps and, manage their finances.

"Micro-level women entrepreneurs in #Gujarat are using mobile apps to manage thriving businesses. They are trained in financial management and market access through World Bank and SEWA support," the World Bank India shared in a recent post on social media platform X.



In a blog post, the World Bank shared how the project was an extension of the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' initiative, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015.

The BETI project added the dimension of 'Beti Kamao' to focus on empowering women economically. The project supports women's growth as entrepreneurs and job creators in the country.

"Empowering women entrepreneurs is an economic priority that will bring considerable benefits to India's economy," the blog post read.

It noted that providing a proper support system can be key to increasing the number, scale, and sustainability of women-led enterprises in the country.

"For this to be achieved, however, micro-level women entrepreneurs will need to better manage their businesses, find ways to reach wider markets, and obtain easier access to finance," the blog post said.

The pilot, operating in four districts of Gujarat -- Mehsana, Ahmedabad, Anand, and Bodeli -- equipped the women with mobile-based tools to "improve their bookkeeping, better manage their inventory and debt, and systematically catalogue their products for sale".

The digital tools helped them with a better understanding of basic business concepts such as revenue, costs, and profits.

Although the project faces roadblocks such as limited access to smartphones by small women entrepreneurs and some being wary of new technology, but "many women said that the new digital tools have made it easy for them to track their income and expenditure, giving them a more accurate picture of their businesses," the blog post said. *IANS*

India, Qatar deepen trade ties as Union Minister Piyush Goyal meets Qatari minister in Doha

DOHA: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal met with Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Trade Affairs, Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Sayed, in Doha, reaffirming India's commitment to strengthening bilateral trade and investment relations with the Gulf nation.

The meeting follows up on discussions held in New Delhi in August, when Al-Sayed led a high-powered investment delegation to India.

Goyal expressed optimism about the growing economic engagement between the two countries, stating, "Glad to meet Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Sayed. We recalled our discussions in New Delhi and look forward to continued engagement for increasing bilateral trade and

investment ties."

Goyal's visit to Qatar coincides with the India-Qatar Joint Commission on Trade and Commerce, which he co-chaired alongside Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry, Sheikh Faisal bin Thani bin Faisal Al Thani.

The two sides discussed the proposed India-Qatar Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), aiming to double bilateral trade from the current \$14 billion to \$28 billion by 2030. India faces a significant trade deficit with Qatar, largely due to petroleum imports. However, Qatar has already invested \$4 to 5 billion in India, with another \$1.5 billion in the pipeline. *IANS*

Apostille Services for Students Planning to Study Abroad

NEW DELHI: With the increasing trend of Indian students going abroad for higher studies, the need for efficient and trustworthy apostille services in Bangalore has hit the peak. Document legalization is an essential part of the whole admission and visa process for students who are planning to study in foreign universities.

Document authentication and legalization company IndiaMEA, a reliable name in the industry, is easing the procedure for students travelling abroad to study. An Apostille is a government certification under the Hague Convention that recognizes documents such as educational certificates, transcripts, birth certificates, and other personal documents for use in a foreign country.

"Students frequently encounter difficulties when trying to comprehend the complicated nature of document legalization. Our aim is to provide students with a hassle-free and seamless experience so that they can concentrate more on their studies and less on the paperwork," said an IndiaMEA representative.

Most recent trends point out that foreign universities are implementing stricter and stricter rules regarding the papers that students submit. If there is no apostille stamp or the authentication is incorrect, the student's admission process may be delayed or the visa may be refused. IndiaMEA helps students to meet international standards for document verification by delivering timely and accurate solutions.

Students in Bangalore need the proper direction of a professional in apostille so as to not make mistakes and to save their valuable time in the whole admission process. IndiaMEA takes the entire responsibility of the student's documents from verification to the final stamp of the apostille, thus ensuring that the documents are legally valid in another country.

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

US Visa Travel Insurance: What Indian travellers must know

MUMBAI: The United States is thrilling and a little unpredictable. Flights connect through busy hubs, luggage takes a different route, and a minor illness can turn into a long clinic visit. That is why many Indian travellers keep a solid travel policy in their back pocket.

This article explains what to buy, when to buy, and how to use it so you can plan with confidence.

What is US Visa Travel Insurance

It is a policy that supports you during a trip to the United States. For US travel insurance from India , the cover usually includes medical treatment for sudden illnesses or injuries, along with assistance for travel disruptions and loss of belongings. The idea is simple. You protect your trip budget and avoid scrambling for solutions in an unfamiliar system.

Who should consider it:

- Tourists visiting family and friends
- Students heading for a semester or longer program
- Business travellers with multiple meetings and connections
- Parents or seniors planning an extended stay with children
- Anyone taking internal domestic flights within the US

Short Trip vs Long Stay

Match the plan to the length of your visit.

- Short Trip: Going for sightseeing or a quick work visit. Look for short trip travel insurance USA with fixed dates and a single journey.
- Long Stay: Studying, temporary work, or a long family visit. Explore long stay insurance USA that allows longer durations and easy extensions if your plans change.

What it Usually Covers

Refer to the brochure rather than relying solely on headlines. Most plans include:

- Emergency medical expenses and hospital admission



- Outpatient doctor visits and prescribed medicines
- Dental treatment for sudden pain caused by injury
- Trip cancellation or curtailment for listed reasons
- Missed connections and long delays caused by specified events
- Loss, theft, or delay of checked baggage
- Personal liability within the limits stated in the policy

It is a policy that supports you during a trip to the United States. For US travel insurance from India , the cover usually includes medical treatment for sudden illnesses or injuries, along with assistance for travel disruptions and loss of belongings

- 24x7 assistance to locate care, arrange cashless options, and guide paperwork

What is Commonly Excluded

- These points vary across insurers, so read carefully.
- Pre-existing conditions, unless declared and accepted
 - Routine check-ups or

planned procedures

- High-risk sports not named in your plan
- Travel against medical advice

- Losses when documents or bags are left unattended
- Situations that fall outside the policy wording

How to Choose a Policy From India

When comparing US travel insurance from India, make your decision a practical one.

- Purpose Fit: Tourist, student, business, or family visit. Select a plan that clearly states your purpose.

For US travel insurance from India , the cover usually includes medical treatment for sudden illnesses or injuries, along with assistance for travel disruptions and loss of belongings

a reachable assistance line.

- Claims Process: Cashless network, document list, and how to submit from overseas.
- Clarity of Wording: Prefer plans that explain benefits and exclusions in plain language. This helps when comparing options under US travel insurance India.

When to Buy and How Long to Keep It

Purchase your tickets after they are reasonably firm. Start from the day you depart India and end on the day you land back home. If you need to extend your stay, choose a plan that allows for extensions before the expiry date. Students should align the cover with their course start and end dates, including a small buffer around travel days.

Documents and Proof to Carry

Here are the documents and proof to carry:

- Policy certificate with names, trip dates, and sum insured
- Assistance phone number and email saved on your phone
- Passport and visa copies kept digitally
- Flight bookings and stay details
- Prescriptions for any long-term medicines

Simple Claim Path in The US

Here, you will explore a simple claim path in the USA:

1) Call the assistance number on your e-card. Share the policy number and location.

(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.)

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

Nigerian national detained in Delhi for overstaying visa, deportation initiated

NEW DELHI: In a significant crackdown on illegal foreign nationals, the Operations Cell of the South West District Police has successfully traced and detained a Nigerian national found to be overstaying in India, Delhi Police said.

The detained individual, identified as Apeh Nnanna Malachy, aged 39, is a resident of Enuguezike, Nigeria. He had been staying in India after his medical visa expired.

"Accordingly, a dedicated team comprising ASI Vinod

Upon intercepting the individual and conducting a thorough verification, it was revealed that Malachy had entered India on March 15, 2021, on a medical visa, which expired on May 24, 2021, the police said

Kumar, ASI Dharmendra, HC Mohit, HC Narender and HC Prashant was constituted under the leadership of Insp. Ram Kumar, I/C AATS/SW and under the supervision of Vijaypal Tomar, ACP/Operations, South West District. The team was briefed to identify illegal migrants by conducting thorough checks, particularly in vulnerable areas of the South-West District," the police statement read. According to the officials, on October 3, the team re-

ceived a tip-off about a suspicious foreign national roaming in the Nangal Raya and Vasant Kunj South area. Upon intercepting the individual and conducting a thorough verification, it was revealed that Malachy had entered India on March 15, 2021, on a medical visa, which expired on May 24, 2021, the police said.

He had been residing illegally in Delhi's Burari area and had recently moved to Mahipalpur in search of new accommodation due to increased police scrutiny.

Following his detention at PS Vasant Kunj South, all legal and codal formalities were completed. "After thorough verification and inquiry, the necessary legal formalities were completed, leading to initiation of his deportation through the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), New Delhi," the officials stated.

This operation is part of a broader initiative by the South West District Police to curb illegal immigration and enhance public safety. "This successful operation highlights the South West District Police's zero-tolerance approach toward illegal immigration and our commitment to enforcing the rule of law," the police statement read. *IANS*

"There will be evolution of our stance keeping in mind people-centric ties": Misri

NEW DELHI: Noting that India's visa operations in Bangladesh are not at the level at which they were before the events of July and August last year in the neighboring country but it remains one of India's largest visa operations anywhere in the world, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri stated there will "be an evolution of our stance" with regard to this issue keeping in mind the people-centric relationship between the two countries.

He said visa service was affected by the overall security situation that prevailed in the wake of developments of in August last year in Bangladesh.

"Yes, it is not at the level at which it was before the events of July and August last year but even today with the numbers that are there it remains one of our largest visa operations anywhere in the world. I think you are no strangers to the fact that there were certain developments that took place on the ground in the midst of the events of July and August of 2024," Misri told a group of visiting Bangladesh journalists.

"I am not sure that much purpose is served by going into the details of those events as to who was responsible, what happened, what did not happen. As I said my perspective is to look forward, not to look behind to ascribe blame or to look for culprits, what should have been

done, what our expectations were etc. But it is a fact that the provision of a service such as visas in that environment was affected by the overall security situation that prevailed at that point in time. As a result of that we had to readjust our footprint, the number of people that we could have to provide these services," he added.

"Yes, it is not at the level at which it was before the events of July and August last year but even today with the numbers that are there it remains one of our largest visa operations anywhere in the world"

Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina resigned as Bangladesh Prime Minister and fled to India in August last year in the wake of student led agitation that witnessed violence. There were several incidents of violence reported later.

Misri said India has responded as situation improved on the ground in Bangladesh.

"Since you have been watching this situation closely, I hope that you have noted that as things have seemed to improve on the ground we have also responded and the numbers are already well beyond where they were in the immediate aftermath when the rather disturbing security incidents including some that were targeted at our visa operations took place," he said.

"I can assure you that as we move forward there will be an evolution of our stance with regard to this issue, keeping in mind exactly as you have said the people-centric relationship that we have," he added. *ANI*

California to sue over Trump sending National Guard to Portland

LOS ANGELES: California Governor Gavin Newsom announced that the US State of California would sue the Trump administration for deploying National Guard from the state into Portland, Oregon, saying Trump "is using the US military as a political weapon against American citizens."

In a press release, Newsom disclosed that US President Donald Trump is deploying 300 California National Guard troops to Portland after a federal judge temporarily denied Trump the ability to federalize the Oregon National Guard, Xinhua news agency reported.

"They are on their way there now," the press release said. "This is a breathtaking abuse of the law and power. The Trump Administration is unapologetically attacking the rule of law itself and putting into action their dangerous words -- ignoring court orders and treating judges, even those appointed by the President himself, as political opponents."

"We will take this fight to court, but the public cannot stay silent in the face of such reckless and authoritarian conduct by the President of the United States," Newsom said.

"The Trump Administration is unapologetically attacking the rule of law itself and putting into action their dangerous words -- ignoring court orders and treating judges, even those appointed by the President himself, as political opponents"

Trump claimed that the deployment of federalized troops was necessary because the city of Portland was under siege by protesters opposing the immigration enforcement actions conducted by federal agents.

On September 27, Trump ordered to send "all necessary troops" to Portland, putting 200 members of the Oregon National Guard under the command of Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Oregon State and the city of Portland filed a lawsuit in response to this order on September 28. Karin Immergut, a federal judge in Oregon, wrote in her ruling Saturday (4 Oct.) that the protests there were "not significantly violent or disruptive" to justify Trump's use of Oregon's National Guard.

The Trump administration later appealed that decision to the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals based in San Francisco, California. This court previously restored Trump's ability to call up the National Guard in Los Angeles in June, after a federal judge in San Francisco ruled it should be halted. *IANS*

‘Around 35 pc of 650 operational malls in India now meet institutional grade’

NEW DELHI: The Indian retail real estate sector is increasingly driven by institutional players and of the 650 operational malls across the country, 30-35 per cent now meet institutional grade, a recent report said.

The sector's rapid evolution from fragmented, quantity-driven growth to quality, institutional consolidation is a transformation saga with few global parallels.

"Grade A malls have risen from just 22 percent of the inventory in the top seven cities in 2015 to a projected 60 percent by 2027. Meanwhile, vacancies have reduced from 19 percent to about 9 percent - a dramatic sign of improving quality and demand," according to latest report by Anarock research.

According to the report, this trend is most visible among top players which collectively own 58 malls spanning 34 million square feet and have over 45 new malls spanning over 42.5 million sq ft of prime retail space in the pipeline for the next 3-5 years.

"It is notable how quickly institutional investment is spreading beyond the metros into Tier 2 hubs. Chandigarh, Indore, Surat, Bhubaneswar, and Coimbatore, with highly aspirational populations and increasing purchase power, are the new growth centers for organized retail," said Anuj Kejriwal, CEO and MD, Anarock Retail. The Indian retail industry is driven by changing consumer expectations, global brands' preference for standardized and experiential spaces, he added. *IANS*

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October 10, 2025

Institutional investments in India's real estate hit \$4.3 billion in Jan-Sep

NEW DELHI: Led by domestic capital, institutional investments in the Indian real estate sector stood at \$4.3 billion during the first nine months of 2025, a recent report showed.

The nine-months investment volumes remained above the average of \$4 billion inflows in the January-September period of last five years, according to a Colliers India report. The trend underscores ongoing investor confidence in the fundamentals of Indian economy and real estate market. *IANS*

New record in Hyderabad real estate as one acre fetches Rs 177 crore



HYDERABAD: Creating a new record in the real estate market in Hyderabad, an acre of government land was auctioned for a whopping Rs 177 crore.

The Telangana Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (TGIIIC) set a new record in its latest auction of 7.67 acres at Raidurg, Hyderabad Knowledge City, setting a new benchmark for land value in Telangana.

Officials said that this is the highest-ever price per acre realized in any government-led auction in the state, surpassing the earlier Neopolis, Kokapet benchmark of Rs 100.75 crore per acre for 3.60 acres achieved in auctions conducted by Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) in 2023.

The government said the

Raidurg auction drew exceptional participation from leading national and regional developers, demonstrating strong investor faith in Hyderabad's sustained growth, transparency in the auction process. This also under-

scoring a transparent and competitive bidding process that maximized value realization for the state.

"The overwhelming success of the Raidurg auction is a proud moment for Telangana. The

"The overwhelming success of the Raidurg auction is a proud moment for Telangana. The record price of Rs 177 crore per acre reflects the strong confidence that investors and developers have in Hyderabad's long-term potential"

scores the robust policy support from the government.

The auction was successfully managed by JLL India & MSTC as the auction partner, which acted as the exclusive transaction advisor to TGIIIC, en-

record price of Rs 177 crore per acre reflects the strong confidence that investors and developers have in Hyderabad's long-term potential and Telangana Rising-2047 story," said K. Shashanka, VC & Manag-

ing Director, TGIIIC.

He said it also reaffirms the State Government's vision under the leadership of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to create a transparent, business-friendly, and high-growth ecosystem. This result at Raidurg further strengthens Hyderabad's position as one of India's most attractive and competitive investment destinations, he said.

"Achieving Rs 177 crore per acre at Raidurg - nearly 75 per cent higher than the Rs 101 crore per acre benchmark at Neopolis - demonstrates Hyderabad's exceptional market strength, robust investor sentiment, and the city's evolution into a truly global business hub," said a spokesman from JLL India. *IANS*

ED seizes Rs 10.55 crore assets of Ansal Properties in money laundering case linked to pollution law violations

NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached assets worth Rs 10.55 crore belonging to Ansal Properties and Infrastructure Ltd (APIL) and its promoters in a money laundering case related to violations of environmental laws, the agency said

The attached assets include six immovable properties - commercial units and spaces located in Gurugram (Haryana), Greater Noida (Uttar Pradesh) and Ludhiana (Punjab).

These properties are held by APIL's directors, shareholders and beneficial owners, namely Sushil Ansal, Pranav Ansal and

Son HUF, and Kusum Ansal.

The enforcement action was taken under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The case stems from prosecution complaints filed by the Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB), citing non-compliance with provisions of

the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

According to the ED, it "initiated investigation on the basis of Prosecution Complaints filed by Haryana State Pollution Control Board (HSPCB) for commission of scheduled offences

U/s 43 of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and U/s 37 of Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, involving non-compliance of environmental norms by APIL in its two Gurugram-based real-estate projects- 'Sushant Lok-I' and 'Esencia'." *IANS*

How property buying decisions change after marriage or having kids?

ANURADHA RAMAMIRTHAM

Property buying is impacted by many factors and one such is the stage of life at which you are in. A property bought when you are in your twenties need not fit the lifestyle aspirations that you may have and able to achieve in your late thirties. Additionally, the kind of financial security you have built around you will influence your choice of properties. In this guide, we talk about change in property decisions seen after marriage and having kids.

How financial consideration changes?

Finance is the one factor that makes or breaks the house buying deal. Before marriage, a person may have lesser salary component but he may have a higher risk appetite and flexible budget. This changes once a person is married, where the expenses are shared. He has an option of joint loans, tax rebates etc. In this also, risks can be taken as there is a backup in the form of spouse. However, with kids, the focus shifts to stability and this in turn results in reduced risk appetite. But, the good news is that there is a growth in the career and hence one is able to take the leap of faith and make property investments that are more convenient and lifestyle oriented rather than being mere necessity.

What are the common property buying preferences before marriage?

Before marriage, the property buying preference completely depicts the individual's lifestyle and choices. Also, with an early career, property choices are mostly focused on affordable housing. The two decisive criteria around this time is proximity to work and a good social life, if the person is looking at buying a property for self-use. These are mostly studio apartments or 1 BHK or a 1RK, right at

the city center. In case the person is looking at only investment purposes, then a property on the periphery is often the choice- that also smaller units- 1 BHK or 1.5 BHK.

How marriage influences property choices?

Marriage has a strong influence on property choices because now two people are involved in making decisions that is compatible to their lifestyle and choices.

Location: With two people involved, lo-

benefits.

Configuration: A long term perspective of an expanded family is taken into consideration while buying a property after marriage. With two people and expected guests, there is an upgrade in configuration from what they would have preferred before. For instance, a person with a 1RK in urban city center may look at an upgrade of a spacious 1 BHK.

Single building vs gated community: Single building is mostly chosen over gated communities as the maintenance

reach school and are ready to take the hit on commuting.

Space: With children as part of the family, most people opt for a 2.5 BHK or a 3BHK as any space available is welcome.

Safe environment: While this comes to play after marriage itself, after children are born, safety becomes paramount.

Amenities: With respect to convenience, people opt for gated communities that have a host of child friendly amenities. Many gated communities offer convenience such as child care centers, clinic, café, etc. in the complex.

According to Murali, a resident of Nerul, "After my marriage, we shifted to a 2 BHK apartment in Kharghar that I had bought before marriage. Being a single building without amenities it helped us because the society maintenance was less- we paid around Rs 2,800 per month. After our kids were born, in their early years we stayed here because of familiarity. However, we shifted out of the complex and moved towards Nerul once the children grew up and started going to school because there school was in Nerul. We chose to move into a gated complex because of the security, cleanliness and availability of all amenities in the same complex. In our new house, which is a 3BHK, we pay Rs 18,000 per month as maintenance - which is almost six times the previous one. However, the convenience is unmatched. We have play park, swimming class, badminton class, tennis, gym, tuitions, art class etc. in the same complex which is very helpful as the children can be independent, there is no outside commute involved and we get lot of time in hand." www.housing.com



cation plays a crucial deciding factor and couples generally tend to move to a location closer to their places of work. If the financials don't set for locations closer to work place, areas that have excellent connectivity are the next choice, even if they are a little far from the place of work.

Joint financial planning: After marriage, a joint ownership of property is very common. Two people come together to buy a property by combining their incomes, managing EMI and leveraging the tax

for these buildings are far less than gated communities.

How having kids changes buying decisions?

Location: Location gets the biggest priority when buying a property after the kids are part of the family. Their convenience becomes paramount with people looking at investing houses that are near schools, huge parks etc. and are also very safe. Parents would not want children to travel long hours to

India's office leasing grows 24 pc in 2025 till date: Report

NEW DELHI: India's office market surpassed 1 billion square feet in the third quarter of 2025, and the year-to-date (YTD) volumes grew 24 percent YoY, positioning the market for an annual record, as per recent report.

Despite the market being on track for a fresh annual high, the report from real estate services firm Knight Frank noted that the leasing during the quarter primarily came from Grade A leasing, which repre-

sented 88 percent of quarterly volumes and 92 percent year-to-date, the report noted.

Bengaluru, Mumbai, and the National Capital Region accounted for half of the volumes transacted, and Bengaluru led with 4.2 million square ft in Q3 2025.

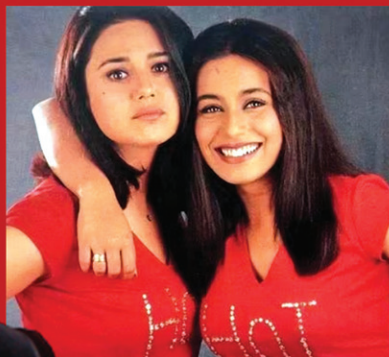
Hyderabad and Chennai contributed significantly to the volume growth during the quarter, achieving a year-over-year increase of 33 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) accounted for approximately 5.7 million sq ft of office space transactions, making up the largest share at 32 percent among all occupier segments. Bengaluru was the top choice for this segment, accounting for a massive 65 percent of the GCC-related leasing activity in Q3 2025, the report noted.

Further, rental levels in the larger office markets of Mumbai, NCR and Bengaluru grew by 11 percent, 9 percent and 6 per-

cent YoY, respectively. With global AI adoption accelerating, India's deep talent pool and cost advantages continue to strengthen its appeal as a hub for outsourced IT services, the report noted.

The Quarters to Sell (QTS) indicator has remained below 18 months in the eight key markets throughout the past year. QTS indicates the time needed to absorb current inventory based on the average sales pace of the past eight quarters. *IANS*



BOBBY DEOL ON THREE ACTRESSES HE LOVES WORKING WITH MOST

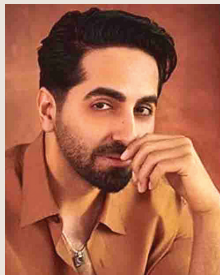
Actor Bobby Deol, who has completed three decades in the industry, has opened up about the actresses he enjoys working with the most.

In an exclusive interview with IANS, the 'Animal' actor revealed that his co-stars Preity Zinta, Rani Mukerji and Twinkle Khanna hold a special place in his heart. The actor also admitted that he is very fond of Preity, with whom he has shared screen space in films like "Soldier," "Jhoom Barabar Jhoom," and "Heroes." When asked about his favorite female co-stars, Bobby shared, "I get along with everyone it's like Preetam Singh (Preity Zinta) she is someone I am really fond of and then Rani Mukerji and Twinkle Khanna. These three are I have been more in touch with than anyone else."

Bobby has worked with Rani Mukerji in movies such as, "Bichhoo," and "Badal." Deol made his debut as a lead actor in the romantic film "Barsaat" (1995), opposite Twinkle Khanna. IANS

Ayushmann Khurrana: "It's never easy saying no"

Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana reflected on his early career days, recalling the challenges he faced while working as a young journalist.



Before rising to fame as an actor and singer, the 'Vicky Donor' actor dabbled in journalism, juggling roles in radio, television, and theatre. Speak-

ing at FICCI Frames 2025 event, Ayushmann shared that one of the toughest lessons from that phase was learning to say "no" especially at the beginning of his career. When asked if there was a defining moment in his journey - a time when saying "yes" or "no" completely changed the course of his life, Khurrana reflected on his early days as a journalist, working across radio, television, and theatre.

The 'Badhaai Ho' actor stated, "I think it is these baby steps towards success, being a journalist. I was doing journalism with radio, television, theatre. IANS



TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Saiyaara: **Saiyaara**
- 2 Barbaad: **Saiyaara**
- 3 Dhun: **Saiyaara**
- 4 Qayde Se: **Metro ... In Dino**
- 5 Zamaana Lage: **Metro ... In Dino**
- 6 Aur Mohabbat Kitni Karoon: **Metro ... In Dino**
- 7 Laal Pari: **Housefull 5**
- 8 Tum Ho Toh: **Saiyaara**
- 9 Tu Hain Toh Main Hoon: **Sky Force**
- 10 Pardesiya: **Param Sundari**

Krithi Shetty on learning belly dance for 'Abdi Abdi'

Actress Krithi Shetty, who is receiving a lot of positive response to her performance in the recently released song 'Abdi Abdi' from the upcoming film Genie, has spoken up on her experience of learning belly dance for the song.

The song also features Kalyani, and showcases both leading ladies in a never-seen-before avatar as they deliver a mesmerizing belly dance performance that's already setting social media ablaze.

Talking about the song, Krithi revealed how she had to juggle between her multiple projects to fit in some studio time to preparations for the dance. She said, "I was super thrilled when I found out about this belly dance situation in the movie because as we know, the 'Genie' is a Middle Eastern concept, a character that we've seen in the Arabian Nights. So belly dance being in the film was so accurate. And that's why it actually leads up to a situation where there's belly dance and I was personally very excited because I love dancing and this gave me a chance to go learn a new dance form".

She further mentioned, "What I came to discover is that belly dance is such a beautiful and elegant art form but it got a little tricky because I was continuously shooting for three of my Tamil films in Chennai. IANS

Govinda says he's "ALL SET FOR NEW INNING"

Bollywood actor Govinda, who ruled the roost in the 1990s, is gearing up for a fresh chapter in his career as he has said he is "all set for a new inning".

Hinting towards exciting projects on the horizon, Govinda took to Instagram, where he shared a picture of himself from a set in Film City.

In the image, the Bollywood's original entertainer, who is known for his impeccable comic timing and dance moves, is seen standing and smiling dressed in a bright yellow jacket with intricate patterns, paired with a white T-shirt, blue jeans, and brown shoes.

For the caption, Govinda, who goes by the Instagram handle "govinda_herono1" wrote: "All set for new inning".

The actor did not share any details about the project. However, as per media reports, Govinda will return with a new concept-based show titled 'Lane Den-It's All About Business'.

The 61-year-old actor started as an action and dancing hero in the 1980s, his first film was 1986's Love 86, which turned out to be a hit. He then went on to be seen in films such as Ilzaam, Marte Dam Tak, Khudgarz, Dariya Dil, Jaisi Karni Waisi Bharni, Swarg and Hum.

The actor reinvented himself as a comic hero in the 1990s with films such as Raja Babu, Coolie No. 1, Saajan Chale Sasural, Hero No. 1, Deewana Mastana, Dulhe Raja, Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, Anari No. 1, Haseena Maan Jayegi and Jodi No. 1.

The actor then faced failure in the 2000s, after which he was seen in commercial hits such as

Bhagam Bhag, Partner and Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty. In 2015, Govinda became a judge in the reality show, Dance India Dance Super Moms. *IANS*



Shriya Pilgaonkar on experience with storytelling of 'PG Mates'

Actress Shriya Pilgaonkar opened up about her experience narrating "PG Mates," highlighting how audio storytelling offers a uniquely intimate connection.

The actress shared that lending her voice to the series allowed her to engage with the story and listeners on a personal level, making the experience both special and immersive. In a statement, Shriya shared, "PG Mates captures the chaos, camaraderie, and fun of co-living in Delhi, and narrating this series was a joyous ride. Audio storytelling gives such a unique intimacy, and I loved how every emotion, every quirky moment, translates directly into the listener's imagination."

Audible and Pratilipi have unveiled two new original audio series, "PG Mates" and "Behind the College." The series feature voice talents, with Shriya Pilgaonkar lending her voice to PG Mates and Ahsaas Channa narrating Behind the College. Sharing her experience, Ahsaas Channa, stated, "Narrating 'Behind The College' was an incredible experience. The story blends suspense, humor, and the thrills of student life, and I loved bringing Sameera's journey to life through voice alone. *IANS*



Veer Pahariya, Tara Sutaria holiday in Italy

Bollywood actor Veer Pahariya and actress Tara Sutaria are currently enjoying their getaway in the city Land of Art and Romance, Italy.

Tara took to Instagram to share a series of stunning snapshots from her romantic Italian escape with beau Veer. The posts capture the couple soaking in the picturesque locales while indulging in mouthwatering delicacies like caviar, spaghetti, and clams.

Tara also treated fans to chic pictures of the duo dressed to the nines, exuding style and romance against the backdrop of Italy's scenic charm.

For the caption, Tara wrote: "Summer."

But it was Veer's playful comment for Tara that truly stole the spotlight. Veer took to the comment section and wrote: "My Taruuuu."

It was during Ganesh Chaturthi celebration, when the couple made their relationship official.

The actress in August had dropped a string of stunning photos of herself along with Veer from the Ganesh Chaturthi celebration. *IANS*



Why 9kt Gold Jewelry Is the Perfect Present for Every Occasion



NEW DELHI: Let's face it--gift shopping is a minefield. One wrong move and you're that person handing over a scented candle that screams, "I didn't try." Or worse--a fast-fashion necklace that turns green even before the birthday cake's cut.

If you want to give something that actually lasts, something with weight (literally and sentimentally), 9kt gold jewelry is your golden ticket. Not flashy, not overpriced--just affordable, stylish, real gold that lasts.

Whether you're buying for a

partner who knows their metals, a friend who deserves better than gold-plated regret, or--let's be honest--yourself, 9 karat gold jewelry makes a statement: "I care enough to not buy garbage."

And unlike those trend-chasing pieces that fall apart faster than your New Year's resolutions, 9k gold is built to last. Durable. Stylish. No-fuss. The kind of gift they'll actually wear instead of politely burying in the back of their jewelry drawer.

So, ready to give a gift that doesn't suck? Keep reading.

Why Gold? Why Now?

The answer is simple! It is because no one ever unwrapped a gold necklace and said, "Eh, I'll return it."

Gold isn't just timeless--it's strategic. While 18kt gold jewelry has luxe appeal, 9kt gold jewelry strikes the balance between real gold, affordability, and durability. It's perfect when you want genuine gold that outlasts plating without the price tag of higher karats.

You're not just giving jewelry--you're giving something with weight (figuratively and literally). Something they can wear every day without worrying it'll tarnish or snap. And when it's 9kt gold jewelry, you're giving real gold that keeps up with real life.

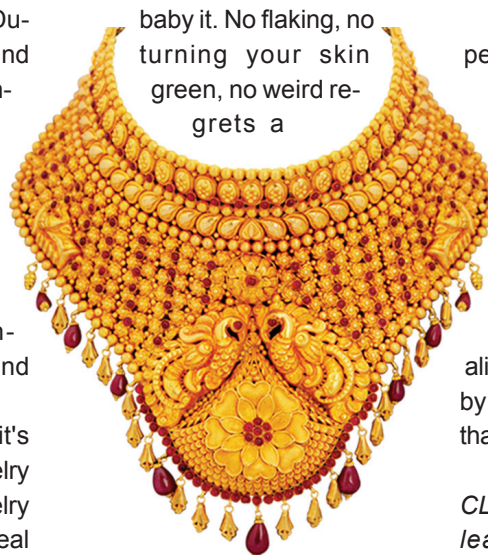
The Real-World Appeal of 9kt Gold Jewelry

Let's not sugarcoat it -- most gifts end up forgotten, returned, or re-gifted. But 9kt gold jewelry?

That's the kind of gift people actually keep and actually wear. It's not trying too hard, yet it screams good taste.

What makes 9 karat gold so perfect in real life is that it looks refined without being high-maintenance. It's gold that doesn't throw a tantrum if you forget to

baby it. No flaking, no turning your skin green, no weird regrets a



month later. Because of its higher alloy content, 9kt gold is tougher and more scratch-resistant than higher karats.

Here's why it slaps as a gift:

* 9k gold durability: Strongest

and most practical for daily wear.

* It looks luxe -- Compared to higher karats, 9kt gold is harder, resists scratches, and is ideal for jewelry you actually wear every day.

* It plays nice with everything. Dress it up, wear it with joggers - it won't look out of place.

* It's the karat level most people wear daily -- and they probably don't even know why it works so well (now you do).

If you're going back and forth on 9kt gold vs 18kt gold, ask yourself this: are you buying a showpiece or something that can survive reality? If it's the latter, 9k gold wins by a mile -- and your wallet will thank you too.

(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.)

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com



Theatre rehearsals revive cultural legacy in Kashmir; young artists take center-stage

SRINAGAR: In a bid to keep the rich legacy of theatres across the valley, rehearsals of multiple stage shows have been in full swing in Kashmir.

Known for having a rich history that spans thousands of years, theatre has been an important part of the region, both culturally and traditionally. It has not just entertained the local people for several decades, but also brought to the fore the many types of social issues.

At the time, some of the most prominent theatre groups in Kashmir have been running under the supervision of senior filmmakers, who are engaged in rehearsals of stage plays to keep the legacy alive for future

generations.

One such example is the 'Kashmir Kala Manch' - one of the oldest theatre groups in the valley that played a tremendous role in keeping the art alive, even during the most challenging situations.

As a result, the group has managed to mentor and prepare a number of young artists, aiming to offer them a platform to showcase their talent. Over the past few days, the group has been busy with specific rehearsals of different plays and engaging young artists to learn the basics of theatre, including learning the script, perfecting dialogue delivery with proper expression and timing. ANI

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Philosophy

H. W. L. POONJAJI (PAPAJI)

What is death? Fear of death? There are beings, bodies everywhere - under the water, under the ground, over the earth, in the air. They cannot be counted - billions, trillions of bodies. All have to die. And this death is after each body.

Even after this death will bring another body and then again death. That's repeated for millions and millions of years unless you remove this fear of death.

What is body? Earth, water, fire, air - that's all. This is the body and these are the elements outside also. Somehow integration has taken place of earth, water, fire, air; and then you have to disintegrate at the time of death.

So if we realize it, always understand it - "These are the elements, but I am not the elements. I am not this body. I am not perishable. I am imperishable - Brah-



H. W. L. Poonjaji (Papaji)

to search for its answer by yourself here and now. And this is going to free you.

And through yoga also you can do it. Just with the count of eight breaths - inhaling, exhaling - 8 times. How much time it takes? One minute you have 16 breaths, one minute - just half a minute and you are free. How? During these 8 inhalings or exhalings do not associate with any object and you are free.

You can do it here and now. Just for 8 counts of your inhalings, no association with any object and you are free. Freedom is here and now, always, everywhere.

You have been postponing for millions of years because of vasanas - "I want this, I want that. I am attached to this person, and that person is very much attached to me." This is all and this is called the cycle of birth and death, and this is universe, and this is bondage, suffering. And actually it doesn't exist - only

When 'I' arises the universe arises
This vasana is samsara, it is time, it is mind

man". Then perhaps you have solved this problem once and for all and you will not wear this body once again.

And how to do it? First of all, when you have found conviction of 'I' don't talk of reality. When you speak: "I am this 'I'" and this 'I' is identified with the body - don't talk of enlightenment, freedom or reality or truth or bliss or ananda whatsoever.

It's not possible. And this 'I' is universe, bondage. When 'I' arises the universe arises, the bondage arises. And when there is no 'I' - no concept of 'I' - that's called freedom.

So how to get rid of this concept of 'I'? There are various ways described in the book of knowledge, Upanishads, sutras also. So everybody says, "I am ..." everybody says, "I am so and so, you are so and so, he is so and so, and this is the world." No one ever questions, "What am I? Where do I come from? Where do I return to? What is the purpose of my coming here? What have I done?"

So this question is never asked. "Who am I?" is never asked. So you have to question, "Who am I?" And then you have

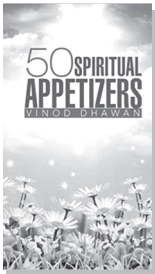
vasana.

There is no difference between vasana and samsara. Vasana is, "I want this." That's all. When you don't give rise to simply, "I want this or that." Where is samsara; where has it gone? So this vasana is samsara, and this vasana is time, this vasana is mind - which is past. Samsara is past. Mind is past. Vasana is past.

Excerpted from hinduwebsite.com. The 115th birth anniversary of H. W. L. Poonjaji (Papaji) is being observed on October 13

50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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Jac O'Keeffe

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New Delhi's Taliban Tilt: Afghan Women Bitter Over Muttaqi Visit To India

NILOVA ROY CHAUDHURY

India does not formally recognize the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. Yet, for the first time, a senior Taliban member, Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, will soon visit India as a guest of the Indian government. India even sought a special waiver for his visit from the United Nations.

Most members of the Taliban were sanctioned as terrorists by the UN Security Council. Under Security Council resolution 1988, most Taliban-linked individuals face a travel ban, asset freeze and arms embargo for whom exceptions can be granted, by consensus, by all 15 UNSC members. Pakistan, a non-permanent UNSC member, currently chairs the UN's 1988 Sanctions Committee.

While there would be several strategic reasons for India to invite Muttaqi to India, New Delhi's decision is being seen by women of Afghanistan as a betrayal. Under the Taliban's misogynist edicts, women have been deprived of most human rights, including the right to educa-

tional award for her efforts to uphold human and women's rights and keep the world informed about what was happening to her and women like her within Afghanistan. After the woman, who is part of a network of women who brought out the ZAN Times, an online newspaper seeking to highlight the problems women face just to survive under the harsh Taliban regime, was notified about the award, she looked forward to a brief reprieve from the harsh conditions of her life outside Kabul. Not only did the journalist, nurtured in the post-Taliban 1.0 era after 2001, not get a visa to come to India to receive the award, despite requests from the organization giving the awards, she found herself endangered under her government's critical scrutiny.

That India could turn down such legitimate visa requests seemed unfair and unkind to her.

"We don't want charity, we just want a chance," she said in despair to colleagues and interlocutors in India.

While there would be several strategic reasons for India to invite Muttaqi to India, New Delhi's decision is being seen by women of Afghanistan as a betrayal. Under the Taliban's misogynist edicts, women have been deprived of most human rights

Change In Indian Policy

India made no outreach to the Taliban during their first tenure between 1996 and 2001. It actively opposed that re-

gime, providing tacit support to the Northern Alliance led by Ahmed Shah Masood.

Women Find India Wanting

When Russia formally recognized the Taliban regime earlier this year, Afghan women were not so embittered as they have been by India's overtures to the fundamentalist regime. Some Afghan women who managed to flee from Kabul when the Taliban 2.0 came rampaging back to power in August 2021, were scathing in their criticism.

One woman, who lives abroad but cannot be identified for security reasons, said she was refused a visa to travel to India though her life was threatened by the Taliban. Yet the Indian government is rolling out the red carpet for a member of the regime threatening her very existence.

Another woman, who must also remain unidentified, received an interna-

gime, providing tacit support to the Northern Alliance led by Ahmed Shah Masood.

Analysts said the international community's constant scrutiny helped oust that harsh misogynist regime and helped women survive that stint of Taliban rule. This time, however, international interlocutors feel there is no credible opposition to the Taliban, which, after four years in power, is in full control, and there is no alternative power center they could threaten to support. Collective efforts have yielded no flexibility or removal of draconian restrictions on women.

Before Taliban 2.0 took power, women's economic empowerment was a national development priority, integral to Afghan growth and sustainability.

(The writer is a senior Indian journalist and analyst) South Asia Monitor

For detailed story visit
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The Third Eye: Trump's initiative in Gaza

D.C. PATHAK

US President Donald Trump seeking to be 'the peacemaker of the world', embarked on a detailed plan of resolving the conflict in Gaza in the back drop of Hamas feeling the weight of Israel's full-blown offensive backed by the US on one hand and some important European countries including France and Britain besides Canada and Australia, supporting recognition of a Palestinian state, on the other.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in keeping with India's policy of favoring peaceful resolutions of all armed conflicts of global implications, has lost no time in welcoming Trump's 20-point plan for ending the Gaza conflict, saying that it provided a 'visible pathway' for long-term peace for the Palestinian and Israeli people.

While Hamas has responded by agreeing to review Donald Trump's plan, Israeli Prime Min-

ister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that if Hamas rejected it, then 'Israel will finish the job by itself'. He claimed that he had not agreed to a Palestinian state during his talks in Washington. Netanyahu, however, told the US President that Israel supported the latter's plan to end the war in Gaza, which 'achieves our war aims'. President Trump announced in his typically hyperbolic style that 'we have one signature that we need and that signature will pay in hell if they don't sign'. Significantly, Saudi Arabia—a US ally—had been working with the UK and France to promote the idea of a two-state solution for the Palestine dispute.

While Hamas has responded by agreeing to review Donald Trump's plan, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned that if Hamas rejected it, then 'Israel will finish the job by itself'

Trump's plan calls for a ceasefire, release of hostages

by Hamas 'within 72 hours', disarmament of Hamas, grant of amnesty to Hamas elements who accepted the idea of 'peaceful coexistence' with Israel and gradual Israeli withdrawal from Gaza followed by a post-war transitional authority headed by Trump himself—thus putting the US President right at the center of implementation of a possible peace accord. It is reported that Qatar—which had hosted the Doha talks between US and Taliban for the withdrawal of American troops from Afghanistan in Biden Presidency and which has now provided a safe shelter for Hamas's exiled leadership—has indicated that Hamas would study the proposal seriously and responsibly.

Hamas is said to have already begun consultations with its political and military leaders both inside Palestine and abroad. The targeted missile attack

on Israel on October 7 in 2023 is what had triggered the retaliatory Israel Defense Forces (IDF) attack in Gaza.

Interestingly, President Donald Trump stated once again that he settled the 'very big' conflict between nuclear-armed India and Pakistan. He was addressing Generals and Admirals summoned from around the world by Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth in Quantico, the Marine Base town in Virginia. The address was designed to counter the reservations expressed in US Army circles against the deployment of Defense force for ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) work. Claiming that he had settled 'so many wars' since his becoming President of the US in January, Trump remarked that it would be an 'insult' to the US if he does not receive the Nobel Peace Prize, adding sarcastically that 'they might give it to some guy who didn't do a damn thing'.

It is significant that President Trump specifically named Pakistan President Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshall Asif Munir, Pak Army Chief among the world leaders who fully supported his plan to end the Gaza conflict. Sharif who was in New York for the high level 80th session of the UN General Assembly had met Trump, along with Munir in the White House. The Pak leaders had already gone on record to recommend President Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize for bringing about a ceasefire between India and Pakistan after the two countries had got into a military confrontation following the Pak-directed terror attack at Pahalgam.

The US President already had the backing of Israel on the Nobel Prize question. Trump took his claim for Nobel Peace Prize to the UN forum on September 25. *(The writer is a former Director Intelligence Bureau) IANS*

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ONCE BITTEN NOT TWICE SHY

The finding of Osama Bin Laden hiding in Pakistan exposed Pakistan's duplicity and its succeeding in milking millions of US taxpayers' dollars, which CIA and FBI both failed to detect. U.S. revealed significant security failures fostering a perception that Pakistan cannot be a fully trusted ally. The 'Operation Abbottabad' found Bin Laden in Abbottabad, Pakistan, revealing that the world's most wanted terrorist had been living in a compound for years without Pakistan's intelligence services (ISI) knowing of his whereabouts.

A Pakistani government investigation, leaked to Al Jazeera, concluded that Bin Laden's presence was not due to a stand-alone failure but indicative of "culpable negligence and incompetence" at various levels of government. The reality of Bin Laden hiding near major military facilities led to accusations, both within and outside Pakistan, of potential complicity or, at least a profound failure to control its territory. The incident was a significant blow to U.S.-Pakistan relations and led to decreased trust in Pakistan's security establishment's commitment to combating extremism. The event continues to fuel discussions and skepticism about the extent to which Pakistan can be relied upon to act decisively against terrorist networks operating within its borders.

In a recent meeting at the White House between US President Donald Trump, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, and Army Chief Asim Munir, has been hailed in Islamabad as long-awaited rehabilitation. For Pakistan's generals, it was rehabilitation after years of marginalization. Yet the embrace reflects America's short-term needs, not a long game plan. Washington is once again "putting lipstick on Rawalpindi's generals". Ayesha Siddiqi, Pakistan's foremost critic of praetorianism warns such gestures empower authoritarianism at home. Munir is now poised for an extension, his authority burnished.

The Saudi-Pakistan pact provides Riyadh manpower and reassures Washington. Pakistan's military, with its deep ties to Saudi Arabia, is being drawn into this equation. Islamabad has also rebranded itself as a 'resource state'. The Sharif-Munir delegation showcased mineral samples in Washington, touting a \$500-million memorandum with a US firm in rare earths. The Financial Times called it a blend of "flattery, minerals, and crypto". But Pakistan's extractive sector is plagued by opacity and elite capture. Without strong governance and transparency, foreign investment could enrich a narrow circle while doing little to stabilize the economy.

No rapprochement with Washington can be understood in isolation from Pakistan's dependence on China. For over a decade, Beijing has been Pakistan's largest financier, arms supplier and diplomatic patron, underwriting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Yet the shine of CPEC has faded. Projects have slowed, debts have mounted, and militant attacks on Chinese engineers have exposed Pakistan's fragility. Beijing has grown cautious, delaying projects and pressing for security.

History warns that US-Pakistan's embraces empower generals and weakens democracies. Tactical gains in Gaza or Afghanistan may come at the cost of entrenching military authoritarianism in Islamabad. For Washington, the challenge is to avoid mistaking short-term utility for long-term strategy. For India, the challenge is simpler: do not be distracted by the puppet show. Pakistan remains a fragile state, strategically located but perpetually unstable. It seems US has not learnt any lessons from earlier and, is not twice shy.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

VARANASI

INDIA'S SPIRITUAL CAPITAL WITH GANGA GHATS, TEMPLES, AND CENTURIES OF RITUALS

World's oldest living city, Varanasi - also known as Kashi (City of Life) and Benaras, is the spiritual capital of India. It is one of Hinduism's seven holy cities. The old city of Varanasi lies along the western banks of the Ganges, spread across a labyrinth of narrow galis. Be prepared to walk on foot and encounter some holy cows! Temples at almost every turn engulf Varanasi but the Kashi Vishwanath Temple is the most visited and the oldest of the lot. Benaras is known as the city of Lord Shiva for a reason, and rightfully so.

Varanasi is considered an auspicious place to die, as it is believed to grant moksha or liberation from the cycle of life and death. One of the city's most iconic features is the 80-ghats along the Ganges, where daily life unfolds against the backdrop of rituals, ceremonies, and spiritual practices. Dashash-

ment of lamps, fire, and chants. The boat ride along the Ganges during sunrise or sunset provides a serene and immersive experience, allowing visitors to witness the city's timeless beauty.

The narrow winding lanes of Varanasi, known as galis, house numerous shrines, shops, and eateries, creating a maze that leads to hidden gems like the historic Sarnath, where Lord Buddha gave his first sermon. The city is a kaleidoscope of colors and sounds during festivals, especially during Diwali and Holi. The vibrant ghats, adorned with thousands of diyas (lamps) during Diwali, create a mesmerizing spectacle. Varanasi's local markets, such as the Vishwanath Gali and Thatheri Bazaar, offer an array of handcrafted silk, brassware, and traditional Banarasi sarees.

The best time to visit Varanasi is during the winter months (October to March), when the weather is pleasant, and the city is vibrant with festivals and cultural events.

PLACES TO VISIT IN VARANASI

Kashi Vishwanath Temple: Situated on the western bank of holy river Ganga in Varanasi, Kashi Vishwanath Temple is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas or temples dedicated to Lord Shiva. The main deity of Kashi Vishwanath Temple is Lord Shiva, also known as Vishwanatha or Vishweshwarar meaning 'the ruler of the universe'. The city of Varanasi, the cultural capital of India, is thus known as the city of Lord Shiva. The temple has 800 kg of gold plating on its tower.

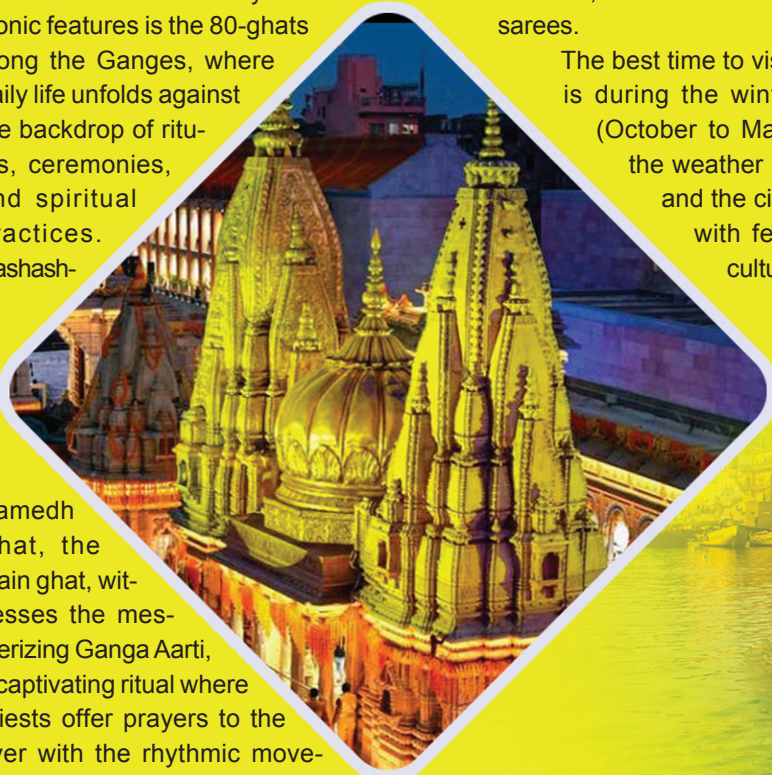
Ganga Aarti: Ganga Aarti is an important ritual held on a grand scale every morning and evening on the banks of the holy Ganges. The priests perform the Aarti at Dashashwamedh Ghat. The entire Ghat gets illuminated with a divine light that can be felt strongly. The magnificent ritual involves huge brass lamps lit with oil and the priests chant the holy mantras that reverberate in the entire location.

Assi Ghat: The Assi Ghat is placed at the confluence of the Rivers Assi and Ganga and is famous for the large Shiva Lingam installed under a peepal tree. It has immense religious importance and has been mentioned in the Puranas and various legends as well. Assi Ghat is the heart of Varanasi and the locals, as well as, the tourists flock there to enjoy the amazing view of the sunset and sunrise at the Ganges.

Boat Ride in Varanasi: A boat ride on the sacred Ganges is an integral part of the Varanasi experience, offering a surreal encounter with spirituality, rituals, and the historical charm of this ancient city. www.holidify.com

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wamedh Ghat, the main ghat, witnesses the mesmerizing Ganga Aarti, a captivating ritual where priests offer prayers to the river with the rhythmic move-



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