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Periodical Postage



Lohri celebrated with grandeur at Fremont Temple

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Shruti inspires with workout: 'Focus, fight, find'

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**INDIA POST**  
SURVEY  
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This week's question

Will US attack Iran?

Last week's result

Will Trump take over Greenland?

YES 92%      NO 8%

## US APPLAUDS MODI

*US lawmakers applaud leadership of PM Modi*

WASHINGTON: Influential US lawmakers described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a pivotal leader shaping India's global role, saying Washington increasingly views his leadership as central to the long-term durability of the US-India partnership.

Speaking at a Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) event, Representative Rich McCormick said PM Modi's approach reflects a strong national focus aligned with India's development goals. "Prime Minister Modi is extremely nationalistic in a good way," McCormick said.

"He's looking after his country just like we look after our country. He wants to bring productivity and expansion, and technologies to his country," said McCormick, he is Co-Chair of the Congressional India Caucus.

McCormick said US lawmakers understand PM Modi's emphasis on domestic capacity building, including in defense and manufacturing. "He wants the military to be built up inside of his country," he said, noting that some Indian policies can complicate collaboration but are rooted in national priorities.

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TH ANNUAL AAPI GLOBAL HEALTH SUMMIT 2026



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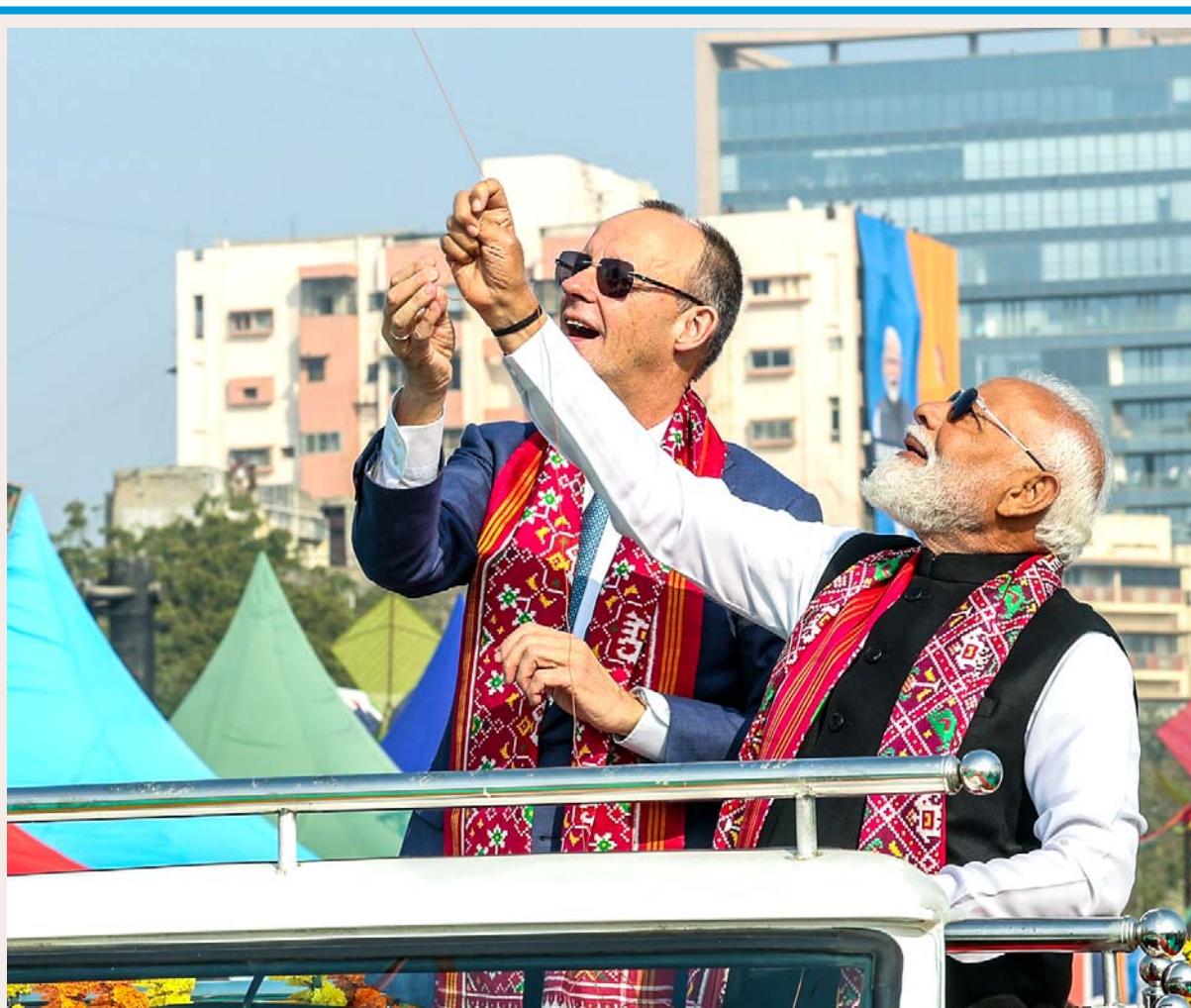
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Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz fly a kite during the inauguration of the International Kite Festival, at Sabarmati riverfront, in Ahmedabad. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

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# US APPLAUDS MODI

## US lawmakers applaud leadership of PM Modi

WASHINGTON: Influential US lawmakers described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a pivotal leader shaping India's global role, saying Washington increasingly views his leadership as central to the long-term durability of the US-India partnership.

Speaking at a Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) event, Representative Rich McCormick said PM Modi's approach reflects a strong national focus aligned with India's development goals. "Prime Minister Modi is extremely nationalistic in a good way," McCormick said.

"He's looking after his country just like we look after our country. He wants to bring productivity and expansion, and technologies to his country," said McCormick, he is Co-Chair of the Congressional India Caucus.

McCormick said US lawmakers understand PM Modi's emphasis on domestic capacity building, including in defense and manufacturing. "He wants the military to be built up inside of his country," he said, noting that some Indian policies can complicate collaboration but are rooted in national priorities.

At the same time, McCormick acknowledged areas of friction, including India's energy purchases. Referring to India's buying of discounted Russian oil, he said, "We hate that. But he's doing it for the best interest of his country so he can expand

his economy with cheap energy."

Despite such differences, McCormick stressed that PM Modi recognizes the importance of alignment with the United States. "In the end, I think he understands

how important we are because we are like-minded," he said.

Representative Ami Bera, the longest-serving Indian American member of Congress, said PM Modi's tenure coincides



CSIS hosted Reps. Rich McCormick and Ami Bera to discuss the evolving U.S.- India relationship and Congress's essential role in shaping its future

*"He's looking after his country just like we look after our country. He wants to bring productivity and expansion, and technologies to his country," said McCormick, he is Co-Chair of the Congressional India Caucus*

with India's rise as a central player in US strategy. "India's been very key to our whole Indo-Pacific strategy," Bera said, referencing continuity across multiple US administrations.

McCormick described PM Modi as an unusually influential political figure. "I think he's the most popular politician in modern history by far," he said, adding, "Probably the most popular guy since Gandhi."

He also recalled PM Modi's emphasis on understanding India's diversity. McCormick said the prime minister once remarked that he does not trust any politician who has not "rode the train from south to north or north to south in coach," a reference to experiencing India's social and cultural breadth firsthand.

Both lawmakers suggested PM Modi's governance style gives him an intuitive understanding of democratic complexity. "United States and India have to think similar in the way that we approach our population," McCormick said, citing India's diversity in religion, language, and politics.

Bera said PM Modi's leadership has coincided with India's growing international confidence. "They see how fast the Indian domestic market is growing," he said, adding that India's trajectory is reshaping global economic and strategic calculations. *IANS*

## US Congress sees India as Key AI, tech and defense partner

WASHINGTON: US lawmakers recently said India is emerging not merely as a defense buyer or technology market, but as a critical partner in artificial intelligence, advanced manufacturing, and Indo-Pacific security.

At a CSIS discussion, Representative Rich McCormick warned against restricting India's access to advanced technologies. "If we start limiting access to our products, that's going to be bad for us as a country," he said.

McCormick argued that keeping India aligned with US technology standards is strategically vital. "If we limit our good chips to the rest of the world, they'll get them from somewhere else... then they become the standard," he said.

Indian American Representative Ami Bera described AI as "a transformational technology" that demands close cooperation. "The United States and India should work incredibly closely together to both advance AI, solve challenges that are going to emerge," he said

McCormick noted India's push for defense self-reliance. "Prime Minister Modi's ultimate goal... is to be independent as a defense contractor," he said, pointing to Indian requirements for majority domestic ownership.

He argued that US defense systems must modernize. "Our technologies have

They also highlighted people-to-people ties as a strategic asset. McCormick noted the scale of Indian talent in the US "We have a quarter million Indian students here right now," he said, warning that sending them back would strengthen competitors.

Bera said talent flows are already changing. "They see how fast the Indian domestic market is growing... they can move back and forth," he said.

The discussion also touched on energy and data infrastructure. McCormick said data centers and AI require massive power. "There's no way you're going to produce that kind of power from anything other than nuclear," he said.

Bera added that India faces water and energy constraints. "As Prime Minister Modi wanted to build out data centers, they don't have enough energy, and they don't have enough water," he said, pointing to opportunities for collaboration on desalination and civil nuclear technol-

Both lawmakers linked technology cooperation to defense ties. Bera said defense-to-defense relations are on "a good trajectory," citing co-production and joint exercises. "We want to continue doing more joint exercises, joint training, joint development," he said.

not kept up in the defense industry," McCormick said, criticizing reliance on "antiquated systems."

Both lawmakers strongly endorsed the QUAD grouping. "The reason I know the Quad's so important is because Beijing hates it," Bera said.

# Rubio, EAM Jaishankar talk nuclear law, trade, Indo-Pacific

WASHINGTON: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio recently spoke over the phone with External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, reviewing key areas of cooperation, including civil nuclear energy, trade talks, and regional security in the Indo-Pacific.

"Discussed trade, critical minerals, nuclear cooperation, defense, and energy. Agreed to remain in touch on these and other issues," EAM Jaishankar wrote on X after the call.

US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor described it as a positive call. "They discussed next steps regarding our bilateral trade negotiations, critical minerals, and a possible meeting next month," Gor wrote on X.

During the call, Rubio congratulated India on enacting the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India bill, a recent law that is part of India's nuclear

energy framework, Principal Deputy Spokesperson Tommy Pigott said.

He said the United States is interested in building on the legislation to strengthen civil nuclear cooperation between the two countries.

"He expressed interest in capitalizing on this important development to enhance U.S.-India civil nuclear cooperation, expand opportunities for American companies, advance shared energy security goals, and secure critical mineral supply chains," Pigott said.

The two diplomats discussed ongoing bilateral trade agreement negotiations and their shared interest in strengthening economic cooperation.

"They also exchanged perspectives on regional developments, reaffirming the United States' and India's commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific," Pigott said. IANS



S Jaishankar and Marco Rubio

## India's Pinaka elevates defense capabilities: Report

WASHINGTON: India's new Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120) marks a major doctrinal shift for the Indian Army, transitioning from "volume saturation to precision strike", a recent report said.

It added by transforming from near-front impact to deep operational effects, the new LRGR-120 turns tube artillery support to a standoff tool of deterrence.

According to a report in US based magazine The National Interest, this weapon will redefine the Indian Army warfare and would be brought to bear against either the Pakistanis or Chinese moves threatening Indian interests in the near-future.

"India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested its new Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120) at the end of last year. According to multiple reports on the matter, the weapon hit targets as far away as 120 kilometers with perfect precision. It is a completely domestically developed weapon system that will enhance the Indian Army's overall long-range strike capability-and these weapons can be fired from the launchers that India already possesses, thereby decreasing overall costs," it detailed.

India's new LRGR-120, the report said, depends on the Inertial Navigation System (INS) with mid-course updates and terminal guidance to ensure high precision.



"The Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher (MBRL) launchers can fire the LRGR-120s in salvos of up to eight guided rockets. These weapons are designed for standoff, precision-strikes directed against enemy command centers, artillery, and logistical hubs," it mentioned.

The report stressed that France has shown interest in acquiring the Pinaka system from India, underscoring the growing demand of this new Indian weapon in the international arms market.

"Nevertheless, the HIMARS in particular has greater ranges than the Pinaka. But this new weapon created by the DRDO nonetheless gives India a much-needed boost in its own long-range fires - and it ensures that India's domestic arms production reaps the benefits by making it entirely within the country," it stated.

The report noted that the Indians have indicated to the fact that the Pinaka is not a static weapon with upgraded variants planned over time.

"As such, the current ranges on Pinaka will be extended in future variants. There have even been 200-300-kilometer variants discussed among the DRDO designers of this platform. So New Delhi is committed to making this weapon system as competitive as possible on the world stage - and as lethal as possible, given the two threats India faces from neighboring China and Pakistan," it stated. IANS

**"That's going to be a big problem for him": Trump rebukes Greenland PM's remarks on 'choosing Denmark' over US**

WASHINGTON DC: Reacting to remarks by the Premier of Greenland expressing a "preference to remain with Denmark" over the US, United States President Donald Trump dismissed the statement and warned that it could create "a big problem" for the latter.

Trump's comments come after Greenland Prime Minister Jens-Frederik Nielsen said the self-governed Danish territory wants to remain part of Denmark rather than join the United States, amid US President Donald Trump's ongoing push to take over the island, Al Jazeera reported.

Speaking to reporters, Trump said he "disagreed" with the Premier's position and said he has no familiarity with him. "Well, that is their problem. I disagree with them. I don't know who he is. Don't know anything about him. But that is going to be a big problem for him," the US President said.

Speaking at a news conference in Copenhagen alongside Denmark's Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, Nielsen said the autonomous Arctic territory would prefer to remain Danish.

"We are now facing a geopolitical crisis, and if we have to choose between the United States and Denmark here and now, we choose Denmark," he said.

"The United States has once again reiterated its desire to take over Greenland. This is something that the governing coalition in Greenland cannot accept under any circumstances," said the island's coalition government.

"As part of the Danish commonwealth, Greenland is a member of NATO, and the defense of Greenland must therefore be through NATO," it added.

US Vice President JD Vance and Secretary of State Marco Rubio will host a meeting with the foreign ministers of Denmark and Greenland at the White House, Al Jazeera reported.

Greenland, the world's largest island, is a self-governing territory within Denmark and a NATO partner of the United States. Both Danish and Greenlandic leaders have repeatedly rejected any suggestion that the island could be sold, or annexed, emphasizing Greenland's future should be decided by its own people.

Earlier, Trump reiterated claims of having to do "something" about Greenland, "the easy way" or "the hard way", saying that if the US doesn't take any action, Russia and China would spring in and that Washington does not want to have them as neighbors.

"We are going to do something on Greenland, whether they like it or not, because if we don't do it, Russia or China will take over Greenland - and we're not going to have Russia or China as a neighbor. I would like to make a deal the easy way, but if we don't do it the easy way, we're going to do it the hard way," Trump said when he was asked about the island. ANI

# PM Modi, German Chancellor Merz reaffirm commitment to strengthen defense and security cooperation

GANDHINAGAR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening defense and security cooperation and deepening their military-to-military cooperation through joint exercises, training, and exchanges of senior officials, while noting with satisfaction regular reciprocal port calls by the naval ships of both countries.

The two leaders welcomed the establishment of a new Track 1.5 Foreign Policy and Security Dialogue between the two countries, according to the joint statement released following the talks held between PM Modi and Chancellor Merz in Ahmedabad.

Following their talks, PM Modi wrote on X: "It was a pleasure hosting Chancellor Friedrich Merz in Ahmedabad. His visit has infused new momentum into India-Germany ties, as we mark 25 years of our Strategic Partnership and 75 years of diplomatic relations. India is honored that he has chosen our nation as the place of his first visit in Asia. This reflects his personal commitment to strong India-Germany relations."

"We agreed to take our relationship to a qualitatively higher level, with deeper cooperation in defense, space and other critical and emerging technologies. Our discussions also covered joint efforts on climate action, trusted and resilient supply



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz hold delegation level talks, in Ahmedabad. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with other delegates is also present. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

chains, skilling, education, sports and strengthening cultural and people-to-people ties," he added.

PM Modi welcomed Germany's intent to participate in Naval Exercise MILAN, and the 9th Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) Conclave of Chiefs in February 2026, Air Combat Exercise 'Tarang Shakti' in September 2026, and Germany's decision to deploy a Liaison Officer to the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), according to the joint statement.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction at ongoing cooperation between the De-

fence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) for the Eurodrone MALE UAV program, which will enable India to collaborate and harness advanced military technology and strengthen its strategic and defense ties with Europe.

The joint statement said: "The Leaders

welcomed the signing of a Joint Declaration of Intent to develop a Defense Industrial Cooperation Roadmap to promote long-term industry-level collaboration, including technology partnerships, co-development and co-production of defense platforms and equipment. India welcomed Germany's efforts to facilitate expeditious export clearances of defense equipment." /IANS

## Pakistan's nuclear role weakens global non-proliferation, undermines stability: Report

LONDON: Pakistan's fragile governance structure, combined with its non-signatory status to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), raises serious doubts about its reliability as a nuclear steward, increasing the risk of leakage and undermining international non-proliferation safeguards, particularly in relation to countries such as Iran, a report said on Tuesday.

It added that the regional role of Pakistan has been destabilizing, as its past nuclear exports triggered a chain of proliferation that armed rogue actors and led to frameworks like the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to curb Iran's nuclear deal - prompting Israeli security concerns and Gulf arms races.

"Pakistan's clandestine nuclear transfers to Iran in the late 1980s and 1990s laid the technological foundation for Tehran's enrichment program, a linkage that persists amid Iran's 2025 uranium stockpiles exceeding JCPOA lim-

its by 48 times. A Q Khan's network supplied centrifuge designs, components, and expertise, shortening Iran's path to threshold status while exposing Pakistan's willingness to proliferate for ideological and economic gain," a report in the UK-based newspaper 'Asian Lite' detailed.

"Today, as Iran installs advanced IR-6 centrifuges at fortified sites like Fordow and suspends IAEA access post-Israeli strikes, Pakistan's public backing of Tehran's "peaceful" nuclear rights signals ongoing strategic alignment with destabilizing potential," it stressed.

According to the report, Pakistan's internal instability makes it the weakest link in the global non-proliferation architecture, where recurring political upheavals, frequent coups, judicial manipulations like the 27th Constitutional Amendment, and economic weaknesses create incentives for elites to leverage nuclear assets for survival and economic benefit. /IANS

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One Indian student dead, two injured in Kazakhstan road accident

ASTANA: The Indian Embassy in Kazakhstan said, that 11 Indian students from Semey Medical University were involved in a road accident in Oskemen while returning from an excursion to the Altai Mountains in East Kazakhstan.

Sharing details in a post on X, the Embassy said, "In a tragic accident in Oskemen, a group of 11 Indian students from Semey Medical University, who were on an excursion trip to the Altai Mountains (East Kazakhstan), encountered an accident on their way back to Oskemen City."

As a result of the incident, the Embassy said that one student, Mili Mohan (date of birth: 17.04.2000), died, while two other students -- Ashika Sheejamini Santhosh and Jaseena B -- sustained injuries.

It further stated, the injured students are receiving treatment at City Hospital No. 1 in Oskemen. "According to the latest reports, their condition is stable," the Embassy said.

Expressing condolences over the death, it said, "The Embassy extends its deepest condolences to the family of the deceased student." ANI



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January 16, 2026

# COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

## Lohri celebrated with grandeur at Fremont Hindu Temple, bringing community together



India Post News Service

FREMONT, CA: Fremont Hindu Temple resonated with joy, warmth, and cultural pride as devotees and community members came together to celebrate vibrant Lohri, and harvest festival of South India. The temple premises came alive with traditional music, folk songs, devotional spirit, and the symbolic Lohri bonfire, marking gratitude for nature's abundance and the onset of longer days.

Families, elders, youth, and children participated enthusiastically, offering peanuts, sesame

seeds, jaggery, and popcorn to the sacred fire, while prayers were offered for prosperity, health, and harmony. The celebration highlighted the essence of Lohri-thanksgiving, togetherness, and cultural continuity-transcending regional boundaries and welcoming people from all backgrounds.

The Fremont Hindu Temple continues to serve as a cultural and spiritual hub, hosting festivals and events that strengthen community ties and pass on timeless values to future generations.



# Seattle University hosts pre-Summit briefing session on India AI Impact Summit 2026!

In partnership with Seattle University (SU), Consulate General of India in Seattle co-hosted a briefing session on the upcoming AI India Impact Summit 2026 today at the Casey Commons Conference Hall at SU. The session focused on the theme "People, Planet, and Progress", highlighting India's AI strategy for social good, sustainable development, and inclusive economic growth. A large number of students and senior faculty from Seattle University attended the event which provided them an overview of India's expanding AI ecosystem and its evolution.

The keynote remarks were delivered by CEO of the popular remittance app REMITLY, Mr. Matt Oppenheimer, who shared Remitly's experience of investing in India's AI-driven future and highlighted how Remitly's Bengaluru office has benefited from reforms in Ease of Doing Business in India. In addition, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Technology Ethics Initiative at Seattle University Prof. Onur Bakiner addressed SU students and scholars on navigating challenges and seizing opportunities in the AI age. Delivering the inaugural address, Consul General of India in Seattle provided an overall overview of the preparations for AI Impact Summit 2026 and profile of the high-level delegation expected



to participate from the Greater Seattle area.

Today's briefing on the AI India Impact Summit 2026 was the second in a series of such events hosted in the Greater Se-

attle Area. It may be noted that CGI Seattle had earlier hosted an AI INDIA Impact Summit 2026: Pre Event Briefing Session for US Congressmen and Tech CEOs on 07 November 2025 at the Consulate pre-

mises wherein, U.S. Rep. Adam Smith and Michael Baumgartner had special briefing sessions from senior tech industry representatives from Microsoft, Salesforce and Anicca Data Science Solutions.

## What comes next for the Country and the World?

**VIDYA SETHURAMAN**  
India Post News Service

**A**fter months of escalating U.S. military pressure against Venezuela, events shifted dramatically a few days ago with direct U.S. military action and the removal of the country's ruler, Nicolas Maduro. Venezuela now faces urgent questions about governance, legitimacy, and democratic recovery. Amidst ongoing tensions between the United States and Venezuela, American Community Media (ACoM) held an online briefing on Jan 9th, inviting several experts on Latin America, International law, and energy policy to analyze the latest developments in Venezuela and the potential ripple effects of related U.S. policies.

Mariano de Alba, Venezuelan lawyer. Geopolitics, International Law, and Diplomacy analyzed the situation from an International law perspective, pointing out that the international order established after World War II places clear restrictions on the use or threat of force.

tions on the use or threat of force. He stated that such actions are difficult to consider legal unless authorized by the UN Security Council or justified under the conditions of self-defense. He emphasized that even if there are widespread doubts about the democratic legitimacy of the Venezuelan leadership, this is not sufficient grounds under international law to

and seeking a livelihood, and equating them as a whole with crime or security threats is not accurate.

Alejandro Velasco, Gallatin School and the Department of History at New York University, Executive Editor of the NACLA Report on the Americas said based on his interactions with family and friends in Venezuela, three emotions are currently

not genuine hope, but rather the feeling that the long-stagnant political situation seems to be loosening up, leading some people to watch and see if new political possibilities might emerge. Velasco also cautioned that the U.S.'s current priorities may not be to promote democratic transition, but rather to focus on oil and broader geopolitical strategies.

Roxanna Vigil, International Affairs Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations pointed out from the perspective of energy and sanctions that rebuilding Venezuela's oil industry requires legal and institutional reforms, the establishment of the rule of law, and attracting long-term investment, which usually requires a democratically legitimate government to accomplish. She also cautioned that the global oil market is currently well-supplied, and Venezuelan crude oil has high refining costs and limited suitable refineries. There is still a gap between the large-scale investment envisioned by the U.S. and the realities of the market.

*Mariano de Alba, Venezuelan lawyer. Geopolitics, International Law, and Diplomacy analyzed the situation from an International law perspective, pointing out that the international order established after World War II places clear restrictions on the use or threat of force*

justify the use of force. Alba pointed out that Washington often uses oil, drugs, and immigration as the main justifications for its policies towards Venezuela, but these claims are exaggerated. He stated that most Venezuelan immigrants in the United States are ordinary people forced to leave their country due to economic hardship

prevalent in Venezuelan society: anxiety, confusion, and a nascent sense of "anticipation." The anxiety stems from the sudden shift in the situation and the high degree of uncertainty about the future; the confusion arises from the unclear nature of whether the power structure has truly changed; and the so-called anticipation is

# Fremont Hindu Temple celebrates Mata ka Vishal jagran



India Post News Service

Fremont, CA: Fremont Hindu Temple celebrated Mata ka Vishal jagran on Saturday, January 10, 2026 with great devotion. The atmosphere was filled with faith, mu-

sic and spiritual energy. Los Angeles artist Amit Anand Ji of Aashirwad group sang Mata devotional bhajans.

Dr Joy Garg along with more than 70 devotees sponsored this event. Veena



Birla, chair Jagran committee, coordinated the Vishal jagran program. Veena ji on this occasion was recognized for her selfless volunteer work since 2011. Rajesh Verma, Co Chairman/CFO and Govind Pasumarthy, Chair, Religious Committee presented this award to Veena ji.

On this special occasion, over 350 devotees enjoyed the Priti Bhoj sponsored by several devotees.

The celebration brought people to-

gether in unity and happiness. The New Year began with blessings, love, and togetherness. Fremont temple priest Pt. Rupendra Mishra ji prayed for all temple devotees and said:

Sabke dukh door kare  
Sabke ghar mein sukh-shanti laaye  
Aur hum sabko dhamr aur satya ke  
marg par chalne ki shakti de  
Vishal Jagran program concluded at  
2:00 am with Tara Rani ki katha and Aarti



## India, not Pakistan, is US long-term strategic partner: Lawmakers

WASHINGTON: Senior US lawmakers sought to draw a clear distinction between India and Pakistan in Washington's strategic calculus, stressing that India - not Pakistan - remains America's long-term partner in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

Speaking at a discussion hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Representative Ami Bera said periodic diplomatic engagement with Pakistan should not be confused with strategic alignment.

"We're not creating a strategic partnership with Pakistan," Bera said, pushing back against perceptions created by recent political rhetoric.

He acknowledged that comments by US leaders can sometimes generate friction in New Delhi. "The president made some comments about Pakistan, had invited Pakistani leaders into the Oval Office," Bera said, describing the diplomatic context during a recent visit to India.

However, Bera emphasized that economic and strategic realities clearly favor India. "You don't see American companies making multibillion-dollar investments in

Pakistan. That's all happening in India," he said.

Representative Rich McCormick echoed that assessment, describing India as indispensable to regional and global stability. "There is no more important friend that we're going to need for the future of not just the United States and India, but for the entire stability of the world, than India," he said.

The lawmakers said Pakistan does not feature in Washington's long-term Indo-Pacific strategy, which is increasingly centered on democratic partners and economic integration. Bera noted that India has been central to US strategy across multiple administrations. "If you go back to the Clinton administration, through the Bush administration, through Obama, to Trump 1.0, to Biden, India's been very key to our whole Indo-Pacific strategy," he said.

Bera also contrasted investor confidence in India with the absence of similar momentum in Pakistan. "We're playing the long game," he said, adding that business communities understand the direction of US engagement. /ANS



Ami Bera

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# AAP Global Health Summit 2026 advances medical innovation, global partnerships and community impact in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, Odisha: The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) organized its 19th annual Global Health Summit (GHS) 2026, a three-day gathering that brought together leading physicians, researchers, educators, and public health experts from India and the United States.

Held from January 9-11 across the Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Mayfair Lagoon, and Swosti Premium, the summit showcased cutting-edge medical advancements, collaborative research, and community-focused initiatives aimed at strengthening healthcare delivery in India.

AAPI President Dr. Amit Chakrabarty described the summit as a defining moment for Indo-U.S. medical collaboration. "GHS 2026 reflects AAPI's unwavering commitment to elevating global health standards," he said. "When experts from two of the world's most dynamic healthcare systems come together, the impact extends far beyond conference halls—it reaches communities, hospitals, and future generations."

Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda, India's Minister for Health, in a video message, lauded AAPI for its contributions to India and the United States. "AAPI stands as a powerful symbol of professional excellence, global leadership and dedicated service to humanity, representing over 100,000 Physicians of Indian origin practicing in the United States," he said.

"AAPI has made remarkable contribution to healthcare delivery, medical education, research and public health, not only in United States, but also across the world. What makes AAPI truly exceptional is its role as a vital bridge between India and the United States. Through sustained academic collaboration, knowledge exchange and capacity building, AAPI has significantly strengthened healthcare system in both nations. I firmly believe that organizations like AAPI play pivotal role in shaping a healthier, more inclusive and more equitable world guided by the timeless Indian philosophy of 'vasudhava kutumba,' the world is one family. AAPI reminds us that service beyond borders, is the highest form of leadership," Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda said.

In his address, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, while stressing the collaborative efforts between KIIT and AAPI, stated, KIIT is one of India's leading private universities, known for its academic excellence, world-class infrastructure, and impressive



placement records. Established in 1992, KIIT Bhubaneswar has grown into a multidisciplinary university offering undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programs across diverse fields such as engineering, management, law, medicine, and humanities.

Earlier, in his welcome address, Prof. R C Das, highlighted the significance of hosting AAPI GHS on its premises, stated, The Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) has redefined the healthcare services in Odisha and in neighboring states, anchored on a genuine desire to promote a healthy society and

of AAPI emphasized, "Our community programs reflect AAPI's heart. Beyond CMEs and conferences, we are committed to protecting and empowering the next generation."

## Day 1: High Impact CME Sessions and Youth Engagement

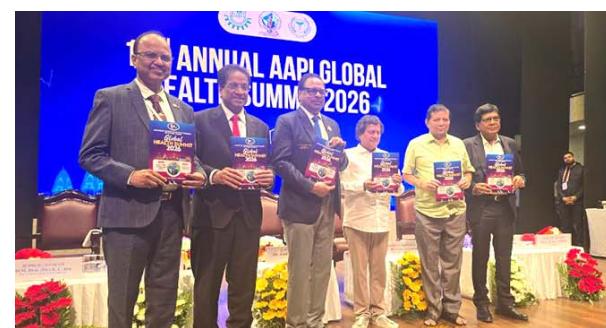
The summit opened on January 9 and every morning thereafter, with a rejuvenating Yoga & Meditation session led by Dr. Amit Shah and Dr. Arti Prasad, emphasizing the importance of integrative wellness in modern medicine.

The morning Scientific Forum featured a series of CME sessions addressing

just academic—they are actionable. Our goal is to bring evidence-based solutions to the forefront of India's healthcare landscape."

The afternoon featured State of the Art Surgical Practices, including live robotic and minimally invasive surgical demonstrations broadcast simultaneously between KIMS and Swosti Premium. Led by Dr. Chakrabarty and Dr. Ashok Hemal, the session highlighted the growing role of technology in surgical excellence.

Parallel tracks included:  
AAPI Ayurveda Consortium CME  
AAPI-IMG Section Update for interna-



provide advanced medical care.

Others who addressed the audience during the inaugural ceremony were: Prof. CBK Mohanty, Pro Vice Chancellor of KIMS; Dr. Atashu Nayak, President, Odisha Physicians of America; Dr. Ajit K Mohanty, Director General of KIMS.

During the gala, AAPI recognized and honored Dr. Sita Kanta Dash and Dr. Santosh Dora, for their contributions to the larger society.

Dr. Meher Medavaram, President-Elect

some of India's most pressing health challenges:

Metabolic Syndrome: A Hidden Epidemic - Dr. Prasun K. Jalal

Advances in Hemoglobinopathy Treatment - Dr. Arun Panigrahi

AAPI Advocacy to Address Healthcare Gaps in India - Dr. Lokesh Edara

Cervical Cancer Update - Dr. Bhagyalaxmi Nayak

AAPI President-Elect Dr. Krishan Kumar noted, "These discussions are not

tional medical graduates

Suicide Prevention Across Borders, featuring experts from India and the U.S.

Poster Presentations and Hands On Skills Workshops for medical students

Dr. Seema Arora, Secretary of AAPI emphasized, "Suicide prevention requires global insight and local action. AAPI is committed to building culturally sensitive mental health frameworks."

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



# Diaspora vital to India's rise, but dual citizenship complex: Ram Madhav

WASHINGTON: The Indian diaspora plays a central role in strengthening India's global standing, but issues such as dual citizenship and voting rights require careful handling given India's unique geopolitical and constitutional challenges, senior BJP leader Ram Madhav said.

Addressing an Overseas Friends of BJP (OFBJP) interaction here, Madhav acknowledged the emotional and political connection that overseas Indians maintain with their homeland. "Your brains work here, but your heart is in Bharat," he told the audience, many of whom are US citizens or permanent residents.

Responding to audience questions about why India is not granting dual citizenship and voting rights to non-resident Indians (NRIs), Madhav said the issue is far more complex than it appears.

He referred to territorial disputes, geopolitical complications, and regional security concerns.

He said extending citizenship could have unintended consequences. "When you extend citizenship, whether you extend it to them also or not, so many other complications are involved," he said.

Madhav said India has instead expanded benefits under the Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) framework. "That gives a lot of benefits already, short of voting," he said, while acknowledging that further facilities could be considered.

"More can be extended as you demand. You want anything more, that also can be considered," he said, describing the current government as "very, very friendly to NRIs."

The BJP government has consistently addressed the issues of its diaspora, he asserted.

Responding to questions related to illegal immigration, including concerns over undocumented migrants entering India, Madhav said the government was acting quietly but firmly. "We are doing more and propagating less," he said.

"Certain things have to be done cor-



rectly," he added, declining to give figures. "Be assured that the concern that you have, ten times more concern is there in the people who are in the government."

Madhav contrasted India's approach with what he described as performative politics elsewhere. "We are doing more

and propagating less," he said.

He urged patience in addressing sensitive diaspora-linked issues, saying not everything should be handled publicly. "Not everything should be openly said," he added.

Madhav also cautioned against aggres-

sive postures in international affairs, arguing that India's global credibility rests on restraint. "Assertiveness has to be responsible. It cannot be aggressive," he said.

He underlined that India's independent foreign policy has earned global respect. "You'll be surprised to know 40 countries followed us," he said, referring to India's neutral stances on major global conflicts.

Madhav said the Indian diaspora has become a key pillar of India-US relations. "Indian Americans have been a very important element in this relationship," he said, noting the community now numbers over four million. It is worth noting that India has steadily expanded its engagement with its overseas population through OCI schemes, investment outreach, and political engagement, while stopping short of granting dual citizenship.

Diaspora influence has grown significantly in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, shaping perceptions of India's rise. One of the hallmarks of the Modi government is its engagement with the Diaspora. /ANS

## Indian American leaders offer sharp contrast ahead of Trump's Detroit visit

WASHINGTON: On the eve of President Donald J. Trump's visit to Detroit, two Indian American leaders in Michigan have put forward sharply contrasting messages, underscoring political divisions within the community over the president's record and rhetoric towards the city.

Republican leader Sunny Reddy announced that he is sponsoring billboards across Michigan to welcome Trump during his visit. In a social media post, Reddy said the effort was meant to greet the president and signal support for Michigan Republicans.

"I wanted to share that I'm sponsoring billboards across Michigan to welcome

President Trump to our state," Reddy wrote, adding that he was "proud to stand with Michigan Republicans". He was recently elected as vice chairman of the Republican Party in Michigan.

A very different message was offered by Democratic Congressman Shri Thanedar, who represents a Detroit-area district and has been openly critical of Trump.

Thanedar recalled Trump's previous

*"I wanted to share that I'm sponsoring billboards across Michigan to welcome President Trump to our state," Reddy wrote, adding that he was "proud to stand with Michigan Republicans"*

visit to Detroit, saying the former president had insulted the city. "The last time Donald Trump visited Detroit, he insulted our city, saying the whole country would end up like Detroit if Kamala Harris were elected," Thanedar said.

He challenged Trump's economic claims, particularly regarding manufacturing and job creation. Thanedar said Trump

had promised to bring manufacturing jobs and economic success to the region, but argued that the opposite had occurred.

"For the last eight months, we've lost 68,000 manufacturing jobs, and unemployment has hit a four-plus year high," Thanedar said.

Thanedar also criticized rising living costs, saying everyday expenses have increased for Americans. "Life in America is more expensive than ever," he said, add-

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ing that Detroit "does not need any more of your insults or lies."

Positioning himself as an advocate for working families, Thanedar said he was focused on lowering costs and improving affordability in the city. "Detroit deserves better," he said. "I'm fighting for you, Detroit. Fighting to bring your costs down and make life more affordable." /ANS

# Fremont Hindu Temple

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World Bank estimates India's growth in FY25-26 at 7.2 percent

WASHINGTON: India's economy is projected to remain among the world's fastest-growing major economies, with growth estimated at 7.2 percent in FY2025-26, supported by strong domestic demand despite rising global trade tensions, the World Bank said recently.

In its latest Global Economic Prospects report, the World Bank said India's resilience helped lift overall growth in South Asia in 2025, offsetting the impact of heightened policy uncertainty and global trade frictions.

Growth in South Asia strengthened to 7.1 percent in 2025, "mainly because of resilient activity in India", the report noted.

The World Bank does not include Pakistan and Afghanistan in South Asia, and their economies are included in the Middle East and North Africa division.

India's expansion is "mainly reflecting robust domestic demand, including strong private consumption, supported by earlier tax reforms and improvements in real household earnings in rural areas", the bank said. *IANS*

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## Big Tech companies to offshore more jobs to India in 2026 amid US mass layoffs

NEW DELHI: Around 52 percent of tech and banking professionals in India and US said their companies plan to increase hiring in India in 2026, a recent report said.

The report from anonymous community app for professionals, Blind, said that 34 percent of respondents expect a significant increase and 18 percent who anticipate a moderate rise, the report said.

The survey gathered responses from 2,392 verified professionals across the United States and India and reported that the trend signals an acceleration of offshoring by major global tech firms including Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Uber and eBay.

When asked how India hiring



affects US-based roles, 38 percent said it is replacing US based roles while 23 percent said it complements US hiring, the report said.

The report highlighted that 28 percent of respondents cited recent H-1B visa restrictions as a factor pushing companies to

Indian passport jumps five places in Henley Passport Index

NEW DELHI: Indian passports jumped five places in global mobility rankings in 2026, offering visa-free, visa-on-arrival or eTA access to 55 destinations, as per report of 14 January.

The Henley Passport Index placed India at 80th spot sharing this rank with Algeria and Niger. Singapore, which topped the list, has visa-free access to 192 countries. Japan (188 destinations) and South Korea followed closely, highlighting the connection of travel freedom with the economic strength of the country. *IANS*



Rather than relying on U.S.-based expansion, many companies appear to be redirecting growth to India, signaling a structural shift in global workforce planning," the report mentioned.

Among employees at global firms such as eBay, Wayfair, LinkedIn, Qualcomm, Capital One, Google, Amazon, Salesforce, SAP and Microsoft, up to 93 percent reported plans to expand hiring in India.

In terms of how companies are expanding in India, 25 percent said their employers are scaling up existing India teams, while about 20 percent reported the creation of new roles in India and another 20 percent said specific projects or functions are being moved there. *IANS*

## FICCI seeks steps to fast-track tax appeal cases in Budget 2026-27

NEW DELHI: Apex business chamber FICCI on Tuesday listed its key expectations from Union Budget 2026-2027 regarding direct taxes and processes dealing with customs collections that include a reduction in the pendency of appeal cases, and tax neutrality for fast-track mergers.

According to a FICCI statement, the reduction of pendency before the Commissioner of Income Tax, Appeals, is critical to the success of the new Faceless Appeal system and for alleviating hardships faced by taxpayers by way of demands and blockage of refunds.

It has highlighted that currently, there is a huge pendency of appeals filed before CIT(A). Around 5.4 lakh cases are stuck there as on April 1,

2025, involving an amount of Rs 18.16 lakh crore.

Further, the Central Action Plan (CAP) for 2025-26 targets call for disposing of 2 lakh cases and Rs 10 lakh crore of disputed demand for various charges (international tax and transfer pricing, central faceless and JCIT

valuation of their shares during the sale of shares by Indian promoters to FDI investors. The government also loses revenue due to the high pendency of cases, the statement said.

FICCI has also sought the rationalization of provisions to facilitate obtaining a full stay of de-

mand on the tax neutrality of fast-track demergers will facilitate demergers in small-sized companies and intra-group restructuring in a smaller time frame, relieve the burden on NCLT for processing such applications, and thereby improve "ease of doing business" without adversely impacting revenue's interests.

It has also sought restoration of the Associated Enterprise (AE) definition in the new Act as per the old Act. This will preserve continuity of tax policy as recommended by the Select Committee; provide certainty on TP com-

*According to a FICCI statement, the reduction of pendency before the Commissioner of Income Tax, Appeals, is critical to the success of the new Faceless Appeal system and for alleviating hardships faced by taxpayers by way of demands and blockage of refunds*

(appeals)). Without capacity augmentation or differentiated tracks and timelines for disposal, it is infeasible to clear the backlog, it said.

Pending litigation reflects as contingent liabilities in the books of companies, pulling down the

mand during the pendency of appeals to unlock amounts locked up in litigation, ease working capital blockage for taxpayers without adversely impacting the interest of revenue collection.

The business chamber has further stated that providing clar-

pliance for taxpayers and avoid unwarranted litigation on coverage of AEs, the statement said.

FICCI's wish list on indirect taxes includes the constitution of more offices of the Customs Authority for Advance Rulings (AAR). Expanding Customs AAR offices and allowing self-declared extensions would enhance trade certainty, reduce compliance burden and lower litigation on customs matters, it said.

At present, the offices of the CAAR are established only in New Delhi and Mumbai, with an all-India jurisdictional division between them. This is despite a considerable number of applications being made by trade involved in ports in the south and east of the country, such as Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, etc. *IANS*

# Germany sees India as key partner in trade, defense

NEW DELHI: Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz has used his first official visit to India to signal that Berlin now sees New Delhi as a central partner for trade, technology and security in an increasingly fractured world order. Spread over two days in Ahmedabad and Bengaluru, the visit combined high symbolism with a dense agenda on defense, green transition, mobility and a long-pending India-EU trade deal, according to an article in India Narrative.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Merz in Ahmedabad, where the program blended political signaling with cultural outreach. Bilateral talks and press state-

long-pending India-EU Free Trade Agreement, as he observed that the deal could be concluded by the end of January. New Delhi and Berlin also welcomed a new Joint Declaration of Intent to strengthen economic cooperation through a German-Indian CEO Forum, pitched as a permanent channel to deepen investment, technology partnerships and resilient supply chains.

Security and defense industry cooperation received unusually prominent attention for a German leader's India visit. Modi and Merz backed expanded military-to-military engagement through joint exercises and senior?level exchanges, and endorsed a new roadmap for defense industrial cooperation focused on long-term technology partnerships and co-development of equipment in India, the article states.

The two countries held discussions on a multi-billion-euro project to jointly build submarines in India, aligning Germany's defense export push with India's Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat priorities. Beyond defense, the two sides signed or exchanged 19 MoUs and eight major announcements across clean energy, digital technology and

innovation, framed as tools to advance green and sustainable development.

People?centric measures were another notable highlight, with India publicly welcoming Germany's decision to allow visa-free transit for Indian passport holders, expected to ease travel and business connectivity via German hubs. New agreements on higher education, skilling, renewable energy training, sports cooperation, maritime heritage and youth exchanges were showcased as investments in the next generation of the partnership, the article added. *IANS*

## Germany CEOs Forum

12 January 2026: Gandhinagar, India



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with German Chancellor Friedrich Merz during India-Germany CEOs Forum, in Ahmedabad. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

ments at Gandhinagar's Mahatma Mandir provided the formal backdrop for announcements on trade, defense and technology.

The article highlights that economics was the central pillar of the visit, with Merz accompanied by a high-powered delegation of 23 German CEOs and industry leaders. Both leaders noted that Germany already accounts for over a quarter of India's trade with the EU and that bilateral trade has hit record highs since 2024, strengthening the case for a more ambitious agenda.

Merz sent a clear signal of the political backing the

## Gold prices eye fresh record high, silver skyrockets after softer US inflation data

MUMBAI: Gold hovered near fresh record high while silver touched new peak on 14 January, as softer US inflation data and elevated geopolitical tensions boosted safe haven demand among investors.

MCX gold February futures rose 0.53 percent to Rs 1,42,995 per 10 grams around 10.05 am, while MCX silver March futures climbed 4.53 percent to Rs 2,87,640 per kg.

US core Consumer Price Index (CPI) data for December showed a 0.2 percent month?on?month surge and 2.6 percent year?on?year rise, below forecasts and reinforcing market bets that the Federal Reserve will cut rates in 2026, driving gold prices higher.



Analyst said the softer inflation print, coupled with mixed US jobs data, will lead the Fed likely to hold in January but likely undertake two to three cuts through the year, supporting gold prices.

"Ongoing geopolitical and economic uncertainties continued to fuel safe-haven demand. Civil unrest in Iran and rising geopolitical tensions further supported buying interest in precious metals. Core CPI was below expectations of 0.3 percent, and remained steady on year-on-year basis,

reinforcing the view that underlying inflation pressures are easing," said Rahul Kalantri, VP Commodities, Mehta Equities Ltd. *IANS*

## India becomes 1st market outside US to start local production of Mercedes-Maybach GLS

NEW DELHI: Mercedes-Benz India announced it has achieved a major global milestone by becoming the first market outside the United States to start local production of the ultra-luxury Mercedes-Maybach GLS.

The move highlights India's growing importance for the German luxury carmaker and underlines the company's strong confidence in the country's appetite for top-end luxury vehicles.

According to Mercedes-Benz India, local manufacturing of the Mercedes-Maybach GLS will not only strengthen its top-end portfolio but also help the brand respond better to rising demand while reinforcing its long-term commitment to the Indian market.

"The decision to start the local production of the Mercedes-Maybach GLS reiterates Mercedes-Benz's deep commitment to the Indian customers, offering the pinnacle of luxury SUV, 'Made in India', " Santosh Iyer, Managing Director & CEO, Mercedes-Benz India, said.

"Local production will further enhance the vehicle's appeal, reiterating our world-class manufacturing prowess and agility, catering to most demanding customer wishes for such exclusive top-end vehicles," Iyer added.

In its 2025 sales performance highlights, the German luxury carmaker announced it has sold 19,007 units in India during CY 2025, slightly lower than the 19,565 units sold in 2024.



Despite the marginal dip in volumes, the company recorded its best-ever year in terms of revenue.

According to the company, the Top-End Vehicles portfolio, which includes the S-Class, Mercedes-Maybach models and AMG cars, showed strong resilience and grew 11 percent year-on-year.

This segment accounted for 25 percent of total sales, reflecting rising demand for ultra-luxury vehicles in India.

The high-performance AMG portfolio performed particularly well, registering a sharp 34 percent growth, as Indian customers continued to show strong interest in performance-oriented luxury cars.

Mercedes-Benz India's electric vehicle business also maintained its growth momentum in 2025.

The company's battery electric vehicle portfolio grew 12 percent year-on-year and accounted for 20 percent of all top-end Mercedes-Benz cars sold in the country.

Notably, 70 percent of the electric vehicles sold during the year belonged to the top-end segment, priced between Rs 1.25 crore and Rs 3.1 crore.

These included models such as the EQS SUV, EQS Sedan, Mercedes-Maybach EQS SUV and the Mercedes-Benz G580.

The EQS SUV remained the company's highest-selling luxury electric vehicle in India. *IANS*

Women and elderly more likely to be vaccine-hesitant, says study

NEW DELHI: Women and the elderly are more likely to be vaccine-hesitant, according to a study, which analyzed data from more than 1.1 million people.

The study, published in *The Lancet*, analyzed hesitancy based on Covid-19 vaccine uptake and found that hesitancy against vaccines was rooted in concerns about their efficacy. While it reduced over time, it persists in some people.



The researchers from Imperial College London, UK, found that the likelihood of remaining unvaccinated was higher for older people, women, people who were unemployed or living in deprived areas, those with a history of Covid, and people with a lower level of education.

They identified eight categories of vaccine hesitancy, including concerns about effectiveness and side effects, perception of low risk from Covid, and mistrust of vaccine developers, and fear of vaccines and reactions. *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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## AI-enabled farm-gate quality, traceability to boost India's medicinal plant supply chain

NEW DELHI: Artificial intelligence (AI) and related technologies are crucial to monitor, verify, and document the quality and journey of medicinal plants right from the farm (the farm-gate) through the entire supply chain, said experts from the Ministry of Ayush.

The experts, including those from the National Medicinal Plant Board (NMPB) and the Institute of Teaching and Research in Ayurveda (ITRA), were speaking at a two-day national seminar on "Design and Development of Tools for Quality Assessment of Medicinal Plants at Farm Gates" at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.

The event brought national focus to India's medicinal plant sector, assured quality, traceability, and standardization of raw materials at the point of origin.

Prof. Dr. Mahesh Kumar



Dadhich, Chief Executive Officer, NMPB, and Prof. Dr. Tanuja Nesari, Director, ITRA, emphasized the need to integrate innovation, regulation, and traditional knowledge to build global confidence in Indian medicinal plant raw materials.

The seminar convened policymakers, scientists, tech-

nologists, industry leaders, and researchers to deliberate on strengthening farm-gate quality systems as a foundation for the sustainable growth and global competitiveness of India's Ayush and medicinal plant ecosystem.

Technical sessions examined the entire medicinal plant value chain -- from sustainable cultiva-

tion and regenerative agriculture to AI-enabled quality assessment, digital traceability, and supply-chain integration.

Experts from ICAR-Directorate of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Research (DMPR), IIT Delhi, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Ministry of Ayush, and Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) shared evidence-based insights and field experiences.

The discussions highlighted that India is both technically and institutionally prepared to adopt AI-based diagnostics, digital phenotyping, and integrated quality frameworks, reinforcing the credibility of Indian medicinal plant raw materials in domestic as well as international markets.

The seminar also highlighted the integration of traditional knowledge systems such as Vriksha Ayurveda with modern quality-control frameworks. It demonstrated how India's heritage can be scientifically validated and digitized to strengthen global acceptance. Strong emphasis was placed on capacity building, with participants gaining exposure to advanced tools, standards, and evolving policy directions. *IANS*

## Indian study shows school programs can cut junk food intake by 1,000 calories daily

NEW DELHI: Even as India is seeing a rapid rise in childhood obesity, diabetes, and heart-disease risk, a new study showed how school-based behavioral interventions can help reduce consumption of ultra-processed foods (UPFs) that are rich in salt and sugar among adolescents.

The scientific study led by researchers from the Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh, found that simple school-based behavior programs can dramatically reduce junk food consumption by over 1,000 calories

per day.

Higher intake of UPFs, including fast foods and sugary drinks, is a known factor for increasing health

potential of school-based behavioral interventions to reduce ultra-processed food (UPF) consumption among Indian adolescents,



issues such as diabetes, hypertension, obesity, and cancers in adolescents and teenagers.

"This study demonstrates the

addressing a critical gap in public health research and practice in low-and middle-income countries (LMICs)," said the research-

ers, including those from Imperial College London, UK, and Public Health Foundation of India, in the paper published in the international journal *BMJ Global Health*.

In the study, the team tested a structured nutrition and behavior-change program in schools using a controlled scientific trial design.

A cluster-randomized controlled trial was conducted across 12 public schools in Chandigarh, targeting Grade 8 adolescents and their parents. About 11 sessions were held for adolescents over six months. *IANS*

# Vaccination, screening and early treatment key to fighting cervical cancer

NEW DELHI: Vaccination, screening and early treatment are crucial to fight cervical cancer, which is causing the death of a woman every eight minutes in India, said health experts.

January is observed globally as Cervical Cancer awareness month.

Cervical cancer is caused by the Human Papillomavirus (HPV). The virus infects the cervix, which is the mouth of the uterus. While HPV infection does not mean cancer, it requires testing or screening to see if it has caused changes in the cervix.

"Cervical cancer and breast cancer are the most common cancers affecting women. In India, one woman dies every eight minutes due to cervical cancer. This shows how big the burden is. In many foreign countries, these deaths are much lower because cervical cancer is completely preventable. If screening is done on time or vaccination is given at the right age, it is almost 100 percent preventable," Dr Sujata Pathak, Scientist, Preventive Oncology, IRCH, AIIMS Delhi, told IANS.

"Cervical cancer prevention is one of the most successful examples of cancer

control in modern medicine. The disease is primarily caused by persistent infection with high-risk HPV, making it largely preventable through a combination of vaccination, screening, and early treatment,"

Pathak shared that the HPV vaccine has been available since 2006, but awareness has been very low. Recently, awareness has increased because the WHO has declared cervical cancer a major pub-

most oncogenic HPV types. When implemented widely, vaccination programs significantly reduce HPV infections, precancerous lesions, and future cancer incidence," Modi told IANS.

The HPV vaccine is very safe and well-tested. Minor side effects like pain at the injection site, redness, or mild fever for a day may occur, similar to other vaccines. There are no serious side effects, she added.

Girls aged 9 to 14 years should take the vaccine. They require two doses. Above this age, three doses are required. According to the WHO, even one dose can protect for up to 20 years.

Beyond vaccination, maintaining good menstrual hygiene and overall immunity is also important.

In about 90 percent of cases, HPV infection clears on its own within two years.

Screening plays an equally critical role. Tests such as pap smears and HPV DNA testing help detect precancerous changes in the cervix long before they progress to invasive cancer. AIIMS Delhi has also launched a month-long free screening for cervical cancer. IANS



added Dr. Rahul D. Modi, a gynecologic oncologist, at a Delhi-based hospital.

The experts noted that due to a lack of awareness, the burden of the disease is very high in India.

lic health problem.

"HPV vaccination, recommended for adolescents before the onset of sexual activity, can prevent the majority of cervical cancer cases by protecting against the

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# Indian Army launches home delivery of medicines for veterans in Sikkim

GANGTOK: In a significant step towards strengthening veteran security forces' welfare, the Indian Army's Trishakti Corps has launched a pilot project for home delivery of essential medicines for entitled Army veterans in Sikkim, officials said.

Under the initiative, medicines are being delivered directly to the homes of beneficiaries through the ECHS Polyclinic in Gangtok, in collaboration with the India Department of Posts and CSC e-Governance Services India Limited.

The arrangement aims to ensure safe, timely and hassle-free delivery of medicines, particularly benefiting Army veterans living in remote and difficult-to-access areas of the state.

During the initial phase, the ECHS Polyclinic in Gangtok identified around 58 long-distance beneficiaries residing across South Sikkim, North Sikkim and West Sikkim.

These Army veterans often face considerable hardship in physically collecting their medicines due to long travel distances, challenging mountainous terrain



and mobility issues.

Many of the beneficiaries are elderly or physically vulnerable, making regular visits to the polyclinic both strenuous and time-consuming.

A senior Army official said the pilot

project is designed to ease this burden by ensuring uninterrupted access to prescribed medicines without the need for frequent travel.

The delivery mechanism leverages the extensive postal network and digital coor-

dination support to maintain reliability and accountability throughout the process.

"Encouraged by the initial response, the ECHS Polyclinic has proposed to expand the home delivery service to all identified beneficiaries in the next phase. The planned expansion is expected to significantly improve accessibility to healthcare services, ensure continuity of treatment and reduce physical and financial strain on senior citizens and differently-abled veterans," the official added.

The initiative is part of a broader all-India program of the Central Organisation Ex-Servicemen Health Scheme under the Adjutant General's Branch.

It reflects the Indian Army's continued focus on leveraging technology and inter-agency coordination to improve the quality of life of Army veterans.

Officials said the pilot project reaffirms the Army's enduring commitment to the welfare of ex-servicemen, ensuring that their healthcare needs are met with dignity, compassion and efficiency, even in geographically challenging regions like Sikkim. IANS

## Australian researchers develop targeted therapy for rare blood cancer

NEW DELHI: A team of Australian researchers has developed a new targeted therapeutic approach that could improve treatment for myelofibrosis -- a rare and serious form of blood cancer.

Myelofibrosis disrupts the body's ability to produce healthy blood cells, leading to fatigue, pain, enlarged spleen, and reduced quality of life.

Although current treatments can help relieve symptoms, there are no treatments to cure the disease.

Rather than just managing symptoms, the research, published in the journal *Blood*, focused on the abnormal blood cells that drive the disease using immunotherapy.



The findings suggest that different biological forms of the disease may benefit from different targeted strategies.

"The future of cancer treatment lies in understanding disease at a molecular and immune level and then translating that knowledge into therapies that are, potent, long-lasting and precise," Angel Lopez, Head of Human Immunology at SA Pathology. IANS

"Our research shows that by focusing on what makes these cells different, it may be possible to develop treatments that are both more effective and more targeted. This is part of a major paradigm shift in the treatment of myelofibrosis and related diseases," Thomas added.

Using the patient cells, the team found two different targets that optimally remove the culprit cells.

The study highlights the potential of precision immunology, an approach that uses the immune system to recognize and act on disease-causing cells while leaving healthy cells largely unaffected.

## AIIMS Bhopal performs complex cardiac surgery, gives new lease of life to 30-yr-old patient

BHOPAL: In another significant achievement, the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery (CTVS) at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Bhopal has successfully performed a complex cardiac surgery, giving a new lease of life to a patient suffering from a serious medical condition.

A 30-year-old patient from Hoshangabad (now Narmadapuram district) had been suffering from severe health complications for the past six months, Dr Yogesh Niwariya, Head of the CTVS Department at AIIMS Bhopal, told IANS recently.

Dr Niwariya said the patient had a history of heart attack, paralysis and kidney dysfunction. In addition, several large clots were found in the left side of the heart (left ventricle), and the heart muscle was also weak.

He said that because of the clots, the patient suffered a heart attack around six months ago.

Subsequently, around 20 days ago,

the kidney artery became blocked and he also developed paralysis. Despite receiving treatment at several places, the patient did not get relief. Considering the severity and complexity of the condition, he was referred to AIIMS Bhopal.



After a detailed evaluation at the CTVS Department of AIIMS Bhopal, the experts decided to proceed with surgery. Investigations revealed the presence of multiple mobile clots in the left ventricle, which posed a high risk of travelling to other organs and causing paralysis or even death. IANS

Attacks on police dogs, horses, could trigger deportation under US House bill

WASHINGTON: Non-citizens who harm police dogs or horses could be barred from entering the United States and deported under a bill approved by the House Judiciary Committee, a move supporters say will strengthen protections for law enforcement animals.

The panel voted 18-12 to advance H.R. 4638, formally titled the Bill to Outlaw Wounding of Official Working Animals Act of 2025, recommending that the House pass the legislation with amendments.

The bill would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to make harming animals used in law enforcement a specific ground for inadmissibility and deportation. The provision would apply to any alien convicted of such an offense, as well as those who admit committing acts that meet the elements of the federal crime.

Republican lawmakers have argued that the legislation is intended to close gaps in immigration law and allow quicker action against offenders. *IANS*

# Immigration POST

January 16, 2026

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India Post 19

## US revokes over 100,000 visas of individuals involved in "criminal activity"

WASHINGTON: The US Department of State has announced that it has revoked more than 100,000 visas, including thousands of student and specialized visas, as part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen domestic security and enforce immigration laws.

In a post on X, the Department of State said that the revocations include around 8,000 student visas and 2,500 specialized visas issued to individuals who had encounters with US law enforcement for criminal activity.

"BREAKING: The State Department has now revoked over 100,000 visas, including some 8,000 student visas and 2,500 specialized visas for individuals

who had encounters with U.S. law enforcement for criminal activity," the post read.

The department further as-

these thugs to keep America safe," the Department of State added in its post.

The development under-



serted that visa revocations and deportations are being used as tools to safeguard national security. "We will continue to deport

scores the Trump administration's ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with its immigration laws and reinforces

that visa holders must adhere strictly to all legal requirements during their stay.

Recently, the US Embassy in India warned visa holders, especially students, that breaking the United States' Laws can have serious consequences, leading to the revocation of the visa and even deportation from the US.

"Breaking U.S. laws can have serious consequences for your student visa. If you are arrested or violate any laws, your visa may be revoked, you may be deported, and you could be ineligible for future U.S. visas. Follow the rules and don't jeopardize your travel. A U.S. visa is a privilege, not a right," the Embassy posted on X on January 7. *ANI*

## Trump says he would strip US citizenship 'in heartbeat'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has said he would strip naturalized Americans of their citizenship "in a heartbeat" if he believed they were dishonest or posed a threat.

Trump made the remarks in

curity, and citizenship.

"If they deserve to be stripped, I would, yes," Trump said when asked whether he would revoke citizenship from naturalized Americans. Pressed further, he added, "I'd do it in a heartbeat."

Trump said his administration was "looking at criteria" for such actions, though he did not outline specific standards. He rejected suggestions that citizenship protections should be absolute, arguing that national loyalty and honesty should determine

Americans while discussing immigration, describing Somalia as "one of the worst in the world" and claiming that people from the country had caused serious problems in the United States.

Asked directly whether people of Somali descent were a group he was considering for citizenship revocation, Trump replied, "Sure I would," adding, "If they were dishonest."

Trump singled out Democratic Congresswoman Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, saying she should be "immediately thrown out of Congress" and sent back to Somalia. When asked whether she should lose her US citizenship, Trump replied, "Oh, absolutely."

New York Times reporters challenged Trump on the lack of evidence for some of his claims, including allegations about Omar's personal history, which they said were unproven. Trump

rejected those objections and insisted his views were justified.

He dismissed concerns that his comments painted entire communities with a broad brush saying, "I don't care. I want great people in this country. I want people that love the country."

Trump argued that judges could block him under certain circumstances but suggested that

*"If they deserve to be stripped, I would, yes," Trump said when asked whether he would revoke citizenship from naturalized Americans. Pressed further, he added, "I'd do it in a heartbeat."*



US President Donald Trump

an interview with The New York Times last week, the transcript of which was released recently, during a contentious exchange about immigration, national se-

curity.

During the course of the interview that lasted for about two hours in the Oval Office, Trump repeatedly focused on Somali

his authority was broader in areas tied to law and order. He said he had been elected on promises of border control and public safety.

The president also raised the possibility of invoking the Insur-

rection Act, which would expand presidential powers to deploy the military domestically, though he said he had not yet felt the need to do so.

Trump's remarks come amid ongoing legal battles over immigration enforcement, deportations and civil rights, as well as broader debates over the constitutional limits of ex-

ecutive authority.

Under US law, citizenship revocation is rare and typically requires proof of fraud during the naturalization process, with courts playing a central role. *IANS*

# US court orders immigration authorities to facilitate return of wrongfully deported Indian

WASHINGTON: A US federal court, in a one of its kind verdicts, has ordered immigration authorities to facilitate the return of an Indian national who was deported to India despite a court order explicitly barring his removal. The judge ruled that the deportation was unlawful and a violation of judicial authority.

In a memorandum and order issued on January 9, the US District Court for the Southern District of Texas said Francisco D'Costa was removed from the United States on December 20, 2025, "more than three hours after the Court order prohibiting the Government from removing him" had been issued.

The court noted that it had assumed jurisdiction over D'Costa's habeas petition earlier that morning and ordered that the government "SHALL NOT remove or deport Petitioner from the United States" without first obtaining permission from the court.

Despite that order, the court said, D'Costa was placed on a Turkish Airlines flight that departed Houston at 2:55 p.m.

the same day. According to a memorandum submitted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the US Attorney's Office, ICE officials, and the detention facility had notice of the stay before the flight departed.

"The intent behind Petitioner's unlawful removal-while relevant to contempt-has no bearing on the lawfulness of the re-

ing counsel, he filed a motion to reopen his case, citing changed country conditions in India and a risk of persecution due to his conversion to Christianity, the court record shows.

The filing of that motion automatically converted his voluntary departure into a final removal order under federal regulations. The immigration judge denied a stay

*The filing of that motion automatically converted his voluntary departure into a final removal order under federal regulations. The immigration judge denied a stay request but had not ruled on the motion to reopen at the time of D'Costa's removal, the court said*

moval," the court said, rejecting the government's argument that the deportation was inadvertent.

D'Costa, a native of India who has lived in the United States since 2009, was granted voluntary departure by an immigration judge in October 2025. After retain-

request but had not ruled on the motion to reopen at the time of D'Costa's removal, the court said.

In its order, the court said removal at that stage risked depriving D'Costa of his statutory right to pursue a motion to reopen, raising serious due process concerns.

However, the government argued that facilitating D'Costa's return was unnecessary. The court lacked jurisdiction; it asserted that D'Costa could pursue further proceedings abroad. The court rejected those arguments, stating that return was required to ensure the case is handled "as it would have been had he not been improperly removed".

Citing a unanimous Supreme Court ruling, the court said facilitating return to the United States is a proper remedy when a noncitizen is unlawfully removed in violation of a court order.

The court ordered the government to facilitate D'Costa's return "as soon as possible" and directed authorities to file, within five days, a plan outlining the steps they will take to do so.

At this stage, the court denied D'Costa's request for contempt findings and monetary sanctions without prejudice, allowing those issues to be raised later if necessary, the order said. IANS

## National Conference on illegal immigration to Mumbai held at JNU

NEW DELHI: Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in collaboration with Mumbai School of Economics and Public Policy (MSEPP), University of Mumbai, Adhishthan Samajik Sanstha and Demography club of Mumbai, successfully organized the National Conference titled "The M - Silent Invasion; Illegal Immigration to Mumbai: An Analysis of Socio-economic and Political Consequences" on 8th of January 2026 at the Convention Centre, JNU, New Delhi.

The conference brought together academics, researchers, policy stakeholders, practitioners from across the country to deliberate on contemporary migration dynamics and their implications for urban governance, labor markets, environmental sustainability, public service delivery, and rights-based frameworks in metropolitan contexts.

A major academic highlight of the program was the presentation and scholarly discussion of the empirical study titled Illegal Immigration to Mumbai: An Analysis of Socio-Economic and Political Consequences, based on a large-scale primary survey of 3,014 respondents conducted across migrant-dominated localities in Mumbai. The study was discussed as one

of the most comprehensive field-based assessments of undocumented migration in the city, drawing on a mixed-method research design that included household surveys, case studies, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews.

The findings presented during the conference underscored that undocumented migration in Mumbai has evolved from an

pacity significantly magnify the impacts of such migration, placing sustained and escalating pressure on housing, sanitation, healthcare services, transport networks, and municipal infrastructure.

The study highlighted the concentration of undocumented populations in ecologically fragile and infrastructure-deficient urban zones, including Govandi, Shivaji

*The conference brought together academics, researchers, policy stakeholders, practitioners from across the country to deliberate on contemporary migration dynamics and their implications for urban governance, labor markets, environmental sustainability, public service delivery*

episodic phenomenon into a deeply entrenched and self-perpetuating structural challenge. Particular attention was drawn to sustained illegal immigration from Bangladesh and Myanmar, which has contributed to rapid population accumulation in informal and unregulated settlements. Participants noted that Mumbai's extreme population density and limited spatial ca-

Nagar (Govandi), Mankhurd, Kurla, Cheetah Camp (Trombay), Malvani-Malad West, Jogeshwari-Oshiwara, Dongri, Bhendi Bazaar, Colaba, Nagpada, Madanpura, and adjoining peripheral slum clusters and also in eco-sensitive mangrove zones of India. Once serving as the ecological lungs of Mumbai, these green patches have been steadily destroyed by

unchecked encroachment and the expansion of illegal settlements associated with undocumented immigration.

Unregulated settlement expansion in these areas was discussed as accelerating environmental degradation, loss of natural buffers, flood vulnerability, groundwater contamination, and long-term ecological damage, thereby weakening Mumbai's climate resilience and disaster preparedness. Participants warned that continued encroachment into such zones converts environmental stress into a persistent urban safety and disaster-risk concern.

From an economic perspective, deliberations emphasized severe wage suppression, displacement pressures on local workers, and distortion of informal labor markets, alongside steady remittance outflows that weaken local economic resilience. Social consequences discussed included acute gender-based vulnerabilities, deterioration in child health and nutrition outcomes, linguistic and cultural isolation, and the consolidation of spatially concentrated residential enclaves, contributing to growing social fragmentation within the city. ANI

## Chinese national charged in US for illegally photographing B-2 base and military assets in Missouri

WASHINGTON, DC: United States Attorney R. Matthew Price announced that a criminal complaint has been filed against 35-year-old Qilin Wu in the Western District of Missouri. The complaint accuses Wu of one count of unlawfully photographing a vital military facility and military assets without permission, in violation of US law, according to a press release issued by the U.S. Department of Justice.

The complaint states that on December 2, 2025, the Whiteman Air Force Base Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) looked into a report about a suspicious minivan with a Massachusetts license plate near the base perimeter.

Air Force security personnel were sent to the location

*The complaint states that on December 2, 2025, the Whiteman Air Force Base Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) looked into a report about a suspicious minivan with a Massachusetts license plate near the base perimeter*

and encountered Wu, who claimed he was there to watch the B-2 Spirit aircraft. The patrol informed Wu that taking photographs or recording video of the military base was not allowed.

According to the complaint, AFOSI was later notified that the same vehicle was again seen near Whiteman Air Force Base's perimeter fence. AFOSI agents responded and once more made contact with Wu. He admitted that he had recorded videos of the B-2 Spirit aircraft and taken numerous photos of Whiteman's fencing, an entry gate, and military equipment.

Wu showed agents his phone, which contained images of Whiteman Air Force Base and military assets he had captured. Investigators reviewed 18 photos and videos that Wu acknowledged taking of the base and its equipment. Wu also admitted photographing another U.S. Air Force installation and its aircraft as well, according to the Department of Justice press release.

Court documents state that Wu is a Chinese citizen who illegally crossed into the United States on June 22, 2023, near Nogales, Arizona. At that time, he was taken into custody by immigration officials for unlawful presence in the United States.

Due to insufficient detention space, Wu was released on recognizance while awaiting immigration removal proceedings scheduled for February 9, 2027. On December 3, 2025, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detained Wu again, the press release stated.

The complaint notes that the allegations are accusations and not proof of guilt, and Wu is presumed innocent unless proven guilty in federal court. If convicted under 18 USC 795, Wu could face up to one year in federal prison. The maximum penalty is set by Congress, and is provided for informational purposes; any final sentence would be determined by the court based on advisory guidelines and other legal considerations.

The case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney, Trey Alford and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Brandon Chiarson, with support from Trial Attorney, Brendan P. Geary of the National Security Division's Counterintelligence and Export Control Section. ANI

## NIA takes over probe into illegal Bangladeshi infiltration case from Delhi Police, begins investigation

NEW DELHI: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has taken over the investigation into a major illegal Bangladeshi immigrant infiltration case that was earlier being probed by the Delhi Police's Special Cell, officials said.

The central agency has begun its investigation and is expected to widen the scope of the probe by tracing the entire syndicate involved and following the money trail linked to the network.

Officials, privy to the development, told ANI that the NIA has also registered a fresh First Information Report (FIR) in the case as part of its takeover of the case from the Delhi Police last week.

The move comes in line with directions from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to crack down on organized networks facilitating illegal immigration and posing potential security concerns.

The case, described as a "deeper conspiracy" involving Bangladeshi nationals, was initially registered by the Delhi Police's Special Cell during a large-scale crackdown on illegal immigration in the national capital. Earlier, the Delhi Police had lodged at least two FIRs alleging a larger conspiracy behind the influx of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants into Delhi.

Multiple units of the Delhi Police were tasked with investigating various aspects of the network. These in-

cluded routes of illegal entry into India, syndicates involved in forging identity documents, individuals providing accommodation, and agents facilitating employment for illegal immigrants.

Officials said the Delhi Police FIRs were aimed at exposing the organized structure enabling illegal migration



from Bangladesh into Delhi and identifying key operatives involved at different levels.

With the NIA now in charge, the investigation is expected to focus on uncovering interstate and cross-border links, funding channels, and the wider conspiracy behind the racket. ANI

## PM Modi invites German universities to open in India, thanks Chancellor Merz for visa-free transit for Indian citizens

AHMEDABAD: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has invited German universities to establish campuses in India as part of a comprehensive roadmap on higher education development between India and Germany during German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's official visit to the country.

Addressing a joint press conference with German Chancellor Merz, PM Modi expressed his gratitude to Merz for announcing visa-free transit for Indian citizens, calling it a step that would further strengthen people-to-people ties between the two nations.

"The comprehensive roadmap on higher education that we have developed today will give a new direction to our partnership in the field of education. I invite German universities to open their campuses in India. I express my gratitude to Chancellor Merz for announcing visa-free transit for Indian citizens," the Prime Minister said.

PM Modi said the two leaders also held wide-ranging discussions on global and regional issues, including the situation in Ukraine and Gaza, adding that both countries are united in their view that terrorism poses a grave threat to humanity and remain committed to combating it together.

The Prime Minister also stressed the need to reform global institutions to address global challenges, citing joint efforts by India and Germany through the G4 group to reform the UN Security Council.

"India has consistently advocated the peaceful resolution of all conflicts and disputes and supports all initiatives aimed at achieving this goal. We are united in our belief that terrorism poses a grave threat to humanity as a whole. India and Germany remain committed to combating this menace together, with unwavering determination," he said.

"The Memorandums of Understanding being signed today will provide fresh momentum and strength to our collaboration across all these areas. India and Germany agree that reforming global institutions is crucial for addressing global challenges. Our joint efforts through the G4 group to reform the UN Security Council are a testament to this shared belief," the PM added. ANI

*"The comprehensive roadmap on higher education that we have developed today will give a new direction to our partnership in the field of education. I invite German universities to open their campuses in India*

India's REITs market cap likely to double by 2030

NEW DELHI: India's Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) market is poised for significant growth due to under penetration as REITs currently cover only 19 percent of the country's listed real estate value, a report said.

The report from real estate services firm Vestian said market capitalization is projected to almost double from \$18 billion in 2025 to \$25 billion by 2030, while REIT?able office assets to double from Rs 8.2 trillion in 2025 to Rs 16 trillion.

The global average of listed real estate value in REITs is at 57 percent compared to 19 percent of India, highlighting relative under-penetration, and huge headroom for long-term growth, according to the report.

"Alongside the expansion of retail and alternative asset classes, India is well-positioned to emerge as one of the most dynamic REIT markets globally," the report said.

Industrial and warehousing REIT and InvIT opportunities is estimated to expand from Rs 0.7 trillion to Rs 1.3 trillion by 2030, mirroring global shifts where logistics and data centers form core REIT subsectors, it said.

India currently has five listed REITs-four focused on office assets and one in the retail segment.

"As the market evolves, asset classes such as data centers, logistics, industrial parks, and warehousing offer scalable, yield-bearing opportunities aligned with mature global REIT markets," said Shrinivas Rao, FRICS, CEO, Vestian.

Office assets' listed portfolios span over 135 million sq ft, benefitting from predictable leasing demand from Global Capability Centres (GCCs), technology firms, and BFSI occupiers, supporting stable yields of 5-7 percent.

India has over 1 billion sq ft of office stock, of which nearly 500 million sq ft is considered REIT?worthy and an additional 34 million sq ft is in the pipeline, the report said. IANS

# Real Estate POST

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Bajaj Housing Finance Limited's Sambhav

Home Loan Offers Eligible Homebuyers to

Explore PMAY-U 2.0 Benefits

PUNE: Pradhan Mantri

Awas Yojana - Urban 2.0

(PMAY-U 2.0) aims to expand access to



HOUSING FINANCE

BAJAJ

homeownership for eligible urban families, particularly those who do not own a permanent home. The scheme is designed around inclusion, transparency, and improved ease of access through a structured eligibility and beneficiary identification framework. NewsVoir. ANI

## South India's realty major Olive Group bets big on MMR's new Airport Corridor

NAVI MUMBAI: South India-based real estate developer Olive Group has re-entered the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) with a development strategy focused on the Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area (NAINA), as town planning schemes and large-scale public infrastructure investments begin to unlock development potential around the upcoming Navi Mumbai International Airport.

The developer, with a legacy of 42+ years and presence across Kerala, Bengaluru and Tamil Nadu, has delivered over 47 lakhs sq. ft. of residential and hospitality projects and has a future development pipeline exceeding 1 crore sq. ft. across MMR. The renewed MMR push marks a strategic shift for the group after several years of concentration in southern India.

Olive Group's vision is anchored in the phased rollout of NAINA town planning schemes, which are providing regulatory clarity on zoning, road networks, infrastructure provisioning and phased urban development in the airport-influenced belt of Navi Mumbai.

"We are bullish about Navi Mumbai because this is one of the fastest-growing urban markets in India where planning, policy and infrastructure are converging at an unprecedented scale," said Dr. P. V. Mathai, Chairman and Managing Director, Olive Group. "Over the last four decades, I have seen how cities expand in phases--often in an uncoordinated manner. What makes the NAINA region different is that public investment, regulatory planning and execution timelines are moving in alignment."

He pointed to the scale of capital being deployed in the corridor. "Public investment running into several tens of thousands of crores is already committed to the NAINA zone through the international airport, metro rail connectivity, expressways, arterial

and social infrastructure are being designed together, which is rare in Indian urban development."

Dr. Mathai added that such alignment changes how developers must approach the market, "In environments like this, the op-



road networks, utilities and planned social and economic infrastructure such as IT and logistics parks. This level of coordinated investment typically unfolds over decades; here, it is being compressed into a single growth cycle."

According to him, the airport will act as a long-term demand anchor. "With the Navi Mumbai International Airport expected to

portunity is not to build isolated projects, but to participate in shaping sustainable urban districts. That is the lens through which we are evaluating Navi Mumbai--not as a short-term real estate play, but as a long-horizon urban development opportunity."

Industry participants note that the NAINA framework is altering the development dynamics of Navi Mumbai by enabling contiguous

*"We are bullish about Navi Mumbai because this is one of the fastest-growing urban markets in India where planning, policy and infrastructure are converging at an unprecedented scale," said Dr. P.*

*V. Mathai, Chairman and Managing Director, Olive Group*

handle up to 90 million passengers annually in phases, the region is being planned not as an extension of Mumbai, but as a city-scale economic ecosystem. Housing, employment, mobility

ous, large-format projects, as opposed to fragmented construction that has characterized many legacy urban pockets.

The Navi Mumbai International Airport, one of the country's larg-

est greenfield infrastructure projects, is backed by multi-thousand-crore public and private investment in social infrastructure as well as IT corridor, corporate parks, etc., and is expected to be operational in phases.

Olive Group has indicated plans to develop around 50 Lakh sq. ft. in the airport influence zone over the next five years. The proposed expansion will be executed through a mix of new residential developments, joint ventures and with project launches calibrated to infrastructure readiness and market absorption.

"Our real estate journey began in Navi Mumbai with more than 20 projects in the early 1990s, when the city itself was still finding its identity," said Varghese Mathew, Director, Olive Group. "What brings us back to MMR today is not nostalgia, but the emergence of a fundamentally different urban opportunity. NAINA is not about adding buildings to a city; it is about planning a city before it gets built. For the first time in the region, infrastructure, mobility, utilities, and zoning are being designed as a single system rather than being retrofitted after density arrives."

He added that the group sees NAINA as a break from legacy real estate cycles. "In most Indian cities, developers are forced to solve problems that already exist--congestion, lack of open spaces, stressed utilities.

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

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

# Latest POP ceiling designs

HARINI BALASUBRAMANIAN

Whether it is the living room, bedroom, dining room or any other part of the house, false POP ceilings can be used to cover the plain ceilings or to conceal centralized air-conditioning systems. From modern to intricate traditional designs, false ceilings can be customized in different colors, shapes and sizes, to make your living room look grand and opulent. Here's a guide to installing plaster of Paris (POP) ceilings in your living rooms and a POP ceiling design catalogue for your help.



POP ceilings can also be used to add an extra layer of insulation in your living room. If you want to give a warm look to your room, you can choose LED lights in the false ceiling. If you have a modest budget to invest on the false ceiling, you can choose simple POP designs for living room, which are easy to install, good to look at and add a minimalist look to your room.

## 1. Multi-layer POP ceiling design for hall

This POP ceiling for hall features multiple panels fitted with accent lighting fixtures for an enhanced look for the interiors.

## 2. Hall POP ceiling design with double square pattern

This POP ceiling features double square patterns intersecting to create a visually appealing ceiling design.

## 3. Modern POP ceiling for main hall with central wood panels

You can choose a simple POP ceiling design for the hall and incorporate two small wooden panels fitted at the center to give the ceiling an enhanced look.

## 4. Floral POP ceiling for roof with intricate patterns

If you are looking for an eye-catching look for your living room, consider a floral POP with additional petals with intricate carving, as shown in the image below.

## 5. Hall POP ceiling grid with modified corners

Consider a simple grid pattern and experiment with the design to give it a unique twist such as the pattern shown below, where the corners of the rectangles have been tweaked.

## 6. Thin wooden panels for POP ceiling design for hall

One of best ideas for a POP design for hall is to use thin wooden panels.

## 7. Latest POP design for roof with neutral colors

Choose a simple hall pop design in neutral colors to add elegance to your living room

## 8. Combination of panels for false ceiling



For a spacious hall with a new POP ceiling design, opt for a combination of thin wooden panels and a quirky POP ceiling panel.

## 9. Floral POP ceiling design

Make your living room interesting with a floral POP design in hall. You can try innovative patterns in this design.

## 10. Intricate patterns for ceiling design in POP

Consider intricate patterns for your POP false ceiling design.

## 11. Multiple panels with LED lights for false ceiling

A false ceiling design with multiple panels fitted with LED lights enhances the look of this living room.

## 12. POP ceiling extending up to an accent wall

Here is a quirky POP ceiling design idea for living room with panels extending up to an accent wall.

## 13. Luxury LED panels POP ceiling design for bedrooms

This is a POP ceiling design for hall with intricate patterns and LED panels, giving a regal appeal to the space.

## 14. False ceiling to conceal electrical cables

Suspended ceilings are best, when you want to optimize the space and hide electrical cables.

## 15. POP ceiling for open floor plan

This simple rectangular false POP ceiling extends up to the small dining area.

## 16. Ceiling design for hall with unique shapes and layers

Another benefit of using Plaster of Paris for your house ceiling design is that you can use molds and shapes like circles, trays, layers, squares, etc. Apart from this, it is very easy to add any design to the POP false ceiling after finishing the installation process, to re-decorate or modify the installed design.

## 17. Circular POP ceiling design

A circular false POP ceiling design has been enhanced with wave-like patterns.

## 18. POP ceiling with multiple circular panels

This false POP ceiling design has multiple circular panels, giving a unique look to this house.

## 19. POP ceiling design with curves

A huge POP ceiling design with circular patterns has been elegantly combined with wooden panels.

## 20. Spiral POP ceiling design effect

This POP ceiling design has a spiral effect, illuminated by LED lights. The overall design adds a regal touch to the room. [www.housing.com](http://www.housing.com)

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



## India's office leasing hits record 20 pc growth in 2025, residential sales steady

NEW DELHI: India's office market touched record high in 2025, with annual gross leasing surging to 86.4 million sq ft, up 20 percent (year-on-year) and 43 percent above the pre-pandemic 2019 peak, a recent report said.

Real estate services firm Knight Frank India said that on the residential front, sales across eight major cities held broadly steady at 3,48,204 units in 2025, easing 1 percent YoY.

In the same period, new launches were recorded at 362,184 units across the top markets easing 3 percent YoY. Mumbai accounted for 29 percent of sales with 97,188 units.

On the office market front, the scale of activity reflected sustained occupier demand and positions India as a global leader among commercial real estate markets, the report said.

Strong performance across regions reflected the maturity of India's office ecosystem, supported by robust talent pools, resilient demand drivers and disciplined supply.



"With annual leasing volumes rising over 20 percent YoY, the current cycle marks not just a numerical high but a structural shift in how global and domestic enterprises view India as a long-term business destination," said Shishir Baijal, International Partner, Chairman and Managing Director, Knight Frank India.

Bengaluru led the office market with a historic 28.7 million sq ft of leasing. Delhi-NCR retained its position as India's second-largest office market in terms of total stock. The residential sector, meanwhile, entered a phase of measured normalization after three consecutive years of elevated activity, supported by end-user activity and sustained by premiumisation and firm price growth, the report noted.

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) accounted for 38 percent of total absorption, while third-party IT services rebounded strongly, taking 15.3 million sq ft (20 percent of transacted area), up 94 percent YoY.

Flexible workspace operators leased a record 18.6 million sq ft, marking 19 percent surge YoY. Rents grew between 1 percent and 16 percent YoY across all markets in H2 2025, led by Kolkata (16 percent), with NCR and Hyderabad surging 10 percent each. IANS

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January 16, 2026

## Samantha Ruth Prabhu praises Yami Gautam for 'Haq'

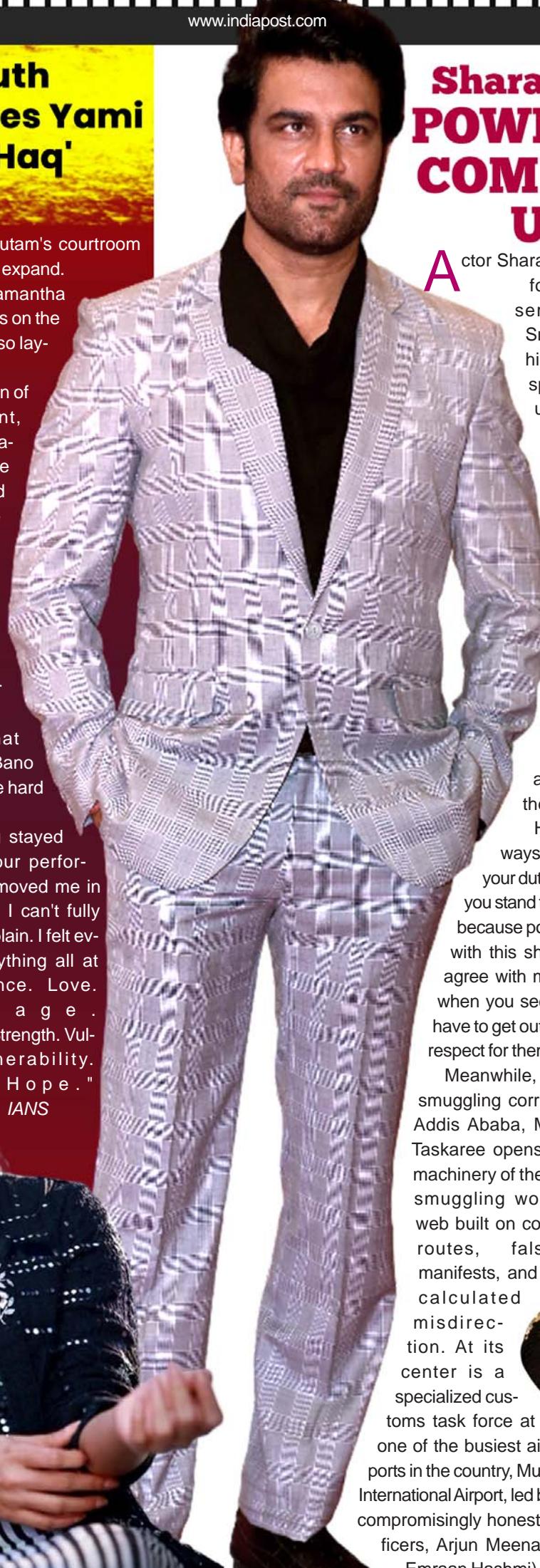
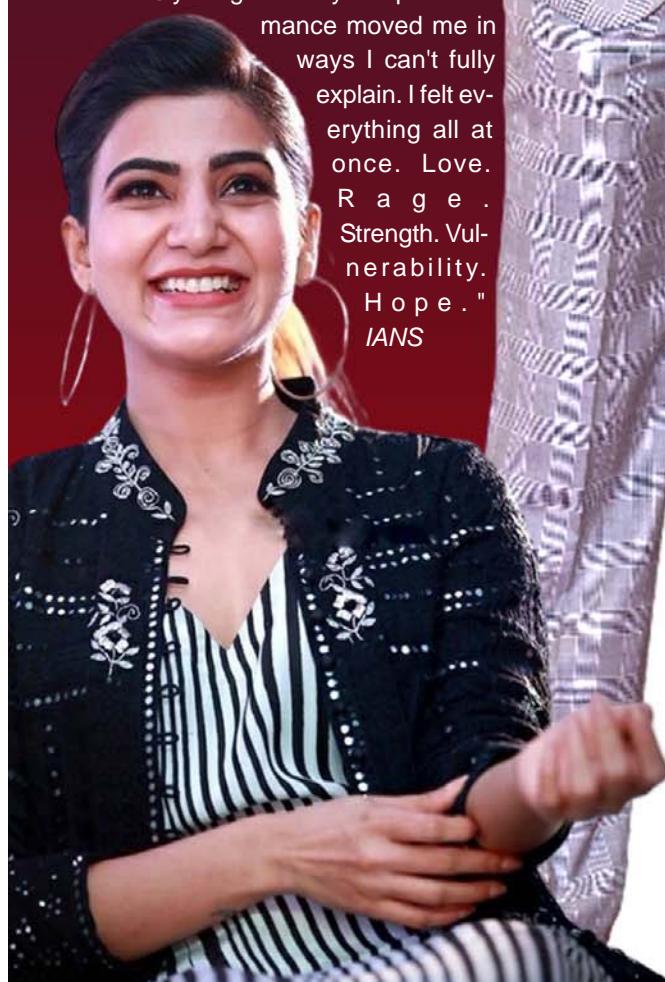
The fan club for Yami Gautam's courtroom drama "Haq" continues to expand.

Most recently, actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu showered praises on the team for making a film that is so layered and so free of judgment.

Taking to the Stories section of her Instagram account, Samantha penned an appreciation post saying, "I had to write this the moment the film ended because I was scared I'd lose even a fraction of what it made me feel. Stories like this are rare. So deeply human. So layered. So free of judgment or bias. And even rarer when they're brought alive by an actor of this caliber @yamigautam. (sic)."

Samantha admitted that Yami's portrayal as Shazia Bano left her moved in ways that are hard for her to put into words.

"@reshunath your writing stayed with me. @yamigautam your performance moved me in ways I can't fully explain. I felt everything all at once. Love. Rage. Strength. Vulnerability. Hope." /ANS



## Sharad Kelkar on POWER THAT COMES WITH UNIFORM

Actor Sharad Kelkar, who is gearing up for his upcoming streaming series 'Taskaree: The Smuggler's Web', has shared his opinion on the sense of responsibility that comes with a uniform.

The actor recently spoke with IANS, and said that power may corrupt a person, and it's important to have checks and balances to keep the corruption due to power at bay.

He told IANS, "It's a very interesting side of any uniform because sometimes power can take you on a different tangent altogether. So, you need to be very thoughtful and sensible. That's why there's the training part of it".

He further mentioned, "They always keep in mind about what are your duties, what you have to do. What you stand for, our country's priority and all because power can corrupt anyone. But, with this show I think everybody will agree with me, that the fear you get when you see a custom officer, you have to get out of it, and there must be respect for them after the show".

Meanwhile, the series spans key smuggling corridors across Al-Dera, Addis Ababa, Milan and Bangkok, Taskaree opens up the complex machinery of the international smuggling world- a web built on coded routes, false manifests, and calculated misdirection. At its center is a specialized customs task force at one of the busiest airports in the country, Mumbai International Airport, led by an uncompromisingly honest team of officers, Arjun Meena (played by Emraan Hashmi) /ANS

## TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Gehra Hua: Dhurandhar
- 2 Ishq Jalakar - Karvaan: Dhurandhar
- 3 Dhurandhar - Title Track: Dhurandhar
- 4 Aawaara Angaara: Tere Ishk Mein
- 5 Sitaare: Ikkis
- 6 Saiyaara: Saiyaara
- 7 Shararat: Dhurandhar
- 8 Lutt Le Gaya: Dhurandhar
- 9 Deewaniyat : Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat
- 10 Sahiba: Sahiba-Aditya Rikhari

## Shruti Haasan inspires with workout: 'Focus, fight, find'

Actress Shruti Haasan is well known for her love for kickboxing and fitness in general. However, recently she had taken some time off her fitness regime to focus on her health as she was suffering from the flu.

Now, Shruti has decided to finally get back to her routine and also dropped a sneak peek of her recent workout session on social media.

Taking to her Insta Stories, she posted a video of herself working on her arm strength using resistance bands hanging from the roof. In the next clip, she was seen practicing her impressive kickboxing moves with her trainer.

Through the various texts in the posts, Shruti conveyed that getting back to her workout session post-break feels like death. Nevertheless, she is determined to fight and focus on improving herself. /ANS



## AMANDEEP SIDHU RECALLS UNIQUE PROPOSAL WHILE FLYING KITES

Actress Amandeep Sidhu, who essays the role of Sneha on the television show 'Ganga Mai Ki Betiyan', has shared a special memory of flying kites from her childhood.

She recollects how she was once proposed to by a guy in childhood, and the best part was that the two never spoke to each other.

Sharing her childhood Makar Sankranti proposal, Amandeep said, "The kite proposal scene that I shot for 'Ganga Mai Ki Betiyan' was actually very special and a little crazy for me because it brought back a personal memory. When I was living in Delhi and was probably in the seventh or eighth standard, there was a boy who lived in my lane. It was a typical galli-mohalle wala childhood love. We never really spoke, no hi or hello, but we used to see each other from our windows at a fixed time. In Delhi, we usually fly kites on August 15, and on that day, when we were flying kites, he wrote his phone number on one of them. I still remember it clearly, and yes, I did call him later".

Talking about the Makar Sankranti scene that she recently shot for 'Ganga Mai Ki Betiyan', the actress shared that while the scenes look super fun on screen, they were equally challenging to shoot off screen. *IANS*



## Ishita Dutta on motherhood and 'bittersweet' travelling

Actress Ishita Dutta opened up about her dilemma as a mother of two young kids. She revealed through her latest social media post that she has been grappling with something that every mother might be able to relate to.

Ishita said that she is someone who loves to travel, but these days, whenever she steps out, she tends to miss her children badly as her heart continues to remain with them.

However, when she is at home, all she wants to do is step out and expand her horizon. Sharing a photo of herself in the Stories section of her Instagram, Ishita penned, "I've always loved travelling. But now it's bittersweet- because my heart stays back with my kids. When I'm home, I want to step out and be something more. The moment I do, all I want is them - checking in, stalking pictures, missing them endlessly. (sic)"

Ishita and her actor husband, Vatsal Sheth, embraced parenthood for the second time in June 2025 as they welcomed their daughter Veda. *IANS*

## Anita Hassanandani fuels second PREGNANCY RUMORS & 2026 PLANS

Actress Anita Hassanandani has sparked fresh speculations, and has hinted at her second pregnancy after sharing a light-hearted yet thought-provoking post on social media. The actress, who is known for her candid online presence, left fans guessing after posting a reel that quickly drew attention and reactions from fellow celebrities.

In the video, Anita is seen in a casual avatar, appearing deep in thought, with a text on her video that read, "Deciding whether to get hot & sexy... or pregnant in 2026."

Adding a fun angle to the post, the actress captioned it as, "My husband is gonna kill me." The comment section soon turned into a discussion spot, with several celebrities giving their own suggestions.

Actress Neha Dhupia commented, "Pregnant is hot n sexy too !!!!". Anita's husband and entrepreneur Rohit Reddy, also reacted with humor, writing, "Why is it mutually exclusive?"

Meanwhile, actress Tina Datta kept it simple and wrote, "Pregnanttt!"

For the uninitiated, Anita Hassanandani is already a mother to Aarav Reddy who was born in 2021. The actress married businessman Rohit Reddy in 2013.

Anita is a popular face on Indian television, and has delivered several memorable performances, most notably as Shagun Arora in the hit show *Yeh Hai Mohabbatein*.

She was also widely loved for her portrayal of the vamp Shesha in Ekta Kapoor's *Naagin*.

Apart from television, Anita has also featured in movies like *Kuch To Hai*, *Krishna Cottage*, and *Yeh Dil*.

Anita who earlier went by the screen name Natasha, has been a part of the entertainment industry for almost 25 years. *IANS*





## Future of Fashion and Creative Disciplines Take Center Stage at Wisdom College, Noida

**NOIDA:** Wisdom: The Design Era - Fashion Week, hosted by Wisdom College for Creativity & Design, concluded successfully at Golden Dreams, sector 51, Noida, celebrating student creativity, innovation, and future-ready education across multiple design and technology disciplines.

The fashion week showcased original student designer collections inspired by Kolkata, Chennai, Ghaziabad, and Lucknow, highlighting strong narratives, craftsmanship, and contemporary design thinking. The event was inaugurated by, Chief Guest Shri Rakesh Mishra, Chairman, M.R. Group of Companies & President, Ghaziabad Cricket Association.

The runway experience was curated under the expert direction of Show Directors Sham Khan and Khizar Hussain, who brought professional finesse, industry insight, and mentorship to the student-led platform.

The showcase was further elevated by special designer presentations from Kingshuk Bhaduri, Prince Lahot, Sangeeta Kumari, Ashfaque Ahmad, and Gagan Kumar, offering students valuable exposure to real-world fashion and creative industry standards.

**THE RUNWAY EXPERIENCE WAS CURATED UNDER THE EXPERT DIRECTION OF SHOW DIRECTORS SHAM KHAN AND KHIZAR HUSSAIN, WHO BROUGHT PROFESSIONAL FINESSE, INDUSTRY INSIGHT, AND MENTORSHIP TO THE STUDENT-LED PLATFORM**



Beyond fashion, Wisdom: The Design Era also highlighted student excellence in Interior Design, Graphic Design, and Data Science & Artificial Intelligence, reinforcing the institution's commitment to multidisciplinary, future-focused education where creativity meets technology.

The event was seamlessly executed by the Management Team led by Mrs Puja Agarwal, under the overall guidance of Organizer Dr Alam Sageer, ensuring smooth coordination and high-quality experience for participants and guests.

**Vision Byte - Wisdom: The Design Era**

"Fashion is not just worn, it is understood. Wisdom: The Design Era empowers students to express ideas, culture, and identity--while bridging education with the professional fashion, design, and technology industries."

The event stood out as a vibrant platform nurturing the next generation of designers, innovators, and creative leaders.

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

### Ambience Mall Gurugram - The Preferred Destination for Luxury Shopping, Fashion and Entertainment

**GURUGRAM:** When conversations revolve around the best malls in Gurugram, Ambience Mall consistently emerges as a preferred choice, not by default, but by experience. In a city with several shopping and leisure destinations, Ambience Mall stands out for its thoughtfully curated brand mix, large-scale ambience, and engaging experiences that make visitors return by choice.



Strategically located and continually evolving, Ambience Mall has grown into a landmark that unites luxury shopping, high-street fashion, gourmet dining, beauty, entertainment and family-friendly experiences under one roof. It is more than just a mall, it is a complete lifestyle destination where people don't simply shop, but spend the day exploring, engaging and indulging.

#### The ultimate hub for luxury and designer fashion

Ambience Mall has firmly established itself as one of the foremost destinations for luxury and designer fashion in Gurugram. International luxury brands and designer boutiques lend the mall an aspirational appeal. Alongside them, celebrated Indian designers and luxury brands make it the preferred spot for wedding wear, festive couture and special-occasion dressing. From haute couture statements to elegant designer collections, the mall delivers a fashion experience that rivals global shopping districts, reinforcing its reputation as the best mall in Gurugram for luxury fashion. *PNN*

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## Philosophy

PARAMHANSA YOGANANDA

Change-even change for the better-is often approached with apprehension. "In giving up something," people think, "will I be left with nothing?" It takes courage to renounce the known for the unknown. It is not easy even to renounce a familiar pain for an unknown, and therefore uncertain, happiness.

The mind is like a horse that for years has pulled its delivery wagon. The horse grows accustomed to its daily route, and cannot be convinced easily to walk a new one. The mind, too, will not lightly abandon its old habits, even when it knows they cause only misery.

Beneficial changes should be embraced with courage. As long as one's hopes for better things are opposed by fear of their attainment, the mind can never be at peace. Accept change, therefore, as life's only constant.

Our lives are an endless procession of gains and losses, of joys and sorrows,



Paramhansa Yogananda

communion.

Your spiritual enthusiasm, long wilted, can be revived. Only drink once more the ancient wine of God communion. In the field of fervent spiritual endeavor, as, daily, you work the softened soil of renewed soul perceptions, sow once again the seeds of spiritual success, and watch

them grow into a new crop of divine joy.

Instead of being overcome and discouraged when confronted with what you think is trouble, thank the Father for offering you the opportunity to see what you need to learn and to develop the strength and wisdom to meet the challenge.

Karma is best worked out by meeting life's tests cheerfully and courageously. If you still fear something, that karma has not yet been worked out. To dissipate it, don't try to avoid the tests you have to face. Rise above them bravely, by dwelling in God's joy within. At any given moment you have all the courage, strength, and intelligence necessary to overcome any seeming difficulty. Become still, men-

## Accept change as life's only constant

*By daily efforts in meditation he conquers flesh-consciousness*

of hopes and disappointments. At one moment we find ourselves threatened by the storms of trials; moments later, a silver lining brightens the grey clouds; then, suddenly, the skies are blue again. The sincere seeker, in contrast to the armchair "seeker" who wastes his life spinning intellectual theories, takes heart at the thought of the hard work before him.

A true warrior, though afraid, plunges courageously into battle when the strength of his arm is needed. A true alpinist, though apprehensive of the sheer cliff he faces, sets out resolutely to conquer it. And the sincere truth seeker tells himself, "I know what an arduous task it must be to achieve perfection, but I will give it all I have. With God's help, success, surely, must be mine!"

By deep, daily efforts in meditation he conquers flesh-consciousness at last, and regains his long lost awareness of the divine bliss within. No matter how dry, clay-hard, and cracked the soil of your heart has become during famine years of sense indulgence, of failure and disappointment, it can be watered and softened again by peace-showers of inner

tally and physically. Retire to your center of poise within, and commune with your Father there. He will show you the way.

There is a right solution to every problem. I have within me the wisdom and intelligence to see this solution, and the courage and energy to carry it through. God is within me and around me, protecting me, so I banish the gloom of fear that shuts out His guiding light.

*Excerpted from 'How to have Courage, Calmness and Confidence'. The 133rd birth anniversary of Paramhansa Yogananda was observed on January 5*

### 50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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Jac O'Keeffe  
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## Violence Against Hindus:

# Is Bangladesh burying its founding ideals of secularism and pluralism?

SALAH UDDIN SHOAIB CHOUDHURY

They were not militants. They were not criminals. They were workers, traders, shopkeepers - ordinary Hindu citizens of Bangladesh whose only "crime" was their faith. Beaten to death by mobs, burnt alive, stabbed, or shot at close range, at least six Hindus have been killed in less than a month, while global outrage remains conspicuously absent. No mass protests. No sustained media pressure. No urgency. Just funerals - and silence. In Bangladesh today, being Hindu has quietly become a life-threatening condition.

A nation does not collapse overnight; it erodes quietly, one ignored crime at a time. In Bangladesh today, that erosion is being written in blood - Hindu blood - spilled through lynchings, arson, stabbings, and executions, while the world watches in deliberate silence. When citizens are murdered for their faith and the state responds

not only his life but his very identity.

The US Department of State rightly described the killing as "horrific" and urged an "unequivocal stand against religious hatred". But such statements lose all meaning when the Yunus regime in Dhaka, propped up by Islamists, jihadist networks, and Pakistan's notorious Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), treats them as background noise. There was no decisive action, no serious reckoning - only silence dressed up as governance.

What followed exposed a grim pattern. On Christmas Eve, Amrit Mandal, also known as Samrat, was killed in Rajbari's Pangsha upazila. Instead of acknowledging the obvious communal dimension, the regime hurried to issue a press statement calling the incident "unfortunate", while insisting it was "not at all communally motivated". Such semantic acrobatics are not accidental. They are designed to shield extremists and dull public conscience.

Just days later, on December 29, 2025, Bajendra Biswas, a member of the Ansar force, was killed by his Muslim colleague in the Bhaluka area of Mymensingh. Once again, the authorities appeared more interested in damage control than justice.

Then came one of the most horrifying cases - Khokon Chandra Das, a Hindu businessman from Damudya upazila in Shariatpur district. He was stabbed multiple times in the lower abdomen and then set on fire. He later died at Dhaka's National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery. This was not spontaneous rage. It was cruelty executed with intent.

On January 5, 2026, Rana Pratap Bairagi, a Hindu trader from Arua village in Jashore's Keshabpur upazila, was shot in the head at point-blank range. There was no mob frenzy, no provocation story - just an execution. He died on the spot.

The author is a journalist, writer, and editor-publisher of the Weekly Blitz. He specializes in counterterrorism and regional geopolitics) *South Asia Monitor*

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

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# Trump's tariff gambit: Will it deepen Cohesion among Global South?

M A HOSSAIN

There are wars that begin with missiles and those that begin with memos. Donald Trump's latest economic offensive belongs firmly to the second category. A 500 percent tariff threat on India-embedded in the so-called Sanctioning Russia Act of 2025-is not merely an escalation of sanctions policy. It is something larger, and far more destabilizing: an undeclared trade war against the Global South, waged under the moral pretext of Ukraine and the strategic paranoia of American decline.

History offers a cautionary note. Great powers rarely announce their decline; they legislate it. Britain's imperial unravelling did not begin with Suez in 1956, but with decades of imperial overreach masked as order-keeping. The Trump administration now risks repeating that error-confusing coercion for leadership, tariffs for diplomacy, and punishment for persuasion.

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## When Economic Statecraft Turns Punitive

Let us be clear about what is happening. By empowering the U.S. president to impose tariffs of at least 500 percent on countries that continue to buy Russian oil, Washington is not just sanctioning Moscow. It is sanctioning the economic reality of the Global South. India, China, Brazil-large, sovereign economies with legitimate energy needs-are being told that their domestic priorities must bow to Washington's geopolitical timetable. That is not alliance management; it is economic extortion.

India's case is especially instructive. For decades, New Delhi has been courted as a stra-

tegic counterweight to China. It is a member of the Quad, a defense partner, and a democracy with its own complicated security calculus. Yet under Trump's "Liberation Day" tariff regime, India now faces cumulative U.S. tariffs of 50 percent, with the threat of a leap to 500 percent hanging overhead. One wonders how long Washington expects Indian goodwill to survive such treatment.

This is where the policy slides from tough to self-defeating. The Trump administration seems to believe that economic pain automatically translates into political obedience. The record suggests otherwise. Sanctions often harden resistance, incentivize alternative networks, and accelerate precisely the forms of cooperation they are meant to prevent. The U.S. embargo on Cuba lasted six decades and achieved exactly nothing beyond diplomatic isolation for Washington.

mentum because the U.S. increasingly weaponized the dollar. When access to global finance becomes contingent on political alignment with Washington, diversification ceases to be rebellion and becomes prudence. Trump's hostility toward BRICS is not containing its influence; it is advertising its necessity.

## Mockery of Modern Statecraft

Nowhere is this contradiction more glaring than in Venezuela. The Trump administration's approach there is a mockery of modern statecraft. On the one hand, Washington denounces Caracas as illegitimate. On the other, it reportedly pressures Venezuela to hand over 50 million barrels of oil while encouraging U.S. private equity to position itself for mining and energy extraction in a "post-Maduro" future-backed, if necessary, by military protection.

This is not regime change dressed up as human rights. It is resource politics stripped of its rhetoric. The involvement of the Department of Defense in advising on security for mining projects, the Commerce Department's advocacy for private equity, and the selective relaxation of sanctions for favored firms like Chevron all point to a familiar pattern. From Noriega to Iraq, the United States has tried this before. It rarely ends well.

More importantly, it reinforces a perception across the Global South that American power is no longer anchored in rules, but in opportunism. That perception matters. The Global South today accounts for roughly one-third of global GDP and about one-third of the world's population. It is not a marginal bloc that can be browbeaten into compliance without consequences.

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## HOPE AMIDST CHAOS

Today, wars across the world exist in a constant state of moral, political, and human mess. They have erupted in different regions and landscapes; yet follow the same cruel pattern. Power struggles, historical wounds, fear and ambition collides, and ordinary lives shattered in the process. Cities that once held laughter become coordinates on a map of destruction. Homes turn into debris. Borders blur, not just on land, but also in conscience. The noise of war is deafening, yet its meaning is often confused.

Leaders speak in polished sentences about security, defense, and necessity, while the ground reality is chaotic and cruel. Missiles do not distinguish between soldier and child. Sanctions do not feel abstract to families searching for food. Wars are justified in conference rooms but endured in hospitals, shelters, and refugee camps. The language of power rarely matches the language of pain. Across continents, civilians carry the heaviest burden. Children grow up learning the sound of sirens before songs. Parents measure days by survival rather than dreams. Education pauses, healthcare collapses, and trauma settles in quietly, long after the bombs stop falling.

Displacement becomes a permanent condition, turning millions into statistics rather than stories. Refugees cross borders only to meet suspicion, exhaustion, and uncertainty. The global response often mirrors the mess itself. Outrage is selective, attention is temporary, and compassion competes with political interest. Social media floods with images, hash tags, and opinions, but clarity is rare. One war trends while another is forgotten. Sympathy depends on geography, alliances, and headlines. In this noise, human suffering risks becoming background static. War also corrodes truth. Propaganda spreads faster than facts. Each side claims righteousness, each blames the other, and the space for nuance disappears.

People far from the battlefield argue fiercely, choosing sides as if war were a game, while those living through it simply want it to end. The mess is not just physical destruction, but ethical confusion about justice, responsibility, and silence. Yet even in this disorder, fragile threads of hope remain. Doctors operate under fire. Journalists risk lives to document reality. Volunteers share food, shelter, and courage. Survivors rebuild, not because they believe in easy peace, but because life insists on continuing. These acts rarely make headlines, but they are proof that humanity has not fully collapsed.

Wars across the world reveal a painful truth: despite progress, technology, and diplomacy, humanity still struggles to resolve conflicts without destruction.

The mess persists because violence is treated as inevitable rather than preventable. Until global priorities shift from dominance to cooperation, wars will continue to repeat themselves in different names, same suffering. In the end, wars are not distant events. They are shared failures, echoing across borders and generations. The mess they create does not stay contained. It spreads through economies, politics, minds, and memories. And while the world watches, divided and overwhelmed, the victims keep waiting for peace, for justice, and for a future not written in vain. What makes it worse is America, which was once seen as the world's leader for peace, prosperity and freedom, now turning into the creator of chaos and promoter of war.

Lets us all hope that the world gives peace a chance!

# Travel & Hospitality Post

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**J**ibhi, often called the "Hamlet of Himachal," is a serene and lesser-explored village in the Banjar Valley of Himachal Pradesh. Nestled along the banks of the Tirthan River, Jibhi is known for its lush pine forests, traditional wooden architecture, and tranquil ambiance, making it a perfect escape for nature lovers and backpackers. Unlike the more commercialized hill stations, Jibhi offers an offbeat retreat where travelers can unwind by the riverside, hike through dense forests, and immerse themselves in the untouched beauty of the Himalayas.

The best time to visit is from March to June, when the weather is pleasant and ideal for outdoor activities, and from September to November, when autumn colors enhance the valley's charm. Winters (December to February) bring snowfall, turning Jibhi into a picturesque wonderland, perfect for those looking to experience a quiet, snow-clad retreat.

Jibhi offers a perfect mix of adventure and relaxation. A short hike leads to the serene Jibhi Waterfall, while Jalori Pass provides breathtaking views and access to the sacred Serolsar Lake. Chaini Kothi, a historic watchtower, showcases traditional Himachali architecture. Nearby, Tirthan Valley is known for trout fishing, riverside camping, and the Great Himalayan National Park. Trekkers can explore Raghupur Fort for stunning Himalayan views, while cultural experiences await at local temples and village homestays.

A 3 to 4-day trip is ideal to explore Jibhi at a relaxed pace. Accommodation options range from cozy wooden homestays and boutique guesthouses to riverside cottages and eco-lodges. Many homestays, run by locals, provide an authentic experience with home-cooked meals and breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains. Budget travelers can find affordable hostels, while those seeking luxury can opt for boutique resorts offering premium stays amidst nature.

Jibhi's cuisine is a blend of traditional Himachali flavors and locally sourced ingredients. Must-try dishes include Siddu (a stuffed steamed bread), Chana Madra (a yogurt-based chickpea curry), and Babru (a Himachali-style stuffed puri). The region is also known for its fresh trout, cooked in local spices. Cafés and homestays serve a variety of organic teas, homemade jams, and baked goods. While Jibhi doesn't have bustling markets, visitors can buy handcrafted woolens, local honey, and dry fruits from nearby villages as souvenirs.

The nearest town, Aut, on the Chandigarh-Manali highway, is 35 km away, with a scenic mountain drive leading to Jibhi. The closest airport is Bhuntar (60 km), and the nearest railway station is Joginder Nagar. Buses to Banjar and local taxis provide access. In winter, check road conditions as snowfall may cause closures. While generally safe, carrying cash is recommended due to limited ATMs.

## Things to do in and around Jibhi

**Camping:** The endless green fields in Jibhi often turn into camping sites. The beauty of this place can be relished to the fullest only if you spend some time in camps. Light a bonfire in the night and sit under the starry sky cozily near it and experience the true wonders of nature.

**Hiking:** The rocky terrain of this place calls for a lot of hiking to do. Hiking is the best way to explore and be familiar with this place. Hiking in this mesmerizing place filled with thick trees and picturesque will relieve you from the stress of everyday life and provide you with inner peace.

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