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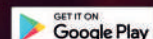
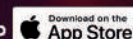
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## Bust of Mahatma Gandhi unveiled in Seattle

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## Venture fund to Indian space startups

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## When Mallika was harassed at midnight

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# CHINA BRAIN DRAIN

*The curious case of China's disappearing intellectuals*

JS SODHI

NEW DELHI: Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Communist Party has had a fraught relationship with intellectuals in the country.

While it recognizes many as valuable experts and scholars, it views them as potential threats to its authority, particularly when their views diverge from the official narrative. This ongoing tension has resulted in cycles of persecution and marginalization, leading to the disappearance of several intellectuals.

Recently, a prominent Chinese economist, Zhu Hengpeng, aged 55, reportedly vanished following his criticism of President Xi Jinping in a private WeChat group, where he is suspected of making disparaging remarks about China's economy and possibly about Xi himself. According to reports from the Wall Street Journal, Zhu was first detained by police in April and has been under investigation since then; he previously held significant positions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and had a distinguished career before his disappearance. His institution has not commented on his situation, and there has been no contact with him since his detention.

Similarly, Hu Xijin, the former Editor-In-Chief of the state-run Global Times, was also silenced after publishing an article that critiqued China's economic strategy following the recent third plenum of the Communist Party. The pattern of disappearing experts is not new in China; it reflects a long-standing strategy employed by Chinese leaders to quash dissent, even when it arises from knowledgeable intellectuals who are attuned to societal issues.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu and First Lady of Maldives, Sajidha Mohamed on their arrival at Rashtrapati Bhavan, in New Delhi. President Droupadi Murmu also present. (ANI Photo/Jitender Gupta) Details on page 10



## Ambros & Ruvkin: Nobel Prize for Medicine

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HIGHLIGHTS

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Mallika Sherawat was harassed



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Venture fund to Indian space startups



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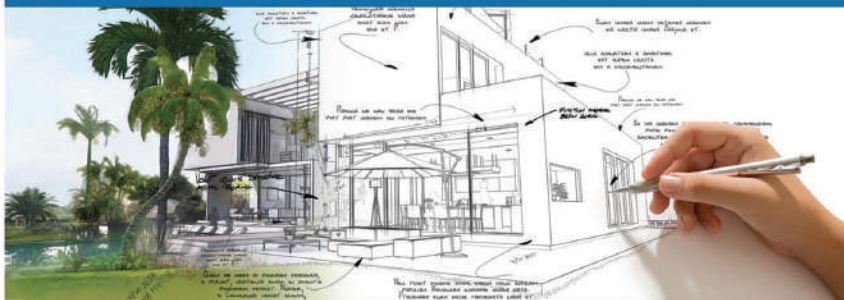


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# CHINA BRAIN DRAIN

## The curious case of China's disappearing intellectuals

JS SODHI

NEW DELHI: Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Communist Party has had a fraught relationship with intellectuals in the country.

While it recognizes many as valuable experts and scholars, it views them as potential threats to its authority, particularly when their views diverge from the official narrative. This ongoing tension has resulted in cycles of persecution and marginalization, leading to the disappearance of several intellectuals.

Recently, a prominent Chinese economist, Zhu Hengpeng, aged 55, reportedly vanished following his criticism of President Xi Jinping in a private WeChat group, where he is suspected of making disparaging remarks about China's economy and possibly about Xi himself. According to reports from the Wall Street Journal, Zhu was first detained by police in April and has been under investigation since then; he previously held significant positions at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) and had a distinguished career before his disappearance. His institution has not commented on his situation, and

there has been no contact with him since his detention.

Similarly, Hu Xijin, the former Editor-in-Chief of the state-run Global Times, was also silenced after publishing an article that critiqued China's economic strategy following the recent third plenum of the Communist Party. The pattern of disappearing experts is not new in China; it re-

From Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping, while China has undergone significant changes over the decades, the suppression of critical voices remains a consistent tool wielded by those in power.

### Mao's Reign

Mao Zedong's governance initiated a systematic campaign against intellectuals by the Communist Party, viewing them as

paigned and the Cultural Revolution. The Anti-Rightist Campaign, launched by Mao in 1957 in response to the Hundred Flowers Movement—where intellectuals were briefly permitted to express their views for party reform—saw Mao retaliate against those who exceeded his expectations for criticism by targeting individuals labelled as "rightists."

Intellectuals who dared to express dissenting opinions were accused of promoting counter-revolutionary ideas, leading to coerced self-criticism among many prominent figures, including philosopher and historian Feng Youlan. Even Ding Ling, a celebrated writer and staunch Communist Party supporter, was labelled a rightist despite her contributions to the revolution, resulting in over 20 years of imprisonment in harsh labor camps. Another significant victim was historian Wu Han, whose play 'Hai Rui Dismissed from Office' was perceived as a veiled critique of Mao, leading to his branding as a rightist; he faced imprisonment, public denunciation, and ultimately died during the Cultural Revolution.

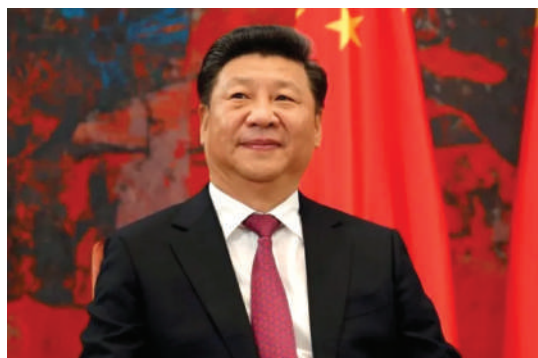
Mao's systematic persecution of these intellectuals persisted throughout his rule, establishing a precedent among Chinese leaders for eliminating opposition and dissenting voices.

Mao's systematic persecution of these intellectuals persisted throughout his rule, establishing a precedent among Chinese leaders for eliminating opposition and dissenting voices.

### Post-Mao China and Specter of Tiananmen

Following Mao Zedong's death in 1976, Deng Xiaoping introduced reform and opening-up policies that marked a significant shift in China's approach to intellectuals. As the Communist Party sought to modernize, it began rehabilitating intellectuals, recognizing their expertise as essential for development; however, the party maintained strict control over intellectual discourse, imposing severe repercussions on those who opposed its authority.

Under Deng's leadership, many intellectuals previously persecuted during Mao's era were reinstated and emerged as influential figures in society. For instance, architect Liang Sicheng, who faced a ban during the Cultural Revolution, later gained respect for his contributions to architecture in China. Similarly, Fei Xiaotong, a distinguished sociologist and anthropologist, was rehabilitated and continued to be a prominent voice in Chinese academia despite enduring years of persecution under Mao. *IANS*



Xi Jinping

*Recently, a prominent Chinese economist, Zhu Hengpeng, aged 55, reportedly vanished following his criticism of President Xi Jinping in a private WeChat group, where he is suspected of making disparaging remarks about China's economy and possibly about Xi himself*

flects a long-standing strategy employed by Chinese leaders to quash dissent, even when it arises from knowledgeable intellectuals who are attuned to societal issues.

adversaries to the revolution due to their education and independent thought, which could potentially undermine party authority. Notable campaigns of persecution during this era included the Anti-Rightist Cam-

## Nobel Prize for Medicine awarded to US scientists Victor Ambros, Gary Ruvkin

STOCKHOLM: The 2024 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine has been awarded to Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun for their discovery of microRNA, a new class of tiny RNA molecules that play a crucial role in gene regulation.

The Nobel Prize committee announced the prestigious honor in Sweden on Monday 6 October.

The Karolinska Institutet awarded the Prize to the scientists for their groundbreaking discovery in the small worm *C. elegans*, which has revealed a completely new principle of gene regulation, The Nobel Assembly said in a press release.

This turned out to be essential for multicellular organisms, including humans. MicroRNAs are proving to be fundamentally important for how organisms develop and function.

This year's medicine laureates Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun studied a relatively unassuming 1 mm long round-worm, *C. elegans*. Despite its small size, *C. elegans* possesses many specialized

cell types such as nerve and muscle cells also found in larger, more complex animals, making it a useful model for investigating how tissues develop and mature in multicellular organisms.

In 1993, this year's Nobel Prize laure-



Victor Ambros & Gary Ruvkin

ates published unexpected findings describing a new level of gene regulation, which turned out to be highly significant and conserved throughout evolution.

The information stored within our chromosomes can be likened to an instruction manual for all cells in our body. Every cell contains the same chromosomes, so every

cell contains exactly the same set of genes and exactly the same set of instructions.

This year's Laureates Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun were interested in how different cell types develop. How different cell types, such as muscle and nerve cells, have very distinct characteristics and how these differences arise?

The answer lies in gene regulation, which allows each cell to select only the relevant instructions. This ensures that only the correct set of genes is active in each cell type.

If gene regulation goes awry, it can lead to serious diseases such as cancer, diabetes, or autoimmunity. Understanding the regulation of gene activity has been an important goal for many decades, the Nobel committee said.

Incidentally, in the late 1980s, both Ambros and Ruvkun were postdoctoral fellows in the laboratory of Robert Horvitz, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in 2002, alongside Sydney Brenner and John Sulston. *ANI*



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# Maldives President Muizzu thanks PM Modi government for Rs 30 billion support, USD 400 million bilateral currency swap agreement

NEW DELHI: Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for Indian government's decision to provide support in the form of Rs 30 billion (USD 360 mn), in addition to USD 400 million bilateral currency swap agreement.

"I am thankful for the Indian Government's decision to provide support in the form of 30 billion Indian Rupees in addition to 400 million US Dollars bilateral currency swap agreement which will be instrumental in addressing the foreign exchange issues we are facing right now," Muizzu said.

PM Modi and Muizzu held bilateral and delegation-level talks at Hyderabad House in the national capital today.

Following the talks India today granted cash-strapped Maldives a USD100 million Treasury bills roll over, in addition to both sides inking a USD 400 million and Rs 3,000 crore currency swap agreement.

Describing the "development partnership" as an important pillar of New Delhi-Male ties, Prime Minister Modi asserted that India has always given preference to the priorities of the people of Maldives.

Prime Minister Modi said, "Development partnership is an important pillar of our (India-Maldives) relations. We have always given preference to the priorities of the people of Maldives. This year, SBI did a rollover of 100 million dollars of the Treasury Bench of Maldives. As per the needs of the Maldives, a 400 million dollars and

early subscribed a USD 50 mn T-bills under same mechanism, again on the request of the Government of Maldives.

In addition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Mohamed Muizzu today witnessed the first transaction of RuPay card payments launched in the Maldives today.

"First of all, I extend a hearty welcome to President Muizzu and his delegation. India and Maldives relations are centuries old. India is Maldives' nearest neighbor and close friend. Maldives holds an important position in our neighborhood policy and SAGAR vision," PM Modi said.

Muizzu arrived in India October 6, on an



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu hold delegation level talks, at Hyderabad House in New Delhi. (ANI Photo)

Rs 3000 crore currency swap agreement was also signed..."

In September, India announced that the State Bank of India would subscribe Maldivian government bonds of USD 50 million. Earlier in May 2024, SBI had simi-

The two leaders also virtually inaugurated the runway of Hanimaadhoo International Airport in the island nation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India and Maldives will be connected through UPI in times to come. "A few days back, RuPay card was launched in Maldives. In the time to come, India and Maldives will be connected through UPI," PM Modi said in a joint press statement along with President Muizzu at Hyderabad House in New Delhi today.

PM Modi further said that the island country holds an important position in India's neighborhood policy and SAGAR vision.

He underlined that India is Maldives' nearest neighbor and close friend.

inaugural five-day visit, was accorded a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhavan earlier today.

President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the Maldivian President and First Lady Sajidha Mohamed as they arrived at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Muizzu also met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in the national capital. "Jaishankar expressed his pleasure in welcoming the President to India, for the state visit.

This is Muizzu's second visit to India this year after attending the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi earlier this June. ANI

## PM Modi, Maldives President agree to work together in advancing developmental partnership

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu have announced to work together in advancing the developmental partnership, as per the needs and requirements of the island nation.

A joint statement released following the meeting between PM Modi and Muizzu read, "Taking into account the progress of ongoing developmental partnership projects, which have already brought tangible benefits to the people of Maldives, the two sides decided: To work together in advancing the developmental partnership, as per needs and requirements of Maldives, across areas, including ports, airports, housing, hospitals, roads networks, sports facilities, schools and water and sewerage.

"To provide assistance to the Maldives in addressing the housing challenges and to accelerate the ongoing social housing projects supported by India's assistance. To extend full support for the timely completion of the flagship Greater Male Connectivity Project (GMCP), and to undertake a feasibility study to connect the islands of Thilafushi and Giraavaru as an extension," it added.

India and Maldives decided to collaborate in the development of a state-of-the-art commercial port at Thilafushi Island to de-congest the Male port and provide enhanced cargo handling capacity at Thilafushi.

The two leaders also agreed to explore collaboration for the development of trans-shipment facilities and bunkering services contributing towards the Maldives Economic Gateway project at the Ihavandhippolhu and Gaadhoo islands of Maldives.

Both sides decided to jointly work in harnessing the full potential of Hanimaadhoo and Gan airports which are being developed with Indian assistance as well as other airports of Maldives. The joint statement said, "Towards this end, both sides will also consider measures to strengthen air connectivity, attract investments and collaborate for efficient management of these airports."

PM Modi and Mohamed Muizzu agreed to jointly work in establishing the "Agriculture Economic Zone" and tourism investments in Haa Dhaalu atoll and fish processing and canning facility at Haa Alifu atoll with Indian assistance. ANI

## US lawmakers arrive in Taiwan for bilateral talks amid China tensions

TAIPEI: US Representative Debbie Lesko along with fellow representatives Andy Biggs and Carol Miller arrived in Taiwan last week, for bilateral talks with government officials, Taiwan News reported.

According to Taiwan News, Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed the delegation's arrival, demonstrating the steadfast support of the US Congress for Taiwan and peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

The delegation's visit comes as Taiwan and the US seek to deepen defense cooperation to counter the Chinese threat, as per Taiwan News.

During the visit, he will meet with President Lai Ching-te and Foreign Minister Lin Chia-lung to discuss US-Taiwan relations,

the security situation in the Taiwan Strait, and economic and energy policies.

The US representative also attends the National Day celebration in Taiwan, Taiwan News reported.

According to MOFA, Lesko's previous visit to Taiwan was in the year 2016 as part of a US Southwest state legislative delegation, while the other members were visiting for the first time.

All three lawmakers have been long-time advocates of Indo-Pacific stability and Taiwan Strait security.

"Taiwan will continue to work closely with its friends in the US to deepen the bilateral partnership based on shared values and promote regional peace and prosperity," the foreign ministry said. ANI



# Chinese Embassy in Pakistan condemns "terror attack" near Karachi airport targeting its nationals

KARACHI: The Chinese Embassy in Pakistan has condemned the October 6 attack in Pakistan's port city of Karachi in which at least three people including Chinese nationals were killed.

Pakistan news outlet Geo News said that at least three foreign nationals died while 17 others sustained injuries in a huge explosion near Jinnah International Airport, Karachi last Sunday night.

The news outlet cited Zia Ul Hassan Lanjar, Home Minister for southern Sindh province, which includes Karachi, as saying that a suspected improvised explosive device (IED) had targeted a convoy of Chinese nationals outside the airport.

"Reports are suggesting that it was an IED explosion," he claimed adding that an investigation into the explosion has been launched and CCTV footage was being acquired.

The Chinese embassy in Pakistan in a statement said the attack took place at about 11 pm when "a convoy from the Port Qasim Electric Power Company was attacked by terrorists near Jinnah Interna-

tional Airport in Karachi, the capital city of the country's south Sindh province."

As per Xinhua news outlet, the banned outfit Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed responsibility for the attack through a statement on a social media platform, while the Pakistani authorities have not confirmed it.

Speaking to Geo News, Pakistan Home Minister Zia Ul Hassan Lanjar Lanjar said

act, express deep condolences to the victims of the two countries, and extend sincere condolences to the injured and their relatives," a statement by the Chinese embassy in Pakistan said.

It added that the Chinese side has been working with the Pakistani side to do their best to deal with the aftermath of the incident.

As per the statement, the Chinese mis-

*As per Xinhua news outlet, the banned outfit Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) has claimed responsibility for the attack through a statement on a social media platform, while the Pakistani authorities have not confirmed it*

an investigation into the explosion has been launched, adding that CCTV footage was being acquired. "Reports are suggesting that it was an IED explosion," he claimed.

"The Chinese Embassy and Consulate in Pakistan strongly condemn this terrorist

sions in Pakistan have launched emergency response plan immediately, requesting the Pakistani side to thoroughly investigate the attack, severely punish the perpetrators, and take all necessary measures to protect the safety of Chinese citizens, institutions and projects in Pakistan. ANI

# Sanjeev Kumar Singla appointed as India's next Ambassador to France



NEW DELHI: Diplomat Sanjeev Kumar Singla has been appointed as India's next Ambassador to France, the Ministry of External Affairs announced recently.

An Indian Foreign Service officer of batch 1997, Singla presently serves as the Ambassador of India to Israel.

"Sanjeev Kumar Singla (IFS: 1997), presently Ambassador of India to Israel, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to France," the MEA said in an official release.

He is expected to take up the assignment shortly. ANI

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## India's foreign exchange reserves cross \$700 billion for first time

NEW DELHI: Despite geo-political uncertainties, the investors' confidence remained intact in India's growth story as the country's foreign exchange reserves surpassed \$700 billion for the first time, reaching \$704.89 billion in the week ending September 27, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) data showed on 4 October.

The forex surged \$12.59 billion, which is the largest weekly rise since mid-July 2023.

With this, India joins the ranks of only three other countries - China, Japan, and Switzerland - which have crossed the \$700 billion threshold in reserves.

As per the central bank, foreign currency assets (FCAs) increased by \$10.4 billion, bringing the total to \$616 billion. Gold reserves also witnessed a rise of \$2 billion, reaching \$65.7 billion.



According to the RBI's Weekly Statistical Supplement, Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) experienced a modest increase of \$8 million, reaching \$18.547 billion. The country's reserve position in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) witnessed a slight decrease of \$71 million, settling at \$4.3 billion for the week.

Foreign inflows into the country this year have reached \$30 billion. Looking ahead, India's forex reserves are projected to grow further. India's strong forex will boost its economic growth trajectory by strengthening its position internationally, drawing in foreign investments, and promoting domestic trade and industry.

Despite global economic headwinds and deepening geopolitical uncertainties, the forex reserves are at record all-time high levels. The rupee is now the most stable currency among major economies. *IANS*

## Indian e-commerce market poised to reach \$325 billion in 2030: Report



NEW DELHI: Driven by robust rural demand, Indian e-commerce market is expected to reach \$325 billion in 2030, with a strong 21 percent compound annual growth rate (CAGR), a report said October 6.

The retail sector, which is valued at \$753 billion in FY23, is projected to post a 9.1 percent CAGR until FY27, the highest among the large economies, according to the FICCI-Deloitte report. *IANS*

## Rs 1,000 cr earmarked for venture fund to Indian space startups: Minister

NEW DELHI: The government said recently it has earmarked Rs 1,000 crore for venture fund to space startups, an indication of high priority that the government gives to the space sector.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh, said the decision was taken within first 100 days of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi 3.0 government.

"About four years back, as a revolutionary step, it was decided to open the space sector to private players. While New India Space Limited (NISL) was a new PSU established, IN-SPACE India was established as the interface with the private sector," the minister informed.

The result has been amazing in the form of the quantum jump from just one digit startup to more than 200 space sector startups

tential and are also among the first of their kind," said the minister, referring to India's first private Rocket, Vikram-S.

in the space sector which has proved to be a great boost for the new initiative and new entrepreneurs.

While the number of starUps in India has gone up from 350 in 2014 to more than 1.5 lakh, raising the country to number three in the world ecosystem, the space sector startUps have also started contributing hugely in adding values to India's future economy.

Referring to Gaganyaan, Dr Singh said they are trying to have the final test flight with the Robot Vyom Mitra before the end of this year or beginning next year, so that the first Indian human being may be sent to space through Gaganyaan during the next year. *IANS*



Dr Jitendra Singh

within a short span of time.

"Not only this, some of India's space startUps are of world po-

Dr Singh further said that there is 100 percent FDI provision allowed by the government

## At \$19 billion, India Inc sees highest quarterly deal volumes in 2 years

NEW DELHI: India Inc saw 551 deals worth \$19 billion in the July-September period, clocking highest quarterly deal volumes in two years, a report showed on October 6.

The three-month period (Q3 2024) also saw 25 initial public offerings (IPOs) valued at \$4.1 billion, according to Grant Thornton Bharat Dealtracker.

There were 214 mergers and acquisitions valued at \$11.4 billion, a 57 percent increase in volume and 65 percent in value from Q2 2024, which is a testament to India's resilience and growing confidence.

"India's deal-making environment has been on the upward trend in volumes since Q1 2023, with Q3 2024 marking its

highest, reflecting domestic market resilience, driven by domestic and cross-border transactions and breeding confidence among investors," said Shanthi Vijetha, Partner, Growth at Grant Thornton Bharat.

Additionally, the record quali-

in digital transformation, sustainability, and other key sectors," Vijetha added.

Notably, cross-border activity reached a 10-year high, with 35 outbound deals worth \$5.3 billion, led by Bharti Enterprises' \$4 billion acquisition of a 25 percent

port noted.

The private equity (PE) landscape saw 337 deals valued at \$7.6 billion, marking the highest deal volumes since Q3 2022.

The quarter saw significant activity from high-value deals, with 23 transactions exceeding \$100 million, totaling \$4.9 billion and accounting for 65 percent of overall deal values.

Early-stage funding also saw notable traction, with seed, pre-seed, and angel stages securing \$273 million across 80 deals.

Sector-wise, the telecom sector led in deal values with \$4 billion from just two deals. Retail sector led deal volumes with 112 deals worth \$1.8 billion, said the report. *IANS*

*"India's deal-making environment has been on the upward trend in volumes since Q1 2023, with Q3 2024 marking its highest, reflecting domestic market resilience"*

fied institutional placement (QIP) activity and heightened IPO listing indicates the upbeat in the Indian capital market.

"We expect this momentum to continue, fuelled by investments

stake in a British telecom group.

Domestic activity also saw a remarkable 54 percent volume increase and 24 percent value increase, achieving an all-time high in quarterly volumes, the re-



# Employment in India up 36 pc with 17 mn jobs between 2016-17 and 2022-23: Centre

NEW DELHI: Contrary to the claims of "jobless growth," the latest government data shows that employment in India increased by 36 percent (17 million jobs) between 2016-17 and 2022-23.

During the same period, the gross domestic product (GDP) grew at an average rate of over 6.5 percent.

Employment data from the Reserve Bank of India's KLEMS database, which relies on surveys like the Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) and Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS), indicates a steady rise in employment since the 1980s, according to the Ministry of Labor and Employment.

"India has witnessed significant employment growth over the years. India's economic trajectory demonstrates sustained job creation across key sectors. With a robust democracy, dynamic economy, and a culture that celebrates unity in diversity, India's journey toward becoming a global powerhouse continues

to inspire the world," said the ministry. The PLFS data from 2017 to 2023 also suggests that Worker Population Ratio (WPR) has increased by 9 percentage points



or almost 26 percent during this period. Therefore, the rhetoric of "joblessness" really does not hold water in terms of cross-comparison of databases, the min-

istry noted in a statement. Moreover, the growth has been driven by consumption, which is closely tied to employment. A rise in consumption im-

employment generation in an economy. The estimates, based on a linear econometric model, show that for the period 2017-23, there was a 1.11 percent increase in jobs for a percent increase in value added. Also, the labor-capital ratio in the economy as a whole is around 1.11 and that for the services sector is 1.17.

"Thus, the supply-side argument that services fail to generate jobs due to their low labor intensity is not corroborated by these observations-rather it is the other way around. Hence, from both the supply- and demand-side, India's economic orientation is inconsistent with any form of joblessness," the ministry emphasized.

The country's economic performance in FY 2023-24 reflects robust growth.

Real GDP has been estimated to grow by 8.2 percent in FY 2023-24 as compared to the growth rate of 7 percent in FY 2022-23.

Moreover, nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9.6 percent in FY 2023-24 over the growth rate of 14.2 percent in FY 2022-23. IANS

## India to become next chip manufacturing hub: Ashwini Vaishnaw

BENGALURU: Union Minister for Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw has said that India is moving towards becoming the next semiconductor hub for the world as big investment is happening in this sector in the country.

Minister Viashnaw referred to a recent roundtable in New York between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and top tech CEOs and said that in the discussion three top executives had said they had not seen this kind of enthusiasm for any country in the last 35 to 40 years.

The Central government has cleared five semiconductor manufacturing proposals, with a total combined investment nearing Rs 1.52 lakh crore.

The Union Minister further said Micron Technology will roll out the first made-in-India chips by early 2025. The construction work of the CG power semiconductor facility is going on. And in Tata's ATMP facility in Assam, construction work is going on very well, he said.

Earlier, the Minister said the growth of the semiconductor industry in India will further boost PM Modi's vision. Semiconductor is a foundational industry. Chips manu-

factured in the industry are used in medical instruments, mobile phones, laptops, cars, trucks, trains, televisions and practically every device.

All the initiatives taken so far, whether it is the Digital India Mission or the telecom mission, have brought technology into the hands of common citizens.

According to the reports, India's semiconductor-related market will reach 64 billion dollars in 2026, nearly triple the size in 2019. Towards achieving this goal, the 'Semicon India' initiative allows financial support for front-end fabrication units, sensors, display manufacturing, display fabs, semiconductor packaging and compound semiconductors.

As per the experts, "by expanding production capabilities, the country is poised to become a major player in the semiconductor sector. National initiatives, such as the Semicon India Program and the India Semiconductor Mission (ISM), are focused on capturing a significant share of the global market, driving innovation, and stimulating economic growth through job creation and technological advancement." IANS



Ashwini Vaishnaw

plies that employment generation is occurring, as consumption would decline if employment were predominantly in unpaid or low-wage jobs.

As per the ministry, "employment elasticity" is a rational measure for checking the causal relation between growth and

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## In Brief

### Egypt sends 22 tons of humanitarian aid to Lebanon

CAIRO: Egypt sent 22 tons of humanitarian aid to Lebanon, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry announced.

According to a statement from the ministry, an airplane carrying the aid, which included medicines and medical supplies, has landed at Beirut Airport, Xinhua news agency reported.

This initiative is in line with directives from Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi to provide support to Lebanon and its people in response to the repercussions of "Israeli aggression".



In a separate development, the ministry reported that the Egyptian embassy in Lebanon facilitated the return of 286 stranded Egyptians to Egypt on an exceptional flight operated by EgyptAir, following the suspension of most commercial airline services due to Israeli attacks.

Israel has recently intensified its airstrikes on Beirut and its suburbs, targeting Hezbollah officials and facilities, and has launched what it describes as a "limited" ground military operation into Lebanon. *IANS*

# Immigration

## POST

14 India Post

www.indiapost.com

October 11, 2024

*This new guidance builds on a previous EB-1 policy update, providing more clarity and transparency to assist petitioners in submitting*

## USCIS Issues New Guidance on EB-1 Eligibility Criteria for Individuals with Extraordinary Ability

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services is issuing policy guidance in our Policy Manual to further clarify the types of evidence that we may evaluate to determine eligibility for extraordinary ability (E11) EB-1 immigrant visa classifications.

### This policy guidance:

Confirms that we consider a person's receipt of team awards under the criterion for lesser nationally or internationally recognized prizes or awards for excellence in the field of endeavor; Clarifies that we consider past memberships under the membership criterion; Removes language suggesting published material must demonstrate the



*This policy update is effective immediately and is controlling and supersedes any related prior guidance on the topic*

value of the person's work and contributions to satisfy the pub-

lished material criterion; and Explains that while the dictio-

nary defines an "exhibition" as a public showing not limited to art, the relevant regulation expressly modifies that term with "artistic," such that we will only consider non-artistic exhibitions as part of a properly supported claim of comparable evidence.

This new guidance builds on a previous EB-1 policy update, providing more clarity and transparency to assist petitioners in submitting appropriate evidence that may establish the beneficiary's eligibility.

This policy update is effective immediately and is controlling and supersedes any related prior guidance on the topic. For more information, see the Policy Manual, Volume 6, Part F, Chapter 2. *USCIS*

## Chinese national robbed by housemaid in Pakistan's capital

ISLAMABAD: In an interesting incident, a Chinese national associated with the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was robbed of valuables and cash worth millions by a housemaid working at his residence in

Islamabad.

The housemaid, also a native of China, has disappeared in Pakistan's capital after the incident.

As per the police authorities, Xie Guangjin, a Chinese national working with the CPEC and residing in Islamabad's Sector F-8, hired a housemaid from his country for cooking and household work.

The Chinese housemaid Zhao Yougqun arrived in Islamabad about 10 days back and started residing at Guangjin's residence.

However, one Saturday, the maid left the house without any notice. Guangjin, in his statement recorded before the Margala Police Station in Islamabad, stated that he searched for his housemaid all around Islamabad but could not trace her.

Later, after getting suspicious

at the maid's sudden disappearance, he checked his belongings and found out that at least \$11,000, 12,700 Chinese Yuan and Rs 150,000, along with at least four boxes of imported Chinese cigarettes worth Rs 130,000 were missing.

Police authorities said that af-

vide the suspect's travel history.

It will be ascertained if she is still in the country or has flown out.

Hiring foreign housemaids is a common practice in Pakistan, done normally through agencies and companies who are supposed to check the credibility and

*The Chinese housemaid Zhao Yougqun arrived in Islamabad about 10 days back and started residing at Guangjin's residence*

ter filing the case, an investigation has been initiated into the incident. Assistance from the capital's Safe City Authority has been taken to trace the whereabouts of the housemaid. Police also stated that the immigration department has been approached with a request to pro-

get all the legal documentation done.

It is still unclear if Guangjin hired his housemaid through a particular agency or an individual. It will also be interesting to find out if his housemaid was issued visa on the basis of employment or some other category. *IANS*

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# UN allocates additional fund to address deteriorating situation in Lebanon

UNITED NATIONS: Given the worsening humanitarian needs in Lebanon, UN humanitarian coordinator for Lebanon Imran Riza announced an additional \$2 million from the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund to address the deteriorating situation in the country, a UN spokesman said.

The new fund, which comes alongside a previous \$10 million Central Emergency Response Fund allocated very recently, would bring the total allocation to \$12 million so far, said Stephane Dujarric, spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Friday, at a daily briefing.

Dujarric said that on the health front, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced on Friday that the first flight with WHO medical supplies, enough to treat tens of thousands of injured people, has arrived in Beirut, Lebanon. More flights are planned for Friday and in the coming days.

Meanwhile, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs remains concerned about the safety and well-being of civilians as Lebanon experiences a surge in airstrikes and displacement orders. There were new orders given by the Israelis in the south, for areas above the Litani River and areas such as El-Buss,



Stephane Dujarric

which hosts a Palestinian refugee camp, that forced families to flee from areas previously considered safer, Xinhua news agency reported.

"Civilians on both sides of the Blue Line

in Lebanon and Israel, must be allowed to live in peace and tranquillity," said the spokesperson.

Beirut residential areas were once again subjected to intense overnight Israeli

*The new fund, which comes alongside a previous \$10 million Central Emergency Response Fund allocated very recently, would bring the total allocation to \$12 million so far, said Stephane Dujarric*

airstrikes, apparently injuring rescue workers. And strikes continued unabated in other parts of Lebanon. "The toll on civilians from this campaign is unacceptable," said Dujarric.

"The Secretary-General is very concerned about the increasing toll on civilians that we are seeing across the im-

mediate region," he said, urging all parties to do whatever they can to protect civilians and infrastructure and ensure that civilians are never harmed.

He said the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) reports that within their area of operations, they still observe intense airstrikes and heavy clashes. Significant exchanges of fire are occurring in Sector West, particularly Marun ar Ras, Yaroun and Bint Jbeil and in Sector East, focusing on the Kham, Kafer Kila and El Adeisse areas.

"UNIFIL peacekeepers continue to remain in position despite the dangerous environment, while the intensity of fighting hampers their movement and ability to undertake the full range of their mandated tasks," said Dujarric.

The safety and security of UN peacekeepers "is a paramount priority and it is a shared responsibility for all parties," he said, adding that UNIFIL reiterates its call both for an immediate de-escalation and for the parties to immediately return to a cessation of hostilities and the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1701. IANS

## Australian international student visa applications plummet amid govt crackdown

CANBERRA: The number of visa applications by international students to study in Australia has fallen by half following a government crackdown to reduce the country's migrant intake.

According to Department of Education figures published by Nine Entertainment newspapers recently, there were 15,270 international student visa applications

(\$1,098.4) from July 1.

The government in August announced it would cap new international student enrolments at universities and vocational education providers at 270,000 in 2025 as part of a broader strategy to cut Australia's record-high migrant intake.

The new data revealed that visa applications from India -- the second-biggest source country for international students in Australia -- fell by 66.4 percent from a combined 13,047 in July and August 2023 to 4,383 in the same period in 2024.

Applications from the Philippines fell from 5,126 to 849 and those from Pakistan from 4,234 to 616.

Visa applications from China -- the largest source country of international students in Australia -- fell by less than 10 percent between 2023 and 2024.

The peak body for universities, Universities Australia, in August, warned that the government's proposed student cap would cost the nation's economy billions of dollars and result in thousands of job losses in the higher education industry. IANS



lodged from overseas in August, down from 30,703 in August 2023.

In July, 18,697 offshore students applied for visas to study in Australia, compared to 36,207 in the same month in 2023, Xinhua news agency reported.

It comes after the government more than doubled the application fee for international student visas from 710 Australian dollars (\$487.4) to 1,600 Australian dollars

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## Housing finance market in India expected to grow at 15-20 pc CAGR till 2030: Report

MUMBAI: Oct 7 (IANS) India's banking sector is on the cusp of rapid growth, with rising RoE (Return on Equity), robust asset quality, and key infrastructure financing opportunities in the coming decade, a report said on Monday.

Smallcase manager Omnisience Capital's report said: "The housing finance market in India has registered a growth of about 25 per cent per annum from FY22 to FY24 and is estimated to grow at 15-20 per cent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) up to 2030. Indian Banks will be playing a significant role while funding India's huge plans for infrastructure overhaul under the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) and Gati Shakti initiative."

The current P/E (price-to-earnings) levels of the Indian Banks are significantly undervalued in contrast to the expected credit and RoE growth. The robust credit growth is expected on account of India's growing GDP growth and consumption, coupled with significant asset-quality improvements and reduced NPAs, the report said.

The Indian banking industry is poised for a re-rating from current valuation levels existing in the market. *IANS*

# Real Estate POST

16 India Post

www.indiapost.com

October 11, 2024

## Maha govt abolishes NA tax payable by housing societies, commercial & industrial establishments

MUMBAI: In a major policy decision, the Maharashtra Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde recently decided to permanently scrap the non-agricultural (NA) tax payable by housing societies, industrial and commercial establishments in rapidly growing urban areas.

The Cabinet took the decision to ease the burden on the public by abolishing the NA tax on the lands on which the residential buildings and high-rise apartments are coming up in a big way. *IANS*

## India's real estate sector to become next employment generation hub: Industry

MUMBAI: The real estate sector in India is the second-largest employer after the agriculture sector and the phenomenal growth with an 18.7 percent compound annual growth rate (CAGR) makes the sector ripe to become the largest employment generating sector and a hub for young talent, industry leaders said.

The Indian real estate industry is witnessing a boom in terms of value and volume with a well-established value chain of developers in residential and commercial real estate, contractors, consultants such as architects and engineers, investors and so on.

"Further, this 'mother industry' is boosting other ancillary sectors and also, new-age PropTech startups are also booming with over Rs 40,000 crore invested in them, the real estate sector is poised to create multiple career opportunities," said Vikas Jain, President-Elect,



NAREDCO Maharashtra Next-Gen.

Speaking at a seminar here, Rajesh Doshi, Secretary, NAREDCO Maharashtra, said this sector is not limited to engineers or architects anymore.

"Real estate is for smart, driven individuals who can turn possibilities into opportunities. With the integration of tech, big data, and 3D modelling, there is

a rising demand for skilled professionals like data scientists to forecast industry trends and dynamics," Doshi added.

A recent report said that future outlook for the real estate market remains in the optimistic territory in India.

The Knight Frank-NAREDCO report cited that the 'Current Sentiment Index Score' has moderated to 65 from its all-time

high in Q1 2024, indicating a measured outlook among stakeholders. Future sentiment score for this period also recorded a recalibration in Q2 2024 and was recorded at 65.

The 'Future Sentiment Index' has adjusted from 73 in Q1 2024 to 65 in Q2 2024, reflecting a positive yet more conservative outlook for the near term. *IANS*

## Indian specialists to solidify workforce on Russian construction sites

MOSCOW: The National Association of Builders (NOSTROY), Russia's largest association of self-regulatory organizations in the construction sector, is set to expand its workforce on various construction sites in the country by attracting qualified specialists from India.

The initiative, as outlined by NOSTROY President Anton Glushkov, aims at enhancing the quality and expertise of the labor force in the Russian construction industry.

"We are actively working on developing partnerships with India, a country that offers immense potential in the skilled

labor market. We are not interested in merely increasing numbers with general laborers, but rather focusing on professionals with verified qualifications," Glushkov remarked at an international construction forum held in Yekaterinburg.

This comes as part of a broader project where the qualifications of foreign workers, particularly from India and Uzbekistan, are certified by Russian authorities. Under the scheme, workers enter the industry with verified diplomas, ensuring they meet the required standards for Russian construction projects.

NOSTROY also plans to act

as a guarantor for foreign workers, overseeing crucial aspects such as their housing, transportation, and ensuring timely payments. In return, foreign institutions will be responsible for maintaining the quality of training provided to their workers.

At present, nearly 80 percent

of the foreign workforce on Russian construction sites consists of unqualified laborers. NOSTROY's goal is to significantly reduce this figure, limiting the use of unqualified workers to no more than 20 percent of the total workforce.

According to Marat Khusnullin,

the Russian Deputy Prime Minister for Construction and Regional Development, this shift aims to address the ongoing labor shortage in the Russian construction sector, which currently lacks 200,000 workers.

In response to this shortage, Russia is also investing in the establishment of training centers for the education and re-training of construction professionals.

Experts believe that these efforts reflect the country's long-term strategy to build a more skilled workforce, ensuring the successful completion of large-scale infrastructure projects. *IANS*





# Unique metallic wallpaper ideas for home decor

RIDDHI CHATTERJI

**P**erigold When it comes to accent designs, metallics are something that will never go out of style. Their shiny and reflective qualities make them ideal for adding visual interest to spaces, to mention nothing of their versatility and ability to cohesively integrate into various decor aesthetics. While you can easily incorporate metallics into your home decor in the form of furniture, lighting fixtures or other decor pieces, there is a luxu-



rious quality about a metallic accent wall. There are various kinds of wallpapers available to achieve this effect. In this article, we will explore some metallic wallpaper ideas you can seek inspiration from to amp your space.

### Brushed gold stripes

A wallpaper featuring wide, irregularly brushed gold stripes catches light beautifully, and the effect can be enhanced by setting it against a navy backdrop. This striking

contrast makes it perfect for use on a dining room accent wall. The gold adds a touch of luxury while the rich jewel tone backdrop keeps the design grounded and sophisticated.

### Silver leaf botanical

Intricate silver leaf designs layered over a soft, muted background, preferably in a shade of green, can evoke a soothing feel. Even better if the leaves have a slightly raised texture, thereby adding to the depth. The refreshing and organic feel of this wallpaper that evokes a serene garden atmosphere makes it ideal for bedrooms and sunrooms.

### Copper geometric diamonds

Think a striking wallpaper with bold, copper diamond shapes arranged in a rhythmic pattern on a dark base like charcoal. By shimmering on contact with light, the copper accents make a perfect addition to a modern living room or office space. The stylish focal point this design creates invites conversation and admiration.

### Champagne metallic damask

An elegant damask pattern in a soft champagne metallic hue is both appealing and sophisticated. The intricately detailed design with subtle variations in tone can catch the light admirably. Oozing a classy timelessness, this design is perfect for a formal dining area or an entryway to enhance the classic elegance of your decor.

### Rose gold Art Deco fan

This design involves a luxurious wallpaper featuring a



bold, fan-shaped Art Deco pattern in a rose gold hue set against a deep emerald green background. The vintage glamour it brings makes it ideal for a chic lounge or bar area, creating a sense of opulence and warmth that draws people in.

For detailed story visit [www.indiapost.com](http://www.indiapost.com)

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## Fear about eggs spiking cholesterol levels 'unwarranted'

NEW DELHI: Consuming an egg every day is safe and good for your heart, and it will not increase your blood cholesterol levels, said experts; noting that the fear is unwarranted.

Given the rise in cholesterol and poor heart health, the number of eggs a person can consume per day has been long debated.

Dr. Rajeev Jayadevan, Kerala State IMA Research Cell Chairman told IANS that eggs are an important source of all-round nutrition.

"Eggs are perhaps the best source of protein in the world, it also contains other nutrients, including vitamins and minerals. Importantly, they are easily available and relatively economical.

"There is a lot of unnecessary anxiety about the consumption of eggs, to the extent that people are fearful of consuming it. This is unwarranted because various studies have shown that increasing the number of eggs taken daily, does not necessarily lead to a rise in blood cholesterol," said Jayadevan, also a gastroenterologist.

He explained that the cholesterol circulating in the blood is primarily made in the liver in response to the body's various nutritional and metabolic requirements.

It is not significantly impacted by the amount of cholesterol consumed in our diet, for instance, by consuming eggs.

"Unfortunately, people believe that cholesterol in blood is directly linked with cholesterol in the diet," Jayadevan said.

While high cholesterol levels are to be avoided, specifically, especially high LDL levels (bad cholesterol), it is important to consider all the risk factors while assessing the risk for cardiovascular disease.

"These risk factors include cigarette smoking, alcohol use, family history of heart disease, obesity, sedentary life, lack of exercise, diabetes, and hypertension. Elevated LDL and decreased HDL (good cholesterol)," the expert said. *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)*

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www.indiapost.com

October 11, 2024

## Cut down sedentary time, do walk, brisk exercise to prevent back pain: Study

NEW DELHI: Facing severe back pain? A new study suggests reducing daily sitting time and walking or doing some brisk exercises to prevent back pain from worsening.

Back pain is very common and common reasons include muscle strain, disk damage, and some health conditions, such as scoliosis and osteoporosis.

Doctoral Researcher and Physiotherapist Jooa Norha from the University of Turku in Finland said that people concerned about back health, must "reduce sitting at work or during leisure time"

To understand the link between activity and back pain as well as the mechanisms related to back pain, the researchers included 64 adults with overweight or obesity and metabolic syn-

drome.

The participants reduced their sitting by 40 minute per day, on average, during the six-month study.

The study did not, however, find a link between "the fattiness or glucose metabolism of the back muscles".

Further, the researchers said

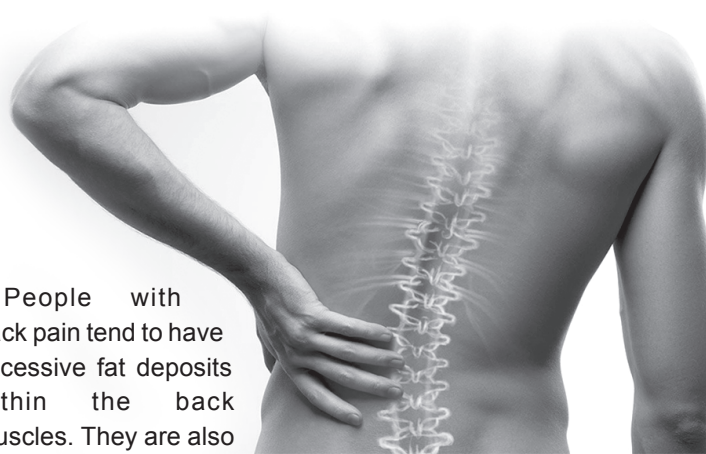
back pain but also for cardiovascular disease.

Just standing up also may not help, instead "walking or more brisk exercise" may be more beneficial", Norha said.

The researchers also said that switching between postures is more important than only looking for the perfect posture.

According to recent analysis published in the journal *Lancet Rheumatology*, more than 800 million people will suffer from lower back pain by 2050, a 36 percent increase from 2020.

The study showed that since 2017, the number of low back pain cases has ticked over to more than half a billion people. In 2020, there were approximately 619 million cases of back pain. *IANS*



People with back pain tend to have excessive fat deposits within the back muscles. They are also likely to have impaired glucose metabolism, or insulin sensitivity, which can predispose them to pain.

that being overweight or obese and having metabolic syndrome not only increases the risk for

## Bringing safety standards crucial for hyperbaric medicine therapy, say experts

NEW DELHI: Bringing safety standards are crucial for hyperbaric medicine therapy, said experts, even as an Uttar Pradesh couple duped dozens of elderly people for the therapy.

The Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) involves breathing pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber. This increased oxygen pressure allows more oxygen to dissolve in the blood and reach tissues that may be deprived of it.

The popular therapy has been used worldwide to boost healing and reduce infection, to repair damaged tissues, carbon monoxide poisoning, diabetic foot ulcers, and wounds that won't heal. It reportedly is

also used for autism, cerebral palsy, and multiple sclerosis.

"When you give oxygen under an additional pressure, it can deliver a significant amount of oxygen to the tissue, in addition to

Prof. (Dr.) Tarun Kumar Sahni, Head of Hyperbaric Medicine & Sr. Consultant Internal Medicine, Apollo Hospital, told IANS.

"It is known to have a lot of positive effects and is well-used

In the last few years, there has been a rapid growth in the usage of the therapy, with many celebrities like pop singer Justin Bieber promoting it for reversing aging.

Closer home, actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu recently in an Instagram post spoke about receiving hyperbaric therapy for her autoimmune condition.

The actor has been diagnosed with myositis -- a condition that can cause muscles to become weak, tired, and painful.

While the therapy has shown promise, it also comes with serious side effects, and may not be safe for all. *IANS*

*The Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) involves breathing pure oxygen in a pressurized chamber. This increased oxygen pressure allows more oxygen to dissolve in the blood and reach tissues that may be deprived of it*

the normal oxygen which is carried in the blood. This additional oxygen is carried in the plasma part of the blood and as it reaches different parts of the tissues,"

for non-healing wounds, diabetic gangrene, radiation tissue damage, acute hearing loss, sudden vision loss, and a large number of other conditions," he added.



# Unable to sleep properly? Blame PFAs in your blood

NEW DELHI: High levels of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) also known as "forever chemicals" in your blood can make it difficult for you to sleep properly, which can act as a precursor to several diseases, finds a study.

Previous studies have shown that the "forever chemicals" have contaminated water, food, and people through products such as Teflon pans, waterproof clothing, stain-resistant carpets and fabrics, and food packaging. Studies have also shown their role in cancers of the breast, ovary, skin, and uterus in women, among other diseases.

The new research led by the University of South California (USC) linked higher levels of four specific types of PFAs in the blood with disruptions to a fundamental pillar of health -- sleep.

PFAS enter the body through contact with consumer items and are even ingested with food and water. They don't break down easily and can persist in the environment for decades.

Sleep is an essential component of good health. A person must sleep 7-8 hours of sleep daily. Prolonged poor

sleep may raise chronic health issues, including diabetes and Alzheimer's disease.

In the study, published in the journal Environmental Advances, the team collected blood samples and information about sleep from 144 participants, ages 19 to 24.

*The new research led by the University of South California (USC) linked higher levels of four specific types of PFAs in the blood with disruptions to a fundamental pillar of health -- sleep*

Out of seven types of PFAS examined, four were significantly associated with less sleep or worse quality of sleep -- PFDA, PFHxS, PFOA, and PFOS.

The young adults with higher levels of these toxic chemicals in the blood had 80 fewer minutes of sleep at night. They also had trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, waking up, or feeling tired during waking hours.

All four forever chemicals -- some of which are associated with cancer and neurological disorders from ADHD to Alzheimer's disease -- are considered "legacy PFAS."

In the study, the team also looked at the overlap between genes affected by the four forever chemicals and genes related to sleep disorders.

Out of 600-plus candidate genes, seven activated by PFAS seemed to influence sleep. *JANS*

## Researchers shed more light on breast cancer treatment

MUNCHEN: Researchers at LMU have successfully tested a novel medication that can greatly prolong the lives of patients with breast cancer.

Brain metastases are frequently observed in patients with advanced HER2-positive breast cancer. Patients who experience this have little likelihood of surviving the following few years while receiving current treatments like radiotherapy and surgery. A new medication has now been examined in a clinical study by an international team of researchers co-led by Professor Nadia Harbeck, Director of the Breast Center at LMU University Hospital.

"With great results," reports the oncologist. According to the findings to date, survival times increase substantially. The results of the trial have been published in the journal Nature Medicine.

Modern medicine divides breast cancer into different types according to tumorbiological characteristics. 50% of patients with advanced breast cancer and the tissue marker HER2 will suffer from brain metastases, which it has not been possible to treat successfully with drugs before now, as the blood-brain barrier often prevents active substances from penetrating into the brain. New drugs are therefore urgently required. *ANI*

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## The Dangers of Project 2025 - Who's At Risk?

VIDYA SETHURAMAN  
India Post News Service

In 2022, the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, released Project 2025. It aims to promote extreme policies, reshape the United States Federal Government, and consolidate executive power over the presidency if its preferred candidate wins the election. Experts describe Project 2025 as an ideological agenda designed to push the U.S. toward autocracy. Legal experts warn that it would erode the rule of law, weaken the separation of powers, blur the lines between church and state, and threaten civil liberties.

Details on page 22

## SALA 2024: An Immersion into All Things Art!

ARCHANA ASTHANA

When you first walked into the space reserved for SALA 2024 on the Stanford campus last weekend, you were immediately surrounded by an array of art on display...on the lawn, in the meeting space, and in a separate gallery. It was a visually stirring environment, and the excitement was palpable as authors chatted with readers, old friends caught up and others made new friends while being entertained by live performances during the break.

Details on page 23

## MMNA Sakhis observe tradition honoring ancestors

India Post News Service

MILPITAS, CA: On the occasion of Pitru Paksha, a time dedicated to honoring our ancestors, MMNA - SV Sakhis (Maheshwari Mahasabha of North America) organized a heartwarming Gau Seva event titled "TANN MANN DHANN" on Saturday, September 28, 2024.

Details on page 25

# COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

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October 11, 2024



## Bust of Mahatma Gandhi unveiled in Seattle; 2nd October declared Mahatma Gandhi Day



SEATTLE: In a unique addition to the city of Seattle landscape, a bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled today at the iconic Seattle Center, just below the base of the Space Needle and adjacent to the Chihuly Garden and Glass Museum. The unveiling marks the first installation of Gandhi's bust in a city known for its vibrant cultural landscape.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by notable dignitaries including Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell, Congressman Adam Smith, Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal, Lt. Gen. Xavier Brunson, Commander of the US First Corps in Pacific Northwest and Mr. Eddie Rye, Chair of the Martin Luther King- Gandhi Initiative

along with the Consul General of India, Prakash Gupta. It was also attended by eminent members of the Indian American community



who offered their respects on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.

October 2nd, which is Gandhi ji's birthday, is also recognized as the International Day of Non-Violence by the United Nations.



All dignitaries who spoke at the Gandhi Jayanti ceremony underscored the values of Ahimsa (Non-Violence), Satyagraha

an appropriate venue for locating the bust of Mahatma Gandhi and the iconic location of Seattle Center, which draws more than 12 million visitors each year, was considered appropriate, given its location, accessibility and commitment to promoting the values of peace and non-violence.

To mark the occasion, Governor of the State of Washington, Mr. Jay Inslee issued an official proclamation acknowledging Gandhi ji's Bust as a lasting tribute to Gandhi's teachings and a powerful reminder of the impact of non-violence in driving change. Another special proclamation was also issued by the King County designating 2nd October as the Mahatma Gandhi Day across all 73 cities of the Greater Seattle area.

It may be recalled that the first Indian Consulate in Seattle commenced its operations in November 2023 with a consular jurisdiction in US Pacific Northwest covering the nine states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Alaska. The installation of the Mahatma Gandhi bust in Seattle (Washington), is one in a series of such initiatives that is gradually being implemented across its consular jurisdiction.









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# The Dangers of Project 2025 - Who's At Risk?

VIDYA SETHURAMAN  
India Post News Service

In 2022, the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank, released Project 2025. It aims to promote extreme policies, reshape the United States Federal Government, and consolidate executive power over the presidency if its preferred candidate wins the election. Experts describe Project 2025 as an ideological agenda designed to push the U.S. toward autocracy. Legal experts warn that it would erode the rule of law, weaken the separation of powers, blur the lines between church and state, and threaten civil liberties.

Experts warn that Plan 2025 could also have far-reaching negative impacts on key areas such as climate policy and health care reform. The reductions in the size of the federal government mentioned in the project may significantly reduce funding for

environmental protection and public health programs, further exacerbating the plight of vulnerable groups.

Manjusha (Manju) P. Kulkarni, Esq, Executive Director, AAPI Equity Alliance criticized Plan 2025, calling it "the most de-

groups in the Asian community. "These policies not only put immigrant families at risk, they also undermine the culture of community trust and diversity we have spent decades building," Kulkarni said.

Sulma Arias, Executive Director,

immigrant groups in particular will bear the brunt of the impact.

Yvonne Gutierrez, Chief Strategy Officer, Reproductive Freedom for All pointed out that if the social conservative policies in the "2025 Plan" are implemented, they may further weaken women's abortion rights and reproductive choices. "We've already seen a trend of reproductive rights under attack in multiple states, and this plan will only exacerbate that oppression and completely destroy women's control over their own bodies."

Although Plan 2025 is still in the proposal stage, multiple community and civil rights organizations have launched protests across the country, calling on the public to remain vigilant and participate in policy discussions. Advocates hope to prevent this radical plan from being implemented by raising public awareness.

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structive approach to immigrant family rights ever". She pointed out that the planned enhanced border management and enforcement measures may cause millions of undocumented immigrants to face deportation, especially vulnerable

People's Action Institute and People's Action emphasized in its latest report that if the project is implemented as planned, social equality and fairness will face a huge test. The report points out that low-income communities, people of color and

# Mata Ka Jagaran at Shivalaya Temple of Greater Boston

India Post News Service

Shivalaya Temple of Greater Boston, MA organized "Mata Ka Jagaran", the nocturnal worship of

the Mother Goddess on Friday, October 4, 2024 evening as a part of Navaratri celebrations. Large number of devotees with many young kids in their colorful tradi-

tional dresses participated in the Jagran with great enthusiasm and joy.

The program started in the evening with meet and greet session. Devotes were served with hot tea, biscuits, and Jeelebi. Ma Durga Puja and Archana by the sponsor family members followed this. Ma Durga in her motherly figure was looking beautiful sitting on a lion with various weapons in her hands. All the devotees bowed in front of the mother of the universe who is behind creation, preservation and destruction of the world.

Usha Kamal Ji and group turned Mata Ka Jagaran into an enchanting affair with

great musical accompanists made it a night to remember.

Vikas Sethi expressed his enthusiasm for this spectacular event and said that the massive gathering we witnessed today was an example of our vibrant traditions and values. Temple president, Vijay Sethi expressed his appreciation for the dedicated efforts of the organizing team, volunteers, sponsors, and participants who played a pivotal role in making this event a resounding success.

The program was concluded by performing Maha Mangalarati of Ma Durga and all other deities of the temple. A

*The program started in the evening with meet and greet session. Devotes were served with hot tea, biscuits, and Jeelebi. Ma Durga Puja and Archana by the sponsor family members followed this. Ma Durga in her motherly figure was looking beautiful sitting on a lion with various weapons in her hands*

their spectacular performance. The event witnessed a grand success with the soul-stirring rendition of present-day devotional Bhajans. Usha Ji who is known for her powerful and tuneful vocals took the center stage at the Mata Ki Chowki event, leaving the audiences in admiration. Her mesmerizing singing of traditional devotional songs in contemporary tunes, created a profound connection with the spirituality of the event. The attendees were absorbed in her soulful singing and the

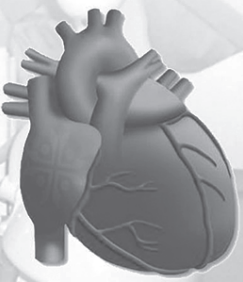
sumptuous Maha Prasad was served to all the fasting and non-fasting devotees.


Vinod Chawla said that Mata Ki Chowki event was a definite success and left us with a surreal and memorable experience. Usha Ji's soulful melodies, coupled with the mesmerizing music truly encapsulated the spirit of the event. Her sing-along songs with repetitive choruses and melodies further added to the charm and grandeur of the evening.

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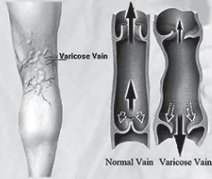


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# SALA 2024: An Immersion into All Things Art!

ARCHANA ASTHANA

Picture courtesy: Art Forum SF

When you first walked into the space reserved for SALA 2024 on the Stanford campus last weekend, you were immediately surrounded by an array of art on display...on the lawn, in the meeting space, and in a separate gallery. It was a visually stirring environment, and the excitement was palpable as authors chatted with readers, old friends caught up and others made new friends while being entertained by live performances during the break.

Art Forum SF in collaboration with Stanford Center for South Asia showcased a plethora of events, themed "Plurality in Community" spanning not only art and literature, but also cinema, poetry, mindfulness, food and the environment at its fifth presentation of South Asian Literature and Art Festival (SALA). Speakers, writers, poets, musicians, filmmakers, chefs, novelists and other creative beings of stature assembled to provide a collection of panels, workshops, keynotes, lectures and talks with riveting Q and A sessions following.

There was room for plenty of laughs as well with some very "tongue in cheek" commentary, and a session dedicated to finding humor in art, sometimes in self-deprecating ways and being able to laugh at oneself.

The Sri Lankan panel was the most refreshing, as several attendees commented on not having read these authors before, but got a copy of their signed books as their next read, to discover the island which was not just about conflict, cricket and cooking, but so much more.

A session combining a real life police officer (Manjari Jaruhar from Bihar) with a writer who skirts danger with law and order in his writing (Vikram Chandra) highlighted the synergies between the real and fictional world.

Another interesting inclusion was a panel with ground-breaking epicurean artists who are redefining Indian cuisine as never before, giving Indians a modern "foodie" vocabulary and bridge between "ghar ka khana" (home cooked food) and fine dining; balancing tradition with a modern palate.



Salima Hashmi was a big draw as she discussed Pakistani art in the past and current context, highlighting how the women played a role being vocal behind their shroud, and whose silent rebellion via art was deafening, to protest the mistreatment of their tribe. A lot of the creative works revealed that times of turmoil bring the artists together in this form of protest, sometimes using creativity in a very unique way.

The ecological preservation of green



spaces in India reemphasized that "given time, everything can heal"; however, an interactive session over a lecture would have been more engaging. The healing concept was extended to the mind, in a session with mental health experts sharing their own stories, encouraging acceptance and seeking solutions for the emotions and feelings that consume one beyond a point of control.

when keynote speakers, filmmaker Imtiaz Ali, and multifaceted Dr. Shashi Tharoor took the stage, enthralled and engaged the audience with their insights, experiences and ideas about their craft.

Attendees came away awed, amused, inspired, curious and buoyed by the presenters. We expect SALA, with Kiran Malhotra, the primary curator, and her team to return next year to continue to satiate the inquiring minds.

Standing room only-crowds were found





# Indo American Democratic Organization banquet

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Nearly 200 elected officials and Menderes gathered at IADO (Indo American Democratic Organization) banquet here last week.

As one of the oldest South Asian American political advocacy organizations in the nation, IADO is dedicated to mobilizing Indian communities to actively participate in the political process.

It is committed to recruiting and supporting candidates who align with community values and advocating for issues that support working and immigrant families.

Indian voice, as one of the fastest-growing communities in Chicago and Illinois, is well appreciated. By investing in



Lifetime Achievement Award: Community Leader Mridu Sekhar, PhD



IADO Board President Kevin Olickal and the IADO Board of Directors

IADO, one is directly supporting its efforts to build a more inclusive, equitable, body

Ensuring its voice resonates powerfully this November, with Kamala Harris and Tim Walz in the White House, let all come

together as a community: register to vote, volunteer, and make voices heard at the polls this November 5, 2024!

Following awards will be given to selected awardees:

## Dan Rocha for City Council



India Post News Service

Dan Rocha, a lifelong Artesia resident and dedicated community leader, is running for Artesia City Council with a clear mission: to enhance public safety, encourage smart development, and ensure every resident feels heard and valued.

Having spent most of his 37 years in Artesia, Rocha is deeply connected to the city. "Artesia isn't just where I live-it's where I grew up, went to school, and built my life," Rocha said. As a City Commissioner, Rocha has worked closely with residents and businesses, advocating for balanced growth while keeping the community's unique character intact.

Rocha's campaign is centered on the idea that all neighborhoods, including the vital Little India district on Pioneer Blvd, deserve equal attention and development. Rocha regularly attends cultural festivals like Holi and enjoys frequenting the vibrant Indian eateries that define Artesia's iden-



Dan Rocha

tity. "The Indian community plays an essential role in making Artesia the diverse and thriving city it is today. I'm proud to stand with them in fostering continued growth and prosperity," said Rocha.

A strong advocate for public safety, Rocha believes every neighborhood should benefit from faster response times and more consistent law enforcement presence. He is also committed to exploring alternative ways to raise finances for the city, ensuring no unnecessary tax burdens are placed on residents.

Dan Rocha is not just a candidate-he is a community member who has stood side by side with residents during food giveaways, cultural events, and public safety discussions. Rocha's track record of leadership and his commitment to serving all Artesians make him the right choice for City Council.

Vote Dan Rocha on November 5th for a safer, stronger, and more united Artesia.



Honorary Membership Award: Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul

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# MMNA Sakhis observe tradition-honoring ancestors



India Post News Service

MILPITAS, CA: On the occasion of Pitru Paksha, a time dedicated to honoring our ancestors, MMNA - SV Sakhis (Maheshwari Mahasabha of North America) organized a heartwarming Gau Seva event titled "TANN MANN DHANN" on Saturday, September 28, 2024. Many Sakhis had a beautiful and fulfilling experience at the Shri Krishna Balram Goshala, home to Gir cows from Kathiawar, Gujarat. These sacred cows,

linked to both Devi Radha and Bhagwan Krishna, hold a special place in our hearts and traditions.

The Gau Seva encompassed three key aspects:

TANN: Participants engaged in feeding, massaging, cleaning, watering, Kandaa making (from gobar) and caring for the Gir cows, ensuring their well-being.

MANN: The spirit of service flourished through the singing of hymns and

bhajans, creating a joyful atmosphere.

DHANN: Funds were raised to support the construction of new shelters for the Gir cows, enhancing their living conditions.

Over 50 Sakhis and children participated, organized into three groups- Barsana, Gokul, and Vrindavan. Special thanks to the volunteer leads: Kavita Malani & Surbhi Agiwal, Shruti Soni & Megha Maheswari, and Alka Periwal & Puja Kasat, who guided the groups and

made the event memorable.

The day concluded with Raas and the chanting of "Hare Rama, Hare Krishna" and the enjoyment of light snacks served too by adhoc volunteers Sandhya Periwal and Santosh Baldi. Kudos to chapter leads Shailja Maroo and SandhyaRani Lahoti Bagdi for their excellent organization and execution of the event. It was truly a collaborative and enriching experience for all involved!

Go Sakhis, Go MMNA

## Legends beat See Red in 25th Annual Indo-American Youth Basketball Championship tournament

CHICAGO: The Indo-American Christian Children of Chicago and North America (ICCCNA) successfully conducted its 25th Anniversary Annual Youth Basketball Championship Tournament at Olympia Park District, Chicago-Illinois.

Rev. Timothy Rathod, Former Pastor of Emmanuel Methodist Church of Evanston, Illinois performed opening ceremony prayer and blessed the players of the tournament. The Tournament was concluded with a prayer by Mr. Edward Maddela.

This year Indo-American Youth Basketball Championship Tournament crosses the milestone and made history by our youth of Indian Basketball Players by coming together and playing basketball together year after year for last twenty-five (25) years to promote friendship and spirit of sportsmanship among our Indian Community of Greater Chicagoland.

The Indo-American Youth Basketball Championship Tournament was founded by Dr. Regi Paul in year 1999 and continues even today by promoting many successful Community Awareness Campaigns for teenagers like "Don't Drink and Drive", "Don't Text and Drive", "Distracted

Driving", "Autism Awareness" and "Cancer Prevention Awareness". Many motivational speakers and Sport personalities like Attorney Joel founder of Distracted Driving Awareness, Attorney Mrs. Esther Kuchipudi of "Autism Awareness Campaign", Chicago Marathon Champions

Mr. Arun Polepaka, who was declared 100th Player of Cricket in State of Illinois also gave a motivating speech and urge all the young children to start playing Cricket in American Neighborhoods.

This year the Youth Basketball Championship Tournament attracted many bas-

ship, displayed spectacular individual skills and scored dazzling accurate long three pointers that thrilled the spectators. All the Teams were trained well and showed their outstanding defensive and offensive tactical moves with extraordinary basketball control.

In the Final Championship Game, the Legends beat See Red by a final score of 71-51. The team captains for Legends were Japheth Bandi and Noel Kadamandala. The captains for "See Red Team" were Aaron Sarikonda and Cecil Maddela. The Third placed "City Boys" captains were Jose Orozco and Ramiro Roma.

Jared Bandi was declared the Most valuable Player (MVP) who scores 32 points and 12 rebounds.

To mark the 25th Anniversary a special three (3) point Shooting Championship for men and women were conducted. The Three pointer Championship was won by Japheth Bandi who scored 16 points out of 20 points and Nathan Maddela was runner up with scores of 13 out of 20 points.



Nutan Siony and Kethaki Paul, Mr. Anthony Gill from NBC Sports of Chicago all gave a motivational speech and advised the players to have, mission and focus on success to reach higher goals in their lives.

ketball players across the State of Illinois. The teams participated in a series of games to determine the final Championship Team. Players showed amazing fierce team competitive spirit, sportsman-

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# Monthi Festh (Nativity Feast) Celebration 2024 @ Holy Trinity Church Hall, Regina Saskatchewan Canada

India Post News Service

REGINA: The Konkani Kutam Regina Association (KKR) celebrated its 2nd annual Monthi Festh celebration at Holy Trinity Church Hall at Regina, Saskatchewan Canada on September 08, 2024. Monthi Festh celebration has its traditions deeply rooted to the Coastal Karnataka (Karavali) Catholic community. This festival is similar to thanksgiving in Canada (October second week) and in India; it is celebrated in different forms like Onam in Kerala, Pongal in Tamil Nadu, Nag Panchami etc. The essence of the Monthi Fest is celebration Mother Mary's birthday and rejoicing the good harvest of the season.

Karavali Konkani Catholics celebrate the birth of the Virgin Mary's feast and give thanks to Mother Mary in gifting us with Jesus Christ the saviour of the world and providing us with a new crop of the season. During this time new crop is blessed and distributed to the devotees, who take them home and have a family get-together to celebrate the birth of Mother Mary.

The cultural programme was initiated by a welcome note by Dina Lobo Lewis. In her welcome address, she welcomed the members and guests of the event. She

also highlighted the essence and significance of Nativity feast. She also welcomed Father Jasper, Parish Priest Holy Trinity Church. Father Jasper blessed the Novem (New Crops). It was followed by



prayer services and hymns sung by the members of the KKR Association.

The Children offered flowers to blessed infant mother Mary. Novem Milk was served to all the devotees. After the religious cer-

emony, cultural and entertainment activities followed. Father Jasper blessed the food that was prepared by the members of the KKR Association with love, dedication and in large variety. The food was prepared



keeping the typical Mangalore and Udupi tastes and cuisines intact. After the meal, games and entertainment sessions were carried on by Teena.

Father Jasper also addressed the gath-

ering and congratulated each and everyone for their sincere efforts in organizing the Monthi Fest celebrations in a place like Regina in Canada far away from home and urged the KKR to conduct such tradi-

tional events every year. Finally, Chris Dsouza thanked all members of KKR Association and the guests of the event for their hard work and contributions in the success of the event.

## Significance of Durga Ashtami

SUNIL KUMAR D. AND GEETHA PATIL

**D**urga Ashtami epitomizes the symbolic victory of righteousness over malevolence. According to ancient scriptures, it was on this day that the mighty Goddess Durga vanquished the demon Mahishasura, underlining the eternal triumph of divine forces over darkness and ignorance. According to the legend, this demon Mahishasura had a boon bestowed upon it by Lord Brahma that a female warrior could only defeat him. Goddess Durga slayed him at the end and her Nava Durga avatar symbolizes her enormous strength and valor.

Apparently, Masik Ashtami is also a sacred day and has deep spiritual significance for Sanatanis devoted to Goddess Durga. The Ashtami day of Navratri festival falls on the powerful Tithi of Shukla Paksha, and devotees come together in reverence, observing strict fasting and offering heartfelt prayers to the Goddess. Sanatanis celebrate the nine days long festival with pomp and show as well as with devotion to propiti-

ate Ma Durga all over the world. This year, Ashtami falls on Thursday, October 10, 2024, starting 12:32 pm onwards and will end on October 11 at 12:07 pm.

**Why Durga Ashtami is so significant and is highly venerated during Navratri?**



During Navratri, many Sanatanis observe fasting and recite Durga Saptasati for all nine days to please Ma Durga. For the reason that SHE appeared as an answer to the prayers of gods and humans

to kill the demons. Navaratri Ashtami is also known as Virashtami/Astra Puja day because all weapons are propitiated and worshipped on this day along with a display of martial arts. When Ma Durga prepared for the war and decided to annihilate the demon Mahishasura, the buffalo faced giant. In the meantime, all Gods wanted to

other name Virashtami attributed to this day heralds the courage and valor of Ma Durga and on the day of Ashtami, Ma Kali emerged from the face of Durga.

In addition, it is believed that the Astanayikas or the eight aspects of Durga that are emerged from her assumed their roles in the war. Therefore, on the day of Ashtami, the war with Mahishasura gained full momentum and force. There was also a fierce battle between Kali and demons Chanda, Munda, and Raktabhija. As part of the Navratri Puja, Ashtami is so significant for worshipping the 64 Yoginis, Ma Kali, Ma Durga, and the Ashtanayikas. These Ashtanayikas names include Brahmacharini, Maheshwari, Kameshwari, Vaishnava, Varahi, Narasinghi, Indrani, and Ma Chamunda. Each of these aspects signifies a particular attribute of Ma Durga.



give her their divine weapons and powers. All those weapons were worshipped before handing them over to Ma Durga on the day of Ashtami and therefore the day came to be called as Astra Puja day. An-

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## FREE VACCINATION BIGGEST STEP FOR SAVING WOMEN FROM CERVICAL CANCER: TINSEL TOWN SURVIVORS

NEW DELHI: At a fashion show organized by the Indian Minorities foundation (IMF), cancer warriors from the film industry like Sonali Bendre, Hina Khan and Tahira Kashyap walked the ramp to celebrate their fight against the deadly disease and to inspire people.

The event titled 'Namo Bharat: Walk for Courage' was organized as part of Sewa Pakhwada, held from September 17 to October 2.

All three Bollywood actresses, having been cured of the deadly ailment, showered praise on the Modi government for launching free vaccination drives to stave off cervical cancer.

"I would like to appreciate the initiative of Modi government for starting free vaccination in government hospitals. Cancer is a deadly disease and there is vaccination for cervical cancer through which the disease can be prevented. I urge women to get themselves vaccinated against cervical cancer,"

Sonali Bendre said.

She further stated: "I would like to say that women's empowerment and women's health have been given priority under Namo Bharat. Today, new discoveries are being made in our country, I think this disease will not be as scary as it used to be in the past. As new medicines are being developed, the patients will benefit from it."

**"IT'S THE BIGGEST STEP THAT THE MODI GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN. HATS OFF TO MODI GOVERNMENT FOR TAKING THIS INITIATIVE BECAUSE CERVICAL CANCER IS NOW NOT THE MOST COMMON CANCER IN INDIA"**

Filmmaker Tahira Kashyap, also a cancer survivor, said that the free vaccination against cervical cancer is one of the biggest initiatives of Modi govt for women's healthcare in the country.

"It's the biggest step that the Modi government has taken. Hats off to Modi government for taking

this initiative because cervical cancer is now not the most common cancer in India. It's the biggest step for the healthcare of women in our country. I absolutely applaud and salute this effort for making the HPV (Human papillomavirus) vaccination available for all girls in India free of cost. Cervical cancer can be prevented through vaccination against HPV in adolescents, screening and treating women with precancerous lesions," said Tahira.

Actress Hina Khan, who is still undergoing treatment for third-stage cancer, said: "The ramp walk symbolized a journey for courage, service, and the rich heritage of India.

We all go through difficult situations and tough times and we are all warriors. It is a really tough journey. But with conviction and God's blessings and strength he gave to fight the diseases held me in good stead. Everyone must take care of their health and stay alert." /ANS

## DIYA DECORATION IDEAS FOR A SPARKLING EFFECT THIS DIWALI

ANURADHA RAMAMIRTHAM

There is no imagining the festival of Diwali without the decorated diya patterns lighting and adorning the entire home. While you may have come up with your own diwali diya decoration ideas, there is no harm in getting some inspiration, especially through a pictorial guide. It is with that intent that we have curated this guide for diwali diya decoration.

**Diya decoration ideas: Terracotta designer diwali diya plate**

A large decorated diya is one way to impress your guests and light up your home during any festive occasion. This could be the pièce de résistance of your Diwali decor theme.

**Decorated diya: Colorful Terracotta designer diwali diya plate**

Want to make your accent Diwali decoration piece more vibrant? Then, go for this multicolored hand-painted terracotta diya.

**Diya decoration ideas: Pair your Diwali diya with flower**

There is no beating a décor arrangement that is visually appealing and pleases the olfactory senses. A decorated diya arrangement that incorporates use of fresh marigold flowers is just perfect.

**Candle diya designs**

This Diwali, you could opt for candles burning in lanterns on your windowsill and a festive garland string at home to modernize your Diwali diya decoration.

**Decorated diya: Pair your Diwali diya with a rangoli**

Just like decorated diya, no Diwali festivity is complete without rangoli. Your decorated diya can be part of your Diwali diya decoration theme. Incorporation of decorated diya makes your rangoli even more charming and attractive.

**Floating diya decoration idea**

Invest in a fancy urn, fill it with fresh water and use decorated diya to light your Diwali.

For floating lights, you could also go for comparatively smaller pots other than large urns. Check out the image below for inspiration.

**Decorated diya: Tea lights**

Tea lights are those decorated diya that make your everyday special. All you have to is just light them up, and get creative with their placement.

**Diya: Tea light on ornamental tray**

Tea lights in an ornamental tray could be highly visually appealing. These are a safe option too for modern compact homes.

**Decorated diya: Floating tea light**

Why not take out those ice-cream bowls, fill them with water and rose petals and float your tea light in these vessels in a series? This could turn out actually quite sublime. [housing.com](http://housing.com)



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Philosophy

PAPAJI (HWL POONJAJI)

Mind creates everything, simultaneously. First the mind is there, and then, simultaneously, every else is there. Mind is thought, isn't it? When you wake up, thought arises. The mind rises first, and then everything arises simultaneously.

The grossest thing is earth, the first element. Then less gross, more subtle is water and so on. The last element, the most subtle one, is ether, space. But where did all these elements spring from? They are all in the mind.

Ether, the space element, and the mind are similar in one respect. Everything is in the ether, in space, and all of these elements are in the mind, in thought. All these things are thought and thought alone. Now, in order to understand prakriti, nature, the five elements, you have to find out what the original thought is, the one that contains and brings into being all these things.

These five elements are also in the body. In order to understand the body, you have to understand these elements, and in order to

The Sanskrit word bhakti actually means 'where there is no division'. The opposite word to bhakti is vibhakti. Bhakti means unity, no division. Vibhakti means division, in supreme devotion, supreme bhakti, there is no division.

How is the mind divided? By giving rise to thought. If you don't give rise to a single thought, then mind itself is not. Thought creates division.

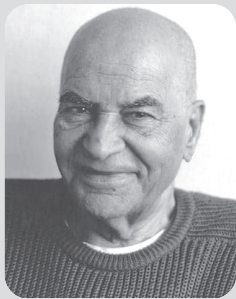
Where there is no division, where there is an undivided mind, this is bhakti. This is called the supreme devotion. Devotion can be to someone, or to something that is other than oneself, but supreme devotion is only to one's own Self.

There is Self and there is non-Self. There is imperishable and there is perishable. To have devotion to the imperishable and to be one with it is supreme devotion. Without this devotion I don't think anything can happen.

The English word 'devotion' can be very misleading, but I can't think of a good English word that translates this very nice Sanskrit word 'bhakti'. Nor can I think of a good word in English that ad-

Supreme devotion is only to one's own Self

The mind rises first, and then everything arises simultaneously



Papaji (HWL Poonjaji)

understand the elements you have to understand the mind. Whatever phenomenon you pick, you can get back to its fundamental nature by tracing it back to these elements and the mind that creates it.

Now, just pick out one thought. If you can understand that one thought - what it is and how it comes into existence - you will understand the whole process and nature of the mind. Question this one thought. Look at this thought and try to see what it is.

Find out what the source of this thought is. When you have found that source you will understand the mind, and then you will enter into the source from where everything emerges. There, no one and nothing has ever existed.

This is how the process of nature, prakriti, comes into existence. It arises from purusha, the first being. All beings are absorbed into this first being and perish there, but that first being never perishes, never vanishes.

**No division**

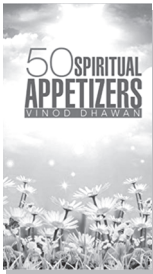
'Devotion' really means 'not divided'.

equately translates 'jnana'.

We usually say 'knowledge' in English when we translate jnana. But knowledge is not jnana. In English knowledge is of something, some object that you know, whereas jnana is merely a subjective knowledge of one's own Self. For knowledge of other things we have other words.

*Excerpted from HWL Poonja magazine December 2004 'Satsang with Papaji, 1991'. The 114th birth anniversary of Poonjaji is being observed on October 13*

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The Third Eye: Roots of the new global terror

DC PATHAK

When the Cold War ended consequent on the dismemberment of the USSR in 1991, international communism which was the driving force of ideology behind one superpower also faced a demise. The rival US had built itself on the pull of capitalism backed by democracy and a free market resting on competition.

The military balance between the US and the Soviet Socialist Republic - both nuclear powers - had acted as a deterrent against an 'open war' that had already become a taboo after World War II.

The tensions of the Cold War ended when the USSR broke up following the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, and China's Deng Xiaoping - taking a lesson from the weakened Soviet economy - decided to "open" the Chinese market to the world outside and planned to

pened in Afghanistan, where militant outfits invoked the 'war cry' of Jihad to fight against the Soviet army there.

The motivation of religion in Islam is particularly strong because of its pull of exclusivism. In the early seventh century, Kalima came as a ringing call - 'there is no God save Allah' backed by the message that Islam is the only 'perfect' religion and also the 'final' one since Prophet Mohammad was the last of the Prophets.

The five fundamentals of Islam described as its 'pillars'- declaration of Iman, prayer, fasting, charity and Haj - were backed by a set of 'do's & don'ts' that were easy to understand even for the illiterate. This paved the way for territorial kinship moving towards religious brotherhood. Jihad was another duty cast on members of the faith at par with the five fundamentals and it was described as the willingness

China promoted Maoism with its instrumentality of violence in various parts of the world but adopted a quieter attitude in the matter of claiming the leadership of the Communist block. With the rise of President Xi Jinping to power, however, China is once again pursuing this ambition vigorously

to make the supreme sacrifice to defend the faith if 'Islam is in danger' or to protect the community if its existence is threatened.

Radical organizations have cropped up within the Muslim

world over the years interpreting geopolitical situations in their own ways and calling for Jihad to fulfil their own political objective.

The current trends of global terrorism are seen more in the Pak-Afghan region, Middle East and North Africa. Since Islam embraces all aspects of a man's life - personal, social, cultural, political or even economic, there is no distinction between religion and politics there.

In fact, today's Islamic radicals carry the historical memory of the anti-West Wahhabi Revolt of the mid-19th century in Algeria, Arabia and India that was led by prominent Ulema who were greatly distressed to find that after a thousand years of 'glorious advancement' of Islam, Western powers had encroached on 'Muslim lands'.

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

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follow the economic route rather than the military path, to becoming the alternate superpower.

China promoted Maoism with its instrumentality of violence in various parts of the world but adopted a quieter attitude in the matter of claiming the leadership of the Communist block. With the rise of President Xi Jinping to power, however, China is once again pursuing this ambition vigorously.

Meanwhile, the post-Cold War era saw a rise in cross-border offensives mainly by way of planned attacks of terrorist groups that could be denied by the sponsors. Terrorism by definition is a 'resort to covert violence for a perceived political cause' and since a 'cause' needed commitment and motivation, terror groups were raised through indoctrination. The motivation could be 'ideological' as in the case of Maoism, could be focused on the assertion of 'ethnic identities' as was seen in the past in India's North-East or like what hap-

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author



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

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## Jaishankar's visit to Colombo: Will it signal continuity or change in bilateral ties under Dissanayake government?

SUGEESWARA SENADHIRA

India will be the first foreign country to have a proper dialogue with Sri Lanka's one-week old government when External Affairs Minister Subramanya Jaishankar visits Sri Lanka this weekend. He will call on newly elected President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who assumed office on September 23. He will also have discussions with Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya and Foreign Minis-

watched as it will include high-level engagement between India and Sri Lanka after leftist leader Dissanayake came to power.

### Reinforcing Indian commitment

Within hours of swearing-in by Dissanayake, India's High Commissioner Santosh Jha called on the new president. They had their second meeting

foreign policy under the new president.

Earlier this year, New Delhi noted the rapid rise of Dissanayake's National People's Power (NPP) of which his Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) holds the leadership and decided to invite JVP leaders to Delhi for a dialogue. Dissanayake, together with Herath, the current foreign minister, visited New Delhi and reportedly settled certain differences over JVP's one-time deep resentment against Indian "hegemony". Discussions held with Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval were described later as "most cordial, fruitful and constructive".

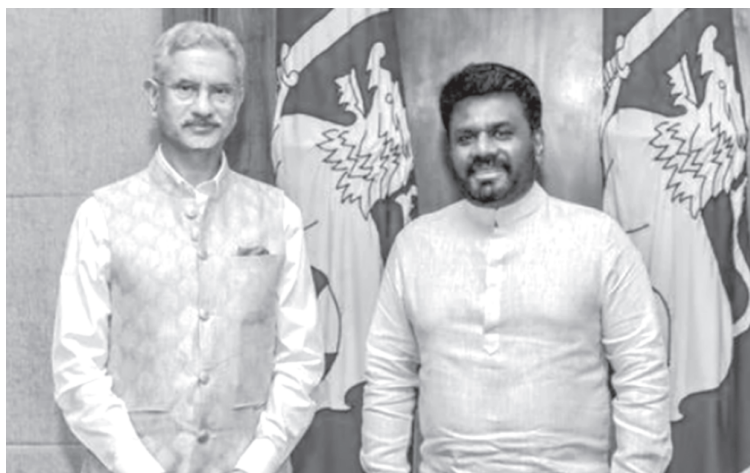
### Praised Indian assistance

After Dissanayake became president, Jaishankar was quoted by media as saying that, "India doesn't expect him to be hostile in the manner the new Maldives president (Mohamed Muizzu) was initially or the way the interim government in Bangladesh has been."

During his talks with Indian officials, Dissanayake is said to have praised India's \$4 billion assistance that helped bail Sri Lanka out of a financial crisis. Before becoming president, he also gave an assurance that he won't be letting Sri Lanka's land, sea and airspace to be used against India.

Dissanayake recently said that he views both India and China as valued partners and that he doesn't want Sri Lanka to get involved in any "geopolitical fight". India played a major role in Sri Lanka's debt restructuring process and Jaishankar is likely to assure continuous support in his meeting with Sri Lankan leaders after he lands in Colombo October 4.

(The author, a former Sri Lankan diplomat, is a political and strategic affairs commentator. Views are personal) South Asia Monitor



External affairs minister S Jaishankar with Sri Lanka's President Anura Kumara Dissanayake

*After Dissanayake became president, Jaishankar was quoted by media as saying that, "India doesn't expect him to be hostile in the manner the new Maldives president (Mohamed Muizzu) was initially or the way the interim government in Bangladesh has been"*

ter Vijitha Herath.

Both the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Dr Amarasuriya, and Dr Jaishankar have a lot in common as both are alumni of Delhi University with a background in research-oriented academics. While Jaishankar did his Bachelor's degree at St Stephen's College, Amarasuriya did her sociology honors degree at across-the-road Hindu College. Both of them completed their PhDs from other universities.

Jaishankar's visit to Colombo would be the first by any foreign minister after the presidential elections last month. The visit will be closely

yesterday at the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo. Jha conveyed India's readiness to support Sri Lanka's development process in any way possible, while also appreciating his anti-corruption agenda. He also highlighted the importance of maintaining a continuous and stable partnership as close neighboring countries with historical ties.

Analysts believe that Jaishankar's visit will be a significant opportunity for India to reinforce its commitment to providing development support for its strategically situated Indian Ocean neighbor amid worries about a shift in its for-



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## WILL INDIA BECOME DEVELOPED NATION?

Union minister Nitin Gadkari recently said there is much talk about making India 'atmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant)', a five trillion-dollar economy, the third-largest economy, and Vishwaguru but individuals must begin making changes within themselves before advising others.

He took examples of Chhatrapati Shivaji and his life mission. "Even if we adopt one of his qualities, it will take our society and country far ahead. Often, there are talks of making India 'atmanirbhar Bharat', a five-trillion-dollar economy, the third largest economy and Vishwaguru. But if we want to bring all of this into reality, we will have to bring change within ourselves. It is easy to tell others to change, but an individual will have to begin with oneself before advising others," Gadkari said.

He did not elaborate or name any person. Gadkari said caste, cash and criminality, have become the biggest ingredients in politics.

"For the purification of politics, netas will have to follow the principles of Shivaji Maharaj and adopt his idea of good governance for the betterment of society." He also said when he contested the Lok Sabha poll; he made it clear that he would not be involved in caste-based politics even if he did not get votes.

There is a debate raging in this country over work. On the one hand, we have industry icons urging young Indians to work 70 hours a week. On the other, the death of an overworked 26-year-old EY employee has caused national outrage. Both sides have their votaries.

India's population faces a huge stray dog and monkey menace in its cities, with ever growing incidents, that have reached 50-thousand-bites approximately each year. Yet municipalities and the government authorities are unable to solve the problem. Can we achieve progress with these problems? What about the growing poverty amongst poor and the increase of beggar's on roadsides all over the country?

10% of India's population may acquire BMWs and Rolls Royce but if their school going children litter the roadsides with empty water bottles and wrappers, can we ever become a fully developed nation.

What India needs is, as Minister Gadkari mentioned during his recent speech, we as citizens must sensitize our families and public to adhere to discipline and our culture at grass root level, as well as, in schools and colleges on social education and initiative that are holistic in nature. Driver's education must be imbibed at school level so that we can avoid accidents, which have been taking a large toll on young Indians on roads across the country.

There is no doubt that India is growing at a very fast rate, but growth without proper discipline will soon fall to the ground if we are not careful. Today India has the world's youngest population and, it must address their issues with careful planning and ensure they have their fair share of repose and stability. Several corporations and employers exploit them and that has to be stopped.

India's youth is its future for labor, as well as, a talent pool across the country and the globe. In the developed world, especially US, India's talent pool is admirably powering the engines of growth.

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



## When Mallika Sherawat was HARASSED at midnight

**B**ollywood actress Mallika Sherawat, who will be soon seen in the upcoming movie 'Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video'; once shared a harrowing incident when she was harassed by a male co-star.

A video of the actress, which has gone viral on the Internet, shows her recollecting the time when she filmed for a "big movie" in Dubai along with a "big starcast".

In the video, Mallika said, "Let me tell you an instance, I was shooting for a big film in Dubai, it was a multi-starrer film. It's a super hit film, people like it a lot, I have done a comedy role in it".

Everything was fine till here. However, what she spoke of next, paints a very uncomfortable, rather a dark picture of what goes around in the blingy corridors of tinsel town.

She further mentioned, "The hero of that film used to knock on my door at 12:00 am. By knocking, I thought he was going to break the door. Because he wanted to come inside my bedroom. And I was like, no, it's not going to happen. After that, that hero never worked with me".

However, the actress refrained from taking any names. As soon as the clip went viral, people on social platforms started speculating who she could be talking about. Some people in the comments section of Reddit deduced that the big budget film could be the 2007 superhit 'Welcome' as it was shot in Dubai, featured a huge starcast, and sees Mallika portraying a comedy role. IANS



## Mrunal Thakur has a filmy moment on her 'good hair day'

**A**ctress Mrunal Thakur had a very "filmy moment" due to the wind while having a good hair day.

Mrunal took to Instagram stories, where she shared a video of herself. In the clip, the actress, who is currently shooting in Uttarakhand with actor Siddhant Chaturvedi for an upcoming yet-untitled romantic film, was seen dressed in an orange bodycon top paired with jeans.

The actress was standing next to some greens and was trying to manage her long black tresses as the wind blew past her hair.

For the caption, she wrote: "Good hair day." IANS

## TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Aaj Ki Raat : **Stree 2**
- 2 Tauba Tauba: **Bad Newz**
- 3 Sajni: **Laapataa Ladies**
- 4 Tainu Khabar Nahi: **Munjya**
- 5 Angaaron : **Pushpa 2 The Rule**
- 6 Akhiyaan Gulaab: **Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya**
- 7 Agar Ho Tum: **Mr. And Mrs. Mahi**
- 8 Satranga: **Animal**
- 9 Chaleya: **Jawan**
- 10 Aayi Nai: **Stree 2**

## When entire Bollywood rallied behind sanjay Dutt

**B**ollywood actor Sanjay Dutt, who was recently seen in the streaming movie 'Ghudchadi', has been through some of the darkest times in the past.

The actor has battled drug addiction, cancer, the loss of his mother, and the allegations of engaging in terrorist activities.

On July 4, 1994, the actor was remanded to judicial custody for his alleged involvement in the Mumbai Bomb blasts. He was arrested under the provisions laid down under the Terrorist and

Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act (TADA). IANS



# Ananya Panday on getting cheated on 'so much'



**B**ollywood actress Ananya Panday has made shocking yet hilarious revelations about her relationship and said that she does not know why she gets cheated on so much.

In a video shared by streaming giant Netflix, Ananya, who reportedly parted ways with actor Aditya Roy Kapur in March, was speaking about how she got cheated on by an ex boyfriend from her school days.

The actress said: So, in school my second boyfriend said he cheated on me. He went for a football camp or something and when he came back everyone was like 'Oh, he kissed some chick'."

The actress said that she confronted him and had a showdown in school.

"I was really upset and then I confronted him in school and full showdown and I was like you suck and all of that stuff. Then we broke up."

The shocking revelation came later in the form of a message on her phone.

"Then later in the day he BBM'd me and he was like 'oh I didn't actually cheat on you but I wanted to break up with you so I made up that fact that I cheated on you and I am like what is worse? Both are bad.'" /ANS



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## Priyanka Chopra Jonas shares what her life looks like 'lately'

**A**ctress Priyanka Chopra Jonas, who is busy with the shoot of the second season of her upcoming streaming series 'Citadel', has shared a leaf from her routine that she follows these days.

The actress took to her Instagram, and dropped several pictures of what her life looks like these days as she swings between her professional and personal duties.

The pictures show her busy with the shoot of 'Citadel', her daughter visiting her on the sets of the show, the actress taking a walk with her daughter and engaging in playtime.

She wrote in the caption, "Lately 1 & 2: Nadia is a little different this season #citadel 3: On the tube. 4: Early wrap takes us to the park 5: When she comes to see mama at work 6: And then we go to the park again. 7: Walks, songs and chats 8: Visiting friends @natasha.poonawalla 9: She turned 80! Happy birthday Fran. @mamadjonas 10: When the sun wakes you up in bed 11: Traffic selfie 12,13,14: When the glam is so good @harryjoshair @yumi\_mori 15: Back on a plane. As usual, racing home".

Earlier, PC had shared a throwback collage of her childhood picture and a picture from the initial phase of her career while discussing evolution. She penned a long caption in which she mentioned her childhood and about her younger self. **IANS**

## RHEA CHAKRABORTY FINDS TANMAY BHAT, ZAKIR KHAN, THERAPEUTIC

**A**ctress Rhea Chakraborty, who hosts the podcast 'Chapter 2', finds hanging out with comedians Tanmay Bhat and Zakir Khan to be therapeutic.

The actress took to Instagram and shared the trailer for the upcoming episode giving a peek into the conversation and the fun that's about to unfold on the podcast.

She wrote in the caption, "Round 4 with two of the most interesting people I know. Hanging out with @tanmaybhat @zakirkhan\_208 is therapeutic. I said it first! Love the vulnerabilities we shared. Chapter 2 episode 4 trailer out now on YouTube. Full episode coming soon". **IANS**



## Shilpa Shetty: Women should be associated with strength

**A**ctress Shilpa Shetty has said that women are often associated with sacrifice instead they should be linked with strength and power.

Shilpa will be seen as a guest on the singing based reality show "Sa Re Ga Ma Pa", which has Sachin-Jigar, Sachet Parampara and Guru Randhawa as the mentors, and Vipul Roy and Salman Ali as the hosts this time around.

Along with Shilpa, actors Rajkummar Rao and Tripti Dimri for the Navaratri special Grand Premiere episode. The top 12 contestants will be seen putting their best foot forward to wow the guests.

Contestant Riya Bhattacharya's special gesture towards her mother moves Shilpa when she did her mother's aarti to seek blessings before her performance.

Shilpa said, "Usually when we talk about women it is often associated with sacrifices, but I believe that- Ek Naari ko Himmat aur Taakat se associate karna chahiye. Whatever you have done today, Riya is so proud of you (her mother). And honestly, I even feel very proud when I hear about such stories."

The actress revealed that she even worships her mother.

"Whatever I am today, wherever I have reached in life, it is only because of her support, and that is why I understand this emotion. A mother is always the strongest pillar in your life, a pillar that will always support you unconditionally. I am so happy to see this beautiful bond here today." **IANS**





# SAMANTHA CALLS ANANYA PANDAY'S PERFORMANCE 'OUTSTANDING'



Ananya Panday is garnering praise for her performance in the gripping cyberthriller 'CTRL'. The latest one to join the list is Samantha Ruth Prabhu. On Saturday, Samantha took to her Instagram story

and Ananya and the CTRL team. She called Ananya's performance outstanding. Sharing the poster, she wrote, "Highly recommend and a must watch #CTRL. It is gripping from start to finish and exceptionally well-made. @ananyapanday

you beauty, your performance was outstanding. It made me quickly grab my phone and uninstall several apps. Congratulations team #CTRL."

In the film, Ananya plays Nella Awasthi, an influencer who, after a painful breakup, turns to Artificial Intelligence (AI) to erase her ex-boyfriend Joe from her life. While the story takes a thrilling turn with AI going out of control, Ananya shared how she handles breakups in real life.

The movie marks her second OTT release this year, following her debut in the series 'Call Me Bae' in September. Directed by Vikramaditya Motwane, the film also stars Vihaan Samat, best known for his role in 'Mismatched'.

The cyberthriller was released on October 4 on Netflix and is now available for streaming.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Samantha is preparing for Citadel: Honey Bunny alongside Bollywood heartthrob Varun Dhawan. This upcoming web series is an Indian adaptation of the Russo brothers' Citadel, which originally featured Priyanka Chopra and Richard Madden.

Apart from this, Samantha will star in Bangaram, a film she announced on her birthday this year. This project is especially significant for her as it marks her debut as a producer. ANI

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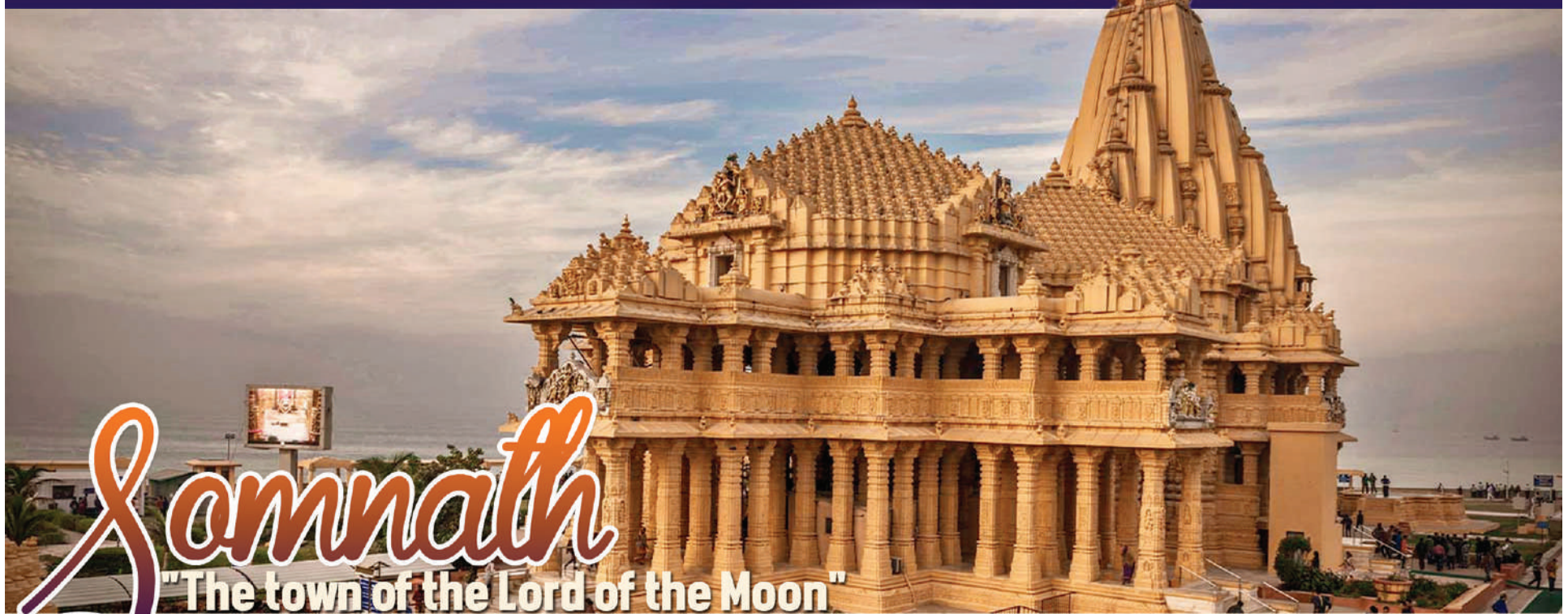
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## Somnath

"The town of the Lord of the Moon"

**S**omnath, literally meaning 'lord of the moon' is a pilgrim center and is home to one of the 12 Jyotirlingas. It is a town which derives much of its identity from the mythology, religion, and legends that surround it.

Primarily a temple town, Somnath is a place where a strong scent of religion and legends lingers around tourism and even daily life. Its spiritual environment is ornamented by the huge number of temples in the area, however, Somnath also offers beaches, museums and other attrac-



tions. While the Somnath temple and Somnath beach are the primary places to visit here, Gita Mandir, Balukha Tirtha, Kamnath Mahadev Temple, Somnath Museum are some of the other places that one can visit.

### PLACES TO VISIT IN SOMNATH

**Somnath Temple:** The Somnath Jyotirlinga Temple is first of the twelve Jyotirlinga shrines of Lord Shiva. It is located on the western coast of Gujarat and is one of the oldest temples of the country. It has been mentioned in ancient texts like Shreemad Bhagavat Gita, Skandpuran, Shivpuran and Rig-Veda which signifies the importance of this

temple as one of the most celebrated pilgrimage sites. The temple is located on the ancient Triveni Sangam or the confluence of three rivers - Kapila, Hiran, and Saraswati.

**Bhalka Tirth:** Bhalka Tirth is a renowned Hindu pilgrim center which is believed to be the location where Lord Krishna was shot by a hunter's arrow. According to the sacred scripts, Lord Krishna's death marks the end of the Dvapara Yug and the beginning of the Kali Yug. The tirth has a temple dedicated to Lord Krishna and is called Mahaprabhuji's Bethak.

**Somnath Beaches:** Along with the world-famous Somnath Temple, the Somnath Beach also forms an essential part of the itinerary of a tourist visiting Gujarat. Travellers can unwind here after a long day of sightseeing, although, swimming is not recommended. One can also find many joggers running along a path in early mornings and evenings. Tourists can rejuvenate themselves with fresh coconut water and corn available here along with the very famous camel rides.

**Paanch Pandav Gufa:** Discovered by



the late Baba Narayandas in the year 1949, the temple was dedicated to the five Pandava Brothers. The location of the temple is such that one can view the entire city and

get mesmerized just by looking at it.

**Laxminarayan Temple:** Located on the Somnath shore, the presiding deity, Lord Laxminarayan is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Reflects modern architectural design, this temple is famous for the carvings on its 18 pillars which have the sacred message of Krishna in the form of Bhagwadgita.

**Triveni Sangam Temple:** The confluence of the three rivers Hiran, Kapila and Saraswati this is the point where the rivers meet the mighty Arabian Sea. Triveni

Sangam is believed to be a very sacred Moksha Tirtha for Hindus.

**Best time to visit Somnath:** September to March are the best months to visit Somnath, as the winters are quite cold. However, if you wish to avoid the crowd and tourists that flock to Somnath, you may be tempted to visit the place during the summer and monsoon season. [www.holidify.com](http://www.holidify.com)

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