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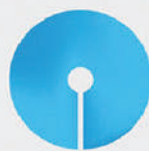
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India to reopen Embassy in Kabul

► Details on page 20



Vidya Balan's manifestation for 'Parineeta'

► Details on page 58

INDIA POST

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survey@indiapost.com

This week's question

Will the Pakistan-Afghanistan ceasefire last?

Last week's result

Will Ukraine & Russia agree to stop war?

YES 2%

NO 98%

INDIA'S MOMENT

"This is India's moment," says US media leader Mark A. Aitken

MARYLAND: Hailing India's transformation from an underdog to a global technology powerhouse, Mark A. Aitken, Senior Vice President of Sinclair Broadcast Group, has said that the country has moved from "potential to execution" and is now "reshaping the global economy."

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"Even as India grappled with infrastructure gaps and economic constraints, I saw something else: resolve. India was not merely catching up. It was preparing to leap ahead," he noted.

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PM Modi meets Canadian FM Anita Anand

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Kartik's first-ever Filmfare Best Actor award

► Details on page 40



Ayodhya: Birthplace of Lord Ram

► Details on page 66

FREMONT CITY IN CALIFORNIA PROCLAIMS OCTOBER AS HINDU HERITAGE MONTH



FOG (Festival of Globe) Founder, Dr. Romesh Japra (third from left) received Fremont City Proclamation from the city Mayor Dr. Raj Salwan. **Details on page 24**

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HIGHLIGHTS

Bollywood:

Vidya Balan's manifestation for 'Parineeta'



Vidya revealed that when she heard 'Seekho Na Naino Ki Bhasha Piya', she started wishing to work with a director like Pradeep Sarkar

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Lifestyle:

Filmfare Best Actor Award

Overwhelmed with emotion, the 'Dhamaka' actor Kartik Aryan expressed his gratitude and reflected on the journey that brought him to this milestone

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INDIA'S MOMENT



In a short piece on LinkedIn, " India's Moment: A Tribute to a Nation in Transformation", Mark A. Aitken highlighted India's growth

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Techbiz:

Confidence of Indian CEOs

Confidence among Chief Executive Officers in India climbed to 83 percent, up from 68 percent in 2024 - a leap that outpaces CEOs globally

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Hindu Heritage Month



On October 14th, 2025, Fremont City Council recognized the immense contributions Hindu community has made toward growth and development of the city

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Ayodhya: "Birthplace of Lord Ram"

This ancient city holds immense significance for millions of Hindus, serving as a pilgrimage site where devotees pay homage to Lord Rama

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Immigration:

India's Embassy in Kabul



Minister S Jaishankar expressed India's commitment to Afghanistan and announced India's upgradation of Technical Mission in Kabul to the status of Embassy

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Women, 7 out of 10 patients

Young women, account for 7 out of 10 patients with autoimmune diseases, said experts, emphasizing need for increasing awareness and early screening

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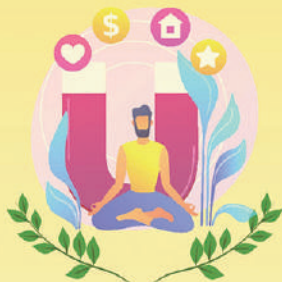
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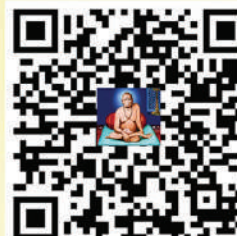
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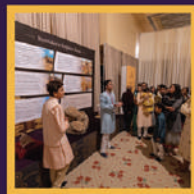
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INDIA'S MOMENT

"This is India's moment," says US media leader Mark A. Aitken

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"Even as India grappled with infrastructure gaps and economic constraints, I saw something else: resolve. India was not merely catching up. It was preparing to leap ahead," he noted.

"India is not simply participating in the global economy. India is reshaping it," he said, citing examples like UPI-enabled financial inclusion, indigenous 4G/5G technology, and the Chandrayaan-3 lunar mission.

The US media executive emphasized that India's most significant resource lies in its people.

"India's greatest resource is not buried underground or locked in vaults. It walks its campuses, staffs its labs, works in factories and codes its platforms," he said.

He credited India's education system and diaspora for shaping world-class talent that leads major global institutions.

Aitken also praised India's policy direction under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, noting that programs such as Digital India, Make in India, and Startup India are not "slogans" but "strategies, and they are working."

Reflecting on his continued engagement with India over the past eight years, Aitken said his work on Direct-to-Mobile (D2M) technologies represents more than just innovation it symbolizes human connection.

"Bringing people together is what builds

nations. I believe that D2M is an integral part of bringing people together. And that, my friends, is far bigger than India," he said.

Aitken added, "Back in 1998, I said that if India could channel its human capital



Mark A. Aitken

with national focus, it wouldn't just be part of the future, it would define it. That future is now unfolding. India is not just taking the stage, it is shaping the script. This is India's moment." ANI

"In 1998, I believed India would lead the world. In 2025, it is. From satellites to semiconductors, from public platforms to space missions this is India's moment," Aitken said in a statement reflecting on his decades-long engagement with India's broadcast and digital ecosystem

"In 1998, I believed India would lead the world. In 2025, it is. From satellites to semiconductors, from public platforms to space missions this is India's moment," Aitken said in a statement reflecting on his decades-long engagement with India's broadcast and digital ecosystem.

Two decades later, he says, India has indeed "leapt, and is soaring."

Aitken lauded India's progress in sectors such as digital connectivity, semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and broadcasting, saying the country has become a "leader, especially for the Global South."

Trump praises 'good friend' Modi as Sharif rolls out carpet of eulogies

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi - despite not being able to attend the Gaza Peace Summit in Sharm El-Sheikh due to prescheduled commitments - was paid warm tributes by co-host US President Donald Trump, much to the discomfort of Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Trump, beaming at the cameras. Intermittently turning towards Sharif, who was standing behind the US President during the latter's concluding address at the Summit, Trump urged India and Pakistan would "live very nicely together".

The slight laughter from world leaders

tions to the peace process. Calling the day as one of the greatest in contemporary history, the Pakistan PM spoke about how peace has been achieved "after untiring efforts led by President Trump". Sharif also thanked Trump, crediting him with averting a nuclear escalation between India and

drawing worldwide praise for his efforts at a truce in Gaza and evolving a 20-point program towards that end, the President appeared somewhat embarrassed when he reacted to Sharif's eulogies with an exclamation, sharing that he had not expected such remarks.

Yet, Trump has earlier himself been talking about his pivotal role in the peace process and hostage exchange, taking credit for preventing a war between India and Pakistan for the umpteenth time. He cited the Gaza truce as one of the eight conflicts he had resolved in the eight years of his second term. The US President, while referring to the Pakistan Prime Minister, also mentioned General Asim Munir by name, though he was not present among the heads of state.

The reference indicates an apparent wave of the power the Pakistan Army wields over an elected government. "Asim Munir," he stated, "is my favorite field marshal." IANS

"India is a great country with a very good friend of mine at the top, and he's done a fantastic job. I think that Pakistan and India are going to live very nicely together"

The Summit at the resort-town was also co-hosted by Egypt's President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi.

"India is a great country with a very good friend of mine at the top, and he's done a fantastic job. I think that Pakistan and India are going to live very nicely together," said

present was audible during a televised address. Incidentally, the US President paused his speech to invite Sharif to say a few words in what appeared to be an impromptu gesture.

Clearly taken unawares, Sharif limited his address in hailing Trump's contribu-



Pakistan. According to him, without the US President's intervention, the conflict between the two countries with nuclear power could have spiraled into unimaginable devastation.

He also announced nominating Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize again. Despite

PM Modi hails efforts to impart 'new momentum' in bilateral ties during meeting with Canadian FM

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has conveyed to Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand that her India visit would contribute to ongoing efforts to impart new momentum to the India-Canada bilateral partnership.

PM Modi hails 'new momentum' in bilateral ties during meeting with Canadian FM Anand, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Canada, as she called on PM Modi before holding discussions with External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar.

Welcoming Anand, Prime Minister Modi recalled his visit to Canada in June this year for the G7 Summit during which he held an "extremely productive" meeting with Prime Minister Mark Carney.

"Prime Minister noted the significance of enhanced cooperation between the two countries in trade, energy, technology, agriculture and people-to-people ties. Prime Minister conveyed his warm wishes to Prime Minister Mark Carney and said that he looked forward to their upcoming engagements," read a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

"I met with Prime Minister Narendra



Canada Foreign Affairs Minister Anita Anand meets with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in New Delhi. (@narendramodi X/ANI Photo)

Modi this morning in New Delhi. Building on the momentum of Prime Minister Mark Carney's meeting with PM Modi this summer at the G7 Summit, Canada and India are elevating the relationship between our countries, while maintaining our law enforcement and security dialogue and expanding our economic relationship," Anand posted on X after the meeting with PM Modi.

Earlier, EAM Jaishankar said that the ties between India and Canada have been steadily progressing in the past few months, and the two nations are working to restore the mechanisms necessary to advance the partnership.

Welcoming Anand on her first visit to India as Canada's Foreign Minister, EAM Jaishankar said, "India-Canada bilateral relations have been steadily progressing in the last few months. We are working to restore and reinvigorate the mechanisms necessary to advance our partnership."

"As Prime Minister Modi noted during his meeting with Prime Minister Carney in Kananaskis, India's approach is to move forward with a positive mindset. This morning, you met the Prime Minister. You have heard from him personally about our vision of cooperation and how best to realize it," he added.

He also recalled the "productive" meeting between National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval and Canadian NSA Nathalie G. Drouin, calling it "an important first step towards enhancing our security cooperation." /ANS

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India to send sacred relics of Buddha's disciples to Mongolia next year: PM Modi

NEW DELHI: Highlighting that the ties between India and Mongolia are not only diplomatic but the two nations also share a bond of warmth and spirituality, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India will send the holy relics of Lord Buddha's two disciples to Mongolia next year.

While addressing a joint press meet with Mongolian

torical ties, we have taken several important decisions.

"I am pleased to announce that next year, the holy relics of two great disciples of Lord Buddha - Sariputra and Maudgalyayana - will be sent from India to Mongolia. We will also send a Sanskrit teacher to Gandan Monastery to study the Buddhist texts there in depth and carry forward the ancient tradition of knowledge," he stated.

PM Modi mentioned that the Nalanda University has played a vital role in the development of Buddhism in Mongolia and announced that the two nations have decided to link Nalanda and Gandan Monastery. He said that Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, before the meeting, planted a sapling as part of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative.

He said, "Our meeting today began with a tree plantation as part of Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam. The banyan tree sapling planted by President Khurelsukh in the name of his late mother will remain a symbol of our deep friendship and our shared commitment to the environment for generations to come."

While extending a warm welcome to President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, PM Modi said, "I am delighted to welcome President Hurelsukh and his delegation to India. The visit of the President of Mongolia to India after six years is a very special occasion and this visit is taking place when

India and Mongolia are celebrating 70 years of diplomatic relations and 10 years of Strategic Partnership. On this occasion, we have issued a joint postal stamp which symbolizes our shared heritage."

PM Modi announced that India will provide free e-visas to Mongolian citizens. He said, "We have decided to provide free e-visas to Mongolian citizens. India will also sponsor the annual visit of young cultural ambassadors from Mongolia to India." *IANS*



Prime Minister Narendra Modi shares a warm hug with Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa during a joint media statement at Hyderabad House, in New Delhi. (ANI Photo/Rahul Singh)

President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa following their talks at the Hyderabad House in New Delhi, PM Modi said, "The relationship between India and Mongolia is not merely diplomatic - it is a bond of warmth and spirituality. The true depth and breadth of our relationship is reflected in our people-to-people ties. For centuries, both countries have been bound by the thread of Buddhism, which has led to us being called spiritual siblings. Today, to further strengthen this tradition and give new strength to our his-

India signs MoU with Mongolia to boost people-to-people ties, announces free e-visas

NEW DELHI: India and Mongolia took a significant step forward in strengthening their cultural and developmental partnership, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi announcing free e-visas for Mongolian citizens and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance cultural and people-to-people ties.

During a joint press statement with Mongolian President Khurelsukh Ukhnaa in the national capital, Prime Minister Modi said the newly signed MoU between the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council and Mongolia's Arkhangai Province would give "a fresh boost" to cultural ties between the two nations.

He also announced an annual sponsored visit for young Mongolian cultural ambassadors to India.

"The MoU signed today between the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council and Mongolia's Arkhangai Province will give a fresh boost to our cultural ties... Even though we do not share a border, India has always considered Mongolia a close neighbor. We will continue to strengthen people-to-people ties. We have decided to provide free e-visas to Mongolian citizens. And we will spon-

sor the annual visit of young cultural ambassadors from Mongolia to India," PM Modi said.

The MoU, signed during President Ukhnaa's official visit, aims to deepen historical and civilizational linkages, particularly through shared Buddhist heritage and cultural exchanges between Ladakh and Arkhangai.

Highlighting India's role as a reliable partner in Mongolia's development, the Prime Minister emphasized the ongoing Oil Refinery Project, supported by India's USD 1.7 billion line of credit.

"India has been a strong and reliable partner in Mongolia's development. The Oil Refinery Project, supported by India's USD 1.7 billion line of credit, will strengthen Mongolia's energy security. It is India's largest development partnership project globally, with over 2,500 Indian professionals working alongside their Mongolian counterparts to make it a reality," the PM said.

The refinery, being constructed in Sainshand, Dornogovi Province, is expected to meet approximately 70 percent of Mongolia's domestic fuel demand, thereby reducing the country's reliance on imports. *ANI*

India, Australia begin joint military drill AUSTRAHIND, strengthening defense cooperation

CANBERRA: Reinforcing the growing defense ties between India and Australia, the 4th edition of the joint bilateral military exercise AUSTRAHIND kicked off at Irwin Barracks in the Australian city of Perth.

The opening ceremony focused on enhancing interoperability and operational readiness, preparing both armies to conduct joint company-level operations in urban and semi-urban environments.

"The opening ceremony of the 4th edition of the Joint Bilateral Military Exercise AUSTRAHIND between the Indian Army and the Australian Army was held on 13 October 2025 at Irwin Barracks, Perth, Australia. The exercise focuses on enhancing interoperability and operational readiness, enabling both armies to execute joint company-level operations in urban and semi-urban terrain," Indian Army's Additional Directorate General of Public Information (ADGPI) posted on X.

The exercise, which followed Defense Minister Rajnath Singh's recent visit to Australia, reaffirmed the deepening defense cooperation between the two nations.

It also underscored the enduring camaraderie, mutual trust, and partnership that strengthen bilateral ties.

Around 120 troops from the Indian Army are in Australia to participate in the Exercise AUSTRAHIND with the Australian Army at the Irwin Barracks.

The joint drill, which runs until October 26, focuses on fostering camaraderie and reinforcing the spirit of partnership and mutual trust between the two forces.

"The High Commission welcomes 120 troops from the Indian Army to Australia for participation in the 4th edition of Exercise AUSTRAHIND 2025 with the Australian Army from 13 - 26 October. Exercise AUSTRAHIND 2025 will further strengthen Defense Cooperation and foster camaraderie between Indian and Australian Army troops, thereby reinforcing the spirit of collaboration and mutual trust," the Indian High Commission in Canberra posted on X.

AUSTRAHIND 2025 is aimed at enhancing military cooperation, improving interoperability and providing a platform for participating armies to exchange tactics, techniques and procedures in the domains of sub-conventional warfare in urban and semi-urban terrain.

The exercise focuses on joint company-level operations in open and semi-desert terrain, wherein troops would undertake missions ranging from joint planning, tactical drills, and special arms skills.

It would offer a valuable opportunity to hone operational capabilities, integrate emerging technologies and operate jointly in a combat environment. *IANS*

Indian envoy felicitates educator as Hindi teaching takes root in China's Shanghai

SHANGHAI: Celebrating a proud moment for India's linguistic heritage and growing cultural footprint abroad, India's Ambassador to China, Pradeep Kumar Rawat recently felicitated an educationist for teaching Hindi at a leading British school in the Chinese city.

Hindi teaching takes root in China - A Cultural Milestone! Ambassador Pradeep Kumar Rawat, together with Consul General in Shanghai Pratik Mathur felicitated Smt. Bhavya Mehta from the reputed Britannica International Senior Secondary School - the first school to promote Hindi teaching for young students in the region's international school network," the Consulate General of India in Shanghai posted on X.

The moment was cherished as Mehta is the daughter of India's war hero Kirti Chakra Brigadier Ravi Datt Mehta, the CGI mentioned.

"Hindi teaching at primary level at BIS now joins Hindi teaching at university level in Chinese Universities such as Fudan, SISU, Tsinghua and Peking University," the post added.



Ambassador Rawat and Mathur also met China's leading scholars on international affairs, Yang Jiemian, President Emeritus, Chen Dongxiao and senior colleagues at the Shanghai Institutes of International Studies (SIIS), holding discus-

sions on various issues of common interest, including global governance, multilateral reform, and appreciation for India's leading role in shaping an equitable world order.

"Ambassador Pradeep Kumar Rawat

and CG Pratik Mathur were happy to meet with China's leading scholars on international affairs, Dr. Yang Jiemian, President Emeritus, Prof. Chen Dongxiao, and senior colleagues at the Shanghai Institutes of International Studies (SIIS) today," the Indian Consulate General in Shanghai posted on X.

"At the renowned Chinese think tank, discussions spanned a broad spectrum of issues of common interest including global governance, multilateral reform, and appreciation for India's leading role in shaping an equitable world order," it added.

Rawat also interacted with community leaders at a luncheon hosted by the Indian Association for Shanghai and Indian leadership of global corporations based out of Eastern Shanghai Region. The discussions reaffirmed Indian diaspora's role as a vital bridge of India's global connect and building bonds of friendship with nations in the region. *IANS*

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Afghan Hindus, Sikhs meet Muttaqi in Delhi, honor him in traditional style

NEW DELHI: A delegation of Afghan Hindus and Sikhs met Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi at the embassy in New Delhi.

The delegation is supported by the Afghan Minority Council and the Indian World Forum.

The members of the minority community honored the Afghan Foreign Minister by presenting him with a turban and a shawl in traditional Afghan style.

An Afghan businessman, Noorula, who came to meet Muttaqi, said that they came to discuss business and the problems faced by businesspeople.

Speaking to IANS, Noorula said, "We came here to discuss our business and the problems we face, including road access, visas, and other issues. We also came to talk about the Wagah Border and the Attari Border, which are shut."

He mentioned that they have been facing several problems due to Pakistan and expressed hope that the issue would be resolved.

"People involved in the fruit and dry fruit business came to meet him. Businessmen face problems due to visa issues. People of Afghanistan have been facing problems due to Pakistan for the past 45-50 years. We hope that the problem is resolved," he added.

The Afghan Foreign Minister is currently on a seven-day visit to India to further strengthen the historic bilateral relations.

Muttaqi interacted with Indian analysts and experts during an event organized by the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) in New Delhi. The packed gathering, which also included many noted female scholars, was enthralled as Muttaqi spoke on his country's deep relationship with India.

"The conversation underscored the deep economic, historical, cultural, and civilizational ties between the two countries. His mention of Rabindranath Tagore's Kabuliwala struck a poignant chord with the audience." IANS

Immigration

POST

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October 17, 2025

India to reopen Embassy in Kabul, upgrade ties with Taliban: EAM Jaishankar

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has expressed India's commitment to Afghanistan's sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence and announced India's upgradation of Technical Mission in Kabul to the status of Embassy. He said that Afghanistan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi's visit to India marks an important step in advancing bilateral ties and affirming the enduring friendship between two nations.

In his opening remarks during his meeting with Muttaqi in New Delhi recently, EAM Jaishankar also recalled the talks held with Afghan Foreign Minister after the April 22 Pahalgam attack and earthquake in Kunar and Nangarhar.

He said, "India is fully committed to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Afghanistan. Closer cooperation between us contributes to your national development, as well as regional stability and resilience. To enhance that, I am pleased to announce today the upgrading of India's Technical Mission in Kabul to the status of Embassy of India."

He expressed India's interest in Afghanistan's development and progress. EAM Jaishankar said that he and Muttaqi can speak about the maintenance and repairs of finished projects and steps to complete others.

"As a contiguous neighbor and a well-wisher of the Afghan people, India has a deep interest in your development and progress. Today, I reaffirm that our longstanding partnership that has seen so many Indian projects in Afghanistan stands renewed. We can discuss the maintenance and repairs of finished projects as well as steps to complete others to which we have already committed. Beyond

that, other development priorities of Afghanistan can be discussed by our teams."

Highlighting India's assistance to Afghanistan over the years, he said, "India has long extended

Indian relief materials were delivered to the earthquake sites within hours of the disaster last month. We would like to contribute to the reconstruction of residences in the affected areas. In-

and irrigation.

He further said, "We note the interest on the Afghan side in taking this further and are ready to collaborate on the sustainable management of its water resources. Your invitation to Indian companies to explore mining opportunities in Afghanistan is also deeply appreciated. This can be discussed further."

EAM Jaishankar said that India and Afghanistan have a shared interest in boosting trade and commerce and expressed happiness over the commencement of additional flights between Kabul and New Delhi. He announced that India will expand avenues for Afghan students to pursue studies at Indian universities.

He said, "Our educational and capacity building programs have long nurtured the Afghan youth. We will expand avenues for Afghan students to pursue studies at Indian universities. Sports are another longstanding connection. The emergence of Afghan cricket talent has been truly impressive. India is glad to deepen its support for Afghan cricket. As you are aware, India has introduced a new visa module for Afghan people in April 2025. As a result, we are now issuing greater number of visas, including in medical, business and student categories."

"We have a common commitment towards growth and prosperity. However, these are endangered by the shared threat of cross-border terrorism that both our nations face. We must coordinate efforts to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. We appreciate your sensitivity towards India's security concerns. Your solidarity with us in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terrorist attack was noteworthy," he added. IANS



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar exchanges a handshake with Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi during a bilateral meeting in New Delhi. (@DrSJaishankarX/ANI Photo)

support for the health security of Afghanistan, including during the Covid pandemic. We are now ready to commit to six new projects, whose details can be announced after the conclusion of our talks. A gift of 20 ambulances is another gesture of good will and I would like to handover 5 of them to you personally as a symbolic step."

"India will also provide MRI and

dia has also been a significant provider of food assistance to the Afghan people. A further consignment will be delivered in Kabul today," he added.

EAM Jaishankar expressed concern over forced repatriation of Afghan refugees.

He said, "The plight of forcibly repatriated Afghan refugees is a matter of deep concern. Their dignity and livelihood is important.

EAM Jaishankar said that India and Afghanistan have a shared interest in boosting trade and commerce and expressed happiness over the commencement of additional flights between Kabul and New Delhi

CT scan machines to Afghan hospitals and deliver vaccines for immunization and cancer medicines. We have also supplied drug rehabilitation materials through UNODC and are open to doing more. As a first responder,

India agrees to help construct residences for them and continue providing material aid to rebuild their lives."

He said that the two nations have "productive history" of co-operating on water management

Assam CM Sarma claims Muslim population in State has risen to 39.5%, backs Centre's 'Detect, Delete, Deport' demography mission

GUWAHATI: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has highlighted the Union Home Minister's speech on the increase in India's Muslim population, attributing it to both internal growth and immigration. He noted the Union government's plan for a demography mission to "detect, delete, and deport."

Sarma emphasized Assam's significant demographic changes, stating the Muslim population had reached

graphic changes. In 2021, the Muslim population in Assam crossed 38 percent. When the census comes, then it will be 1 or 1.5 percent more, plus 38 percent. Now, the Muslim population in Assam is 39.5 percent. Even in Majuli, the Muslim population has increased by 100 percent. However, the Assamese Muslim population growth is not of that type; it is similar to ours. If the Muslim population growth is 100 percent in Majuli, then you can imagine the



Himanta Biswa Sarma

"In 2021, the Muslim population in Assam crossed 38 percent. When the census comes, then it will be 1 or 1.5 percent more, plus 38 percent. Now, the Muslim population in Assam is 39.5 percent. Even in Majuli, the Muslim population has increased by 100 percent"

39.5% with a notable 100% increase in Majuli, distinguishing between Assamese Muslims and others.

"The Union Home Minister on Friday (Oct 10) gave a historic speech, and he said that the Muslim population across the country has increased unprecedentedly. This increase in population has not happened only inside the country; people coming from foreign countries have also contributed to it. For that, the Union government wants to conduct a demographic mission, which aims to detect, delete, and deport. For the first time, the Union government has said this clearly. Assam is a big victim of demo-

graph changes," he said.

The Assam Chief Minister expressed concern over the state's demographic changes, citing projections from the 2011 census that indicate a 40% Muslim population, 6-7% Christian population, and a Hindu population not exceeding 40%. He said he plans to discuss this issue further with Union Minister Amit Shah.

"If we take the Muslim population in Assam as 40 percent, the Christian population as 6-7 percent, then the Hindu population in Assam is not more than 40 percent. It is based on the 2011 projection report. It is a worrying

issue, and we are all worried about it. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi said this on August 15, and Union Home Minister Amit Shah said this on October 10. We will have to know more about this. I will try to know more about this when I meet the Union Home Minister next time," he said.

In the 'Narendra Mohan Smriti Lecture' organized by Dainik Jagran, Home Minister Shah cited demographic data from multiple censuses to highlight how infiltration has altered the population balance over decades.

"Today, infiltration, demographic change, and democracy; I want to say without hesitation that until every Indian understands these three issues, we cannot ensure our country, our culture, our languages, and our independence. These three topics are interconnected..." Shah said.

"Censuses were conducted in 1951, 1971, 1991, and 2011... In the 1951 census, Hindus constituted 84 percent, while Muslims constituted 9.8 percent. In 1971, Hindus constituted 82 percent, and the Muslim population was 11 percent. By 1991, the Hindu population had increased to 81 percent, while the Muslim community accounted for 12.12 percent. In contrast, in 2001, Hindus accounted for 89 percent, and Muslims accounted for 14.2 percent. I'm talking about the populations of only two religions because I want to talk about infiltration..." he explained. ANI

'Reset' in India-Canada ties, says expert as Foreign Minister Anand visits New Delhi

WASHINGTON: As India and Canada agree to create a new roadmap for the relationship, a leading expert in Canadian foreign policy believes that a "reset" is underway in the bilateral ties, and the visit of Canada's Foreign Minister Anita Anand to India was a "significant step."

While speaking to IANS from Vancouver in Canada, Vina Nadjibulla, the Vice-President of Research & Strategy at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, termed the engagements "a big development."

"This is a big development in Canada-India relations, which have come a long way since the low in the relationship a year ago. Exactly a year ago, Canada and India were expelling diplomats, and the relationship was in a deep freeze," she added.

The Canadian Foreign Minister met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar recently in New Delhi, vowing to strengthen the ties.

"Both of our governments agree on the importance of elevating the relationship going further", she said while meeting EAM Jaishankar.

After the talks, both sides issued a joint statement,

promising to "take calibrated measures to restore stability in the relationship and to pursue a constructive and balanced partnership."

They also agreed to re-establish bilateral mechanisms on trade, investment, and science and technology cooperation. In the backdrop of the latest Chinese export controls on rare earths, both sides plan to hold the first Critical Minerals Annual Dialogue early next year and promote dialogue among "government, industry, and think tanks to identify how Canada's mining expertise can provide India with critical minerals needed for energy security."

Nadjibulla, who is also an Adjunct Professor at the University of British Columbia, called it an "ambitious roadmap" and highlighted the potential of collaboration in the critical minerals sector.

"That was also already signaled by the two prime ministers in June. In fact, Prime Minister Modi joined the discussions on energy security and critical minerals. So, I think already it was going to be an important element, but the fact that now this joint statement explicitly names this area of cooperation... there's quite a bit of momentum," she noted. IANS exclusive

"This is a big development in Canada-India relations, which have come a long way since the low in the relationship a year ago"

Nvidia to keep sponsoring H-1B visas despite crackdown: Report

WASHINGTON: Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang has reportedly assured his staff that his company will continue to sponsor H-1B visas and cover all the costs associated with the applications.

A report by Business Insider cited Huang, who wrote in a note to employees, "As one of many immigrants at Nvidia, I know that the opportunities we've found in America have profoundly shaped our lives," adding that "the miracle of Nvidia - built by all of you, and by brilliant colleagues around the world - would not be possible without immigration."

The article quotes Huang as saying that "legal immigration remains essential to ensuring the US continues to lead in technology and ideas," and that the Trump administration's "recent changes reaffirm this."

"At NVIDIA, we built our company with extraordinary people from around the world, and we will continue to sponsor H-1B applicants and cover all associated fees. If you have any questions about H-1B visas, please reach out to NVIDIA-Immigration."

On September 19, US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation to significantly curtail the H-1B visa program and imposed a hefty \$100,000 application fee.

While signing the proclamation, Trump had said the "incentive is to hire American workers."

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick had also defended the move, saying the policy would discourage companies from hiring foreign workers. IANS

M-SANVI's Affordable Homes Initiative: Changing the Face of Housing in Delhi/NCR

NEW DELHI: M-SANVI Real Estate Pvt. Ltd., guided by the motto "Ghar Sahi Milega Yahi," is on a mission to make quality homes both affordable and accessible for families across Delhi/NCR. Through this initiative, the company is addressing the growing demand for sustainable and future-ready housing, investing in strategically located projects that prioritize modern amenities, schools, healthcare, and transportation connectivity.

As part of this vision, M-SANVI has recently launched Skyline Apartment in Uttam Nagar and Raghav Residency in Dwarka Mor and Dwarka. Both developments are designed to provide affordable yet modern homes, meeting the aspirations of young families and first-time buyers while fostering safe, inclusive, and well-connected communities.

Over the years, M-SANVI REAL ESTATE has built its reputation on transparency, customer trust, and ready to move in flats/apartments. The company's integrated approach from project planning and construction to post-sale service reflects its belief that a home is not merely a structure, but the foundation of stability and growth for every family.

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October 17, 2025



Sri Lankan President Dissanayake attends launch of Indian Housing Project Stage 2 Phase IV

Details on Page 23 ►

Despite price pressure, urbanization & income growth driving housing demand in India: Report



NEW DELHI: Urbanization and rising household incomes continue to sustain housing demand in India, even amid increasing property prices in key cities such as Bengaluru and the National Capital Region (NCR), according to a report by PL Capital.

The report highlighted that higher disposable incomes, coupled with potential interest rate cuts, are expected to maintain activity in the housing market over the long term.

While affordable and mid-income housing continues to form the backbone of demand, luxury housing is also witnessing strong momentum in wealthier markets,

driven by high-net-worth individuals and foreign investors.

Following a strong surge in residential and commercial real estate in 2024, with notable price gains in select cities and pre-

While affordable and mid-income housing continues to form the backbone of demand, luxury housing is also witnessing strong momentum in wealthier markets, driven by high-net-worth individuals and foreign investors

mium segments, residential prices are anticipated to stabilize in 2025 while continuing to record steady gains.

It stated, "Urbanization, in-

come growth sustains housing demand despite affordability pressures. Rising household incomes and potential interest rate cuts should sustain market activity over the long term".

The report also mentioned that the 2025 real estate demand is being shaped by a combination of global and local factors, with residential properties remaining

dominant. Sustainability and green building practices are increasingly influencing buyer preferences, with environmentally friendly and energy-efficient properties commanding premiums.

"By FY26, the market is likely to reach a balanced state, favoring credible developers, prime projects, and healthy absorption, with robust sales, barring major global disruptions," the report noted.

Housing demand is expected to strengthen in key locations, supported by record new launches and rising supply.

Despite low rental yields, ownership demand surged, aided by structural reforms and improved transparency.

The sector's increasing emphasis on sustainability, professional practices, and investor participation signals a marked shift from its historically fragmented past.

As urbanization continues and household incomes rise, the report suggested that India's real estate sector is set for sustained growth, offering opportunities for developers and buyers alike, while also encouraging responsible and sustainable development practices. ANI

India's real estate equity inflows jump 48 pc in Q3 2025: Report

NEW DELHI: Equity investments in India's real estate sector jumped 48 percent year-on-year to \$3.8 billion in the July-September period (Q3), a new report said.

This growth in inflow was primarily fuelled by capital deployment into land or development sites and built-up office and retail assets, according to the report by real estate consulting firm CBRE South Asia.

In the first nine months of 2025, the equity investments increased by 14 percent on-year to \$10.2 billion -- from \$8.9 billion in the same period last year.

The report highlighted that land or development sites and built-up office and retail assets accounted for more than 90

percent of the total capital inflows during Q3 2025.



On the category of investors, developers remained the primary drivers of capital deployment, contributing 45 percent of the total equity inflows, followed by Institutional investors with a 33 percent share.

CBRE reported that Mumbai attracted the highest investments at 32 percent, followed by Pune at around 18 percent and Bengaluru at nearly 16 percent.

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman and CEO - India, South-East Asia, Middle East and Africa, CBRE, said that the healthy inflow of domestic capital demonstrates the sector's resilience and depth. IANS

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana: Construction of over 9.9 lakh houses completed in Gujarat

GANDHINAGAR: On October 7, Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked 24 years of dedicated public service, effective governance, and commitment to the welfare of the poor. To commemorate this milestone, Vikas Saptah is observed every year from October 7 to October 15, with Urban Development Day celebrated on October 12-13, an official statement said.

It is noteworthy that during his tenure as

poor and lower-middle-class family living in urban areas with a home of their own, the Prime Minister implemented the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) -- a landmark initiative. Today, under the leadership of CM Bhupendra Patel, Gujarat stands as a leading state in the nation in implementing this scheme, the release stated.

PM Modi believes that urban development is not just about infrastructure but

mentation of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban). The state leads the country in providing interest subsidies on home loans to over 6 lakh beneficiaries under the Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS) component of PMAY (Urban), helping countless families fulfill their dream of owning a home. In addition, under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan announced by the Central Government in 2020, the Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs) scheme was launched to provide affordable rental housing to the urban poor and migrant workers.

In just three months, Gujarat became the first state to get project approval by converting 393 SUDA-area houses in Surat into rental homes under Model-01 of the scheme. Global Housing Technology - Rajkot in Gujarat is among six locations chosen by the Central Government for the India Light House Project. As part of this initiative, 1,144 EWS-2 type houses, each with a carpet area of 39.77 sq m, have been constructed using monolithic concrete technology, it added.

Gujarat has consistently excelled under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban). In 2017, the state earned first place in the Credit Link Subsidy category from the Central Government. In 2019, Gujarat received three additional awards, while three beneficiaries were recognized for Best House Construction under the BLC component. In 2022, the state won awards in seven different categories. Altogether, Gujarat has been honored with 14 awards under PMAY (Urban) so far. ANI



Chief Minister of Gujarat, the Prime Minister launched planned urban development by declaring 2005 as the Urban Development Year. Today, under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Gujarat is making remarkable strides in the direction of urbanization.

To accelerate world-class city development, the State Government has declared the year 2025 as the 'Year of Urban Development'. With the vision of providing every

about improving the quality of life for every citizen. To make this vision a reality, he launched Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) in 2015 to provide housing for the urban poor. Through this scheme, countless families have received their dream homes. So far, over 9.09 lakh houses have been constructed in the state, marking a major milestone in Gujarat's urban development journey, the release added.

Gujarat is the leading state in the imple-

Sri Lankan President Dissanayake attends launch of Indian Housing Project Stage 2 Phase IV

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake attended the launch of the Indian Housing Project Stage 2 Phase IV, with the Indian High Commission saying that the drive encompasses a commitment to the construction of 60,000 houses, while this particular phase covers 4,700

More than 2,000 beneficiaries and their family members were present during the event, according to a statement by the Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka.

Besides them, Sri Lanka's Minister of Plantation and Community Infrastructure, Samantha Vidyaratna, the Minister of Fisheries, Deputy Ministers of Plantation, Tourism and Youth Affairs, Indian High Commissioner Santosh Jha, MPs, Gover-

nors Uva and Sabaragamuwa, Chief Secretaries and senior officials of Provinces with plantation areas, Mayors, Government Agents and officials of districts in



plantation regions attended the event.

In a statement shared on X, the Indian High Commission said: "Indian Housing Project Stage 2 Phase IV launched in the presence of President H.E. Anura Kumara Dissanayake, HC Santosh Jha, Minister of

Plantation & Community Infrastructure Hon. S Vidyaratna, Minister of Fisheries, Dy. Ministers of Plantation, Tourism and Youth Affairs."

"Among the largest development initiatives of Indian overseas, IHP encompasses an overall commitment to build 60000 houses for Sri Lanka beneficiaries with grant assistance of over INR 18 billion. Around 50000 houses constructed to date. Phase IV Stage 2 to cover 4700 beneficiaries," it added.

According to the statement, the Indian Housing Project Phases III and IV showcase the Indian government's commitment to work with the Sri Lankan government for uplifting and empowering Indian origin Tamil community in the country. IANS

Construction sector revival powers strong growth in UP and Bihar, outpaces national average: Report

NEW DELHI: The revival in India's construction sector has driven robust growth in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, with both states witnessing a sharp rise in the sector's contribution to their Gross Value Added (GVA) in FY24, according to a report by HDFC Bank

The report noted that UP and Bihar have seen rapid growth in construction post the pandemic, propelled by the government's support for infrastructure development.

It stated, "The revival in the construction sector has powered recent growth in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, together accounting for 13.4 percent and 11.2 percent of the state's GVA respectively, outpacing the All India average of 8.9 percent".

The report also noted that both states are among the top 3 beneficiaries of the central government's interest-free loan for capital investment projects.

The report also shared that Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the leading contributor to India's construction GVA, commanding a 12.5 percent share in FY24, followed by Tamil Nadu (11.8 percent) and Maharashtra (10 percent).

Other major contributors include Gujarat (6.9 percent), Karnataka (5.7 percent), Kerala (5.6 percent), and West Bengal (5.4 percent).

The surge in Uttar Pradesh's construction sector marks a strong turnaround from previous years.

The state's construction share in total GVA rose sharply from around 12 percent in FY12 to 13.4 percent in FY24, indicating an expansion in infrastructure spending and housing development.

Bihar also displayed a steady recovery, with its construction share climbing to 11.2 percent in FY24 after years of subdued growth.

The revival of increased public investment in infrastructure, particularly under government-led programs focused on housing, roads, and urban development.

The data highlights how construction activity has become a key growth driver for regional economies, particularly in northern India, helping to offset weaknesses in agriculture and manufacturing. ANI

Bridgewater Commons to celebrate Diwali

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP, N.J.: In response to customer demand and to further showcase the joy and beauty of the Festival of Light, Bridgewater Commons has expanded Diwali @ The Commons into a two-day celebration of South Asian culture with live music and dance performances, demonstrations and more on October 18 and 19.

Bridgewater Commons, in partnership with Renascent Media, will celebrate the South Asian festival with a spectacular program in Center Court filled with live music, dance and vibrant yellow, red, and orange marigold flower décor curated by AWD Weddings.

Details on page 27

'US Congress should 'stand together' to defend ties with India'

WASHINGTON: Congressman Ami Bera, a Democratic House member from California, has argued that it's time for the US Congress to "stand together" to defend the "hugely important" India-US relationship.

In an exclusive interview with IANS recently, Bera, who currently serves as the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, spoke about his attempt to create a bipartisan consensus on India-US ties, his recent Congressional visit to India, the H-1B visa crack-down, and the future of the bilateral relationship.

Details on page 30

Sindhi Youth Festival with Fashion Show

NEW DELHI: A special interactive meet was hosted by renowned Sindhi Ajrakh Designer Pooja Motwani from Delhi and Arjan Nankani from Spain, bringing together Sindhi delegates and community leaders to discuss the revival and promotion of Sindhiyat - the spirit of Sindhi culture, tradition, and unity.

Details on page 28

COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

24 India Post

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October 17, 2025



Dr. Romesh Japra

Fremont City in California Proclaims October as Hindu Heritage Month



RITU MAHESHWARI
India Post News Service

FREMONT, CA: On October 14th, 2025, Fremont City Council recognized the immense contributions Hindu community has made toward growth and development of city in economic, cultural, spiritual and social spheres. City council has proclaimed October as Hindu Heritage month.

FOG (Festival of Globe) Founder, Dr. Romesh Japra received Fremont City Proclamation from the city mayor Dr. Raj Salwan. The City recognized the excellent work Hindu community is doing in bringing the community together and contributing in

making Fremont happiest city in the country.

Dr. Romesh Japra said, "Hindu values and culture is very relevant today. Hindu values of 'Vaasudeiva Kutambakam' or, world is one family; unites communities and believes in helping everyone. We as a society can only grow and be happy when we work together and help each other."

Proclamation:
HINDU HERITAGE MONTH
OCTOBER 2025

WHEREAS, the City of Fremont recognizes the vibrant Hindu community that calls Fremont home, whose members have made significant contribu-

tions to the City's cultural, educational, technological, and economic growth; and **WHEREAS**, Hinduism, one of the world's oldest living traditions, promotes values of truth, non-violence, respect for all life, and harmony with nature; and

WHEREAS, Fremont's Hindu community enriches the city through its temples, cultural organizations, volunteer efforts, and celebrations of festivals such as Diwali and Holi, fostering unity and diversity; and

WHEREAS, Hindu Heritage Month is an opportunity to honor the rich traditions,

teachings, and achievements of the Hindu community and their positive impact on Fremont's development and character.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Fremont hereby proclaims the month of October as Hindu Heritage Month in the City of Fremont and encourages all residents to celebrate and learn more about Hindu culture, philosophy, and contributions.



Malabar Gold & Diamonds launches 1st showroom in New Zealand, strengthens presence in 14 countries

Malabar Gold & Diamonds, the re-sponsible jeweler, proudly announces the expansion of its operations to New Zealand. The company's 1st showroom in New Zealand was launched at the Botany Town Centre in Auckland. This launch marks a milestone in the brand's international expansion plan, ensuring its strong presence in 14 countries while delivering exceptional craftsmanship and service.

The new showroom was inaugurated by Mark Mitchell, New Zealand Minister of Emergency Management, Police, Sport and Recreation. Malabar Group Vice Chairman, K.P. Abdul Salam; Malabar Gold & Diamonds International Operations MD, Shamlal Ahamed; Senior Director, C. Maayankutty; Malabar Group Executive Directors, Nishad A.K., K.P. Veerankutty; Manufacturing Head, Faisal A.K.; Finance & Admin Director, Ameer C.M.C.; Malabar Group Chief Digital Officer, Shaji Kakkodi; other senior management members, valued customers, and well-wishers attended the event. The inauguration ceremony commenced with a traditional Maori Karakia prayer, honoring the local customs of New Zealand.

With a global footprint of over 400 plus showrooms across 14 countries--including India, the Middle East, the USA, the UK, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia and Australia--Malabar Gold & Diamonds is renowned for its wide-ranging collections, exceptional quality, and customer-centric

approach. Backed by a dedicated team of 25,000 multilingual employees across 26 countries, the brand has served over 15 million satisfied customers worldwide.

In a statement marking the momentous occasion, M.P. Ahammad, Chairman of Malabar Group, said, "This is a historic leap in the brand's global expansion plan as it expands its operations to its 14th country. With our commitment to trust, tradition, responsibility and craftsmanship, we aim to bring positive changes to the jewelry market in New Zealand. This is not just an achievement for Malabar Gold & Diamonds; it is also a testament to the global recognition of the centuries-old art of Indian jewelry."

The showroom is designed to provide a flawless shop-

ping experience to the customers, with elegant displays and a highly trained team to guide customers in selecting their perfect jewelry. It offers over 30,000 unique designs in gold, diamonds, and precious stones, including a vast collection of jewelry from over 25 exclusive sub-brands. In addition, the store offers an exclusive bridal collection for wedding needs and the ability to customize jewelry according to the customers' needs.

Commenting on the launch, K.P. Abdul Salam, Vice Chairman of Malabar Group, said, "Malabar Gold & Diamonds' entry into New Zealand is a proud achievement in its global growth plan. There was a large local participation to witness the inauguration ceremony. It is heartening to see people from different cultures celebrate the diversity, artistry and tradition of Malabar Gold & Diamonds' jewelry."

Shamlal Ahmed, Managing Director of International Operations, Malabar Gold & Diamonds, commented, "Malabar Gold & Diamonds' exclusive jewelry collection and excellent service have reached a new segment of jewelry lovers with the expansion of its operations to New Zealand. New showrooms will be opened in Wellington, Hamilton and Christchurch in New Zealand. The brand also has plans to open more showrooms in Australia and expand its presence to Fiji."

This showroom launch underscores Malabar Gold & Diamonds' vision of becoming the world's most preferred jeweler, combining traditional craftsmanship with modern innovation to create timeless pieces while prioritizing sustainability and societal well-being. ANI



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SAHARA hosts powerful and inspiring Annual Gala celebrating hope, healing and community impact

India Post News Service

ARTESIA, CA: SAHARA (South Asian Helpline and Referral Agency), a nonprofit organization committed to supporting survivors of domestic violence, elder abuse, and other traumas within the South Asian community and beyond, hosted its highly anticipated Annual Fundraising Gala on September 20th. The evening was a resounding success, drawing an enthusiastic crowd of donors, partners, and community members who rallied together in support of SAHARA's vital mission.

Held at the Delta Hotels by Marriott in Garden Grove, the event welcomed 240 guests for an evening of reflection, celebration, and inspiration. Funds raised will directly support the expansion of critical services, including transitional housing for seniors, the ongoing operation of SAHARA's two existing shelters, legal advocacy, counseling, and personalized empowerment planning for survivors.

Guests were greeted by the soothing sitar melodies of Ronobir during the cocktail hour. The ambiance and décor-expertly curated by Ajita Chopra-elegantly reflected SAHARA's message of compassion and resilience.

The evening's program opened with a graceful dance performance by Anjali Gandhi, followed by an informative video about SAHARA's work. Emcee and auctioneer Miji Vellakateel, SAHARA's Governance Chair and Board Secretary, brought warmth, humor, and energy to the stage, creating an atmosphere that was both heartfelt and uplifting. In a delightful surprise, David Palmer welcomed guests in Hindi and Bengali, adding a personal and inclusive touch.

The gala's fundraising momentum was ignited by a \$500,000 matching challenge from Manu and Rika Shah of The Shah Happiness Foundation, who then stunned the audience by announcing an additional \$1 million donation-a crowning moment of the evening. A generous \$100,000 contribution from Smita and Tarun Sanghvi followed. These transformative gifts, combined with widespread community support, enabled SAHARA to surpass its fundraising goal.



Evening Highlight: A Moving Skit by SAHARA's Youth

One of the most impactful moments of the evening came in the form of a powerful skit performed by SAHARA's youth volunteers and staff. Through a series of emotional vignettes, the performance depicted real-life

stories of survivors-journeys from the depths of domestic violence and elder abuse to newfound safety, healing, and empowerment through SAHARA's wraparound services. The skit concluded with a message of hope, resilience, and collective responsibility, leaving a lasting impression on the audience.

A Celebration of Community and Change

"Once again, SAHARA has earned the highest level any nonprofit can aspire to-the Platinum Seal of Transparency from Candid, a recognition held by just 20% of nonprofits," said Marisol Sanchez, Executive Director of SAHARA.

"Domestic violence is not just a statistic-it's a mother escaping with her children after years of fear, it's a teenager discovering that love should never hurt. But when we come together as a community, we are stronger than violence. Change starts with us," she added-words that resonated deeply throughout the evening.



The program also featured:

A heartfelt testimonial from a former client who shared her journey from survival to strength.

A lighthearted, thought-provoking segment titled "Man Vs. Woman" presented by Manu and Rika Shah, which added levity to the evening.

An inspiring presentation by Tanya Momi, who shared her own story of overcoming abuse-an experience that inspired the film "Designed by Preeti."

As part of its Domestic Violence Awareness Month efforts, SAHARA will host a private screening of the film on October 5 at 1:30 PM at the Frida Theater in Santa Ana, underscoring its commitment to education and empowerment through storytelling. Tanya, now a passionate ad-



vocate, channels her experience and healing into her art.

LOOKING AHEAD

Thanks to the generosity of its donors and the unwavering support of the community, SAHARA is poised to expand its services in 2026. This includes the launch of a new transitional housing initiative for elder abuse survivors and the enhancement of culturally sensitive counseling programs.

"Too many of our seniors-those who raised us and sacrificed for us-are now suffering neglect, isolation, and abuse behind closed doors," said Krutika Pranav, President of the Board. "Our goal is to establish a responsive senior home-a place where our elders will not just survive, but thrive."

Vibhuti Bhuta, Treasurer, and Kinnari Bhavsar, Vice President, closed the evening by thanking attendees for their generous support. Guests were then treated to a delicious dinner catered by Mantra, followed by dancing to music from 3D Sounds.

About SAHARA

Founded in 1991, SAHARA empowers survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and elder abuse through culturally sensitive and trauma-informed care. The organization offers safe, confidential, and empowering spaces for healing and rebuilding.

Get Involved: Whether by volunteering your time, lending your voice, or advocating for survivors in your community-your support makes a difference. Together, we can build a safer, stronger, and more connected future.

Learn more at: www.saharacares.org



Bridgewater Commons to celebrate the Festival of Light with Diwali

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP, N.J.: In response to customer demand and to further showcase the joy and beauty of the Festival of Light, Bridgewater Commons has expanded Diwali @ The Commons into a two-day celebration of South Asian culture with live music and dance performances, demonstrations and more on October 18 and 19.

Bridgewater Commons, in partnership with Renascent Media, will celebrate the South Asian festival with a spectacular program in Center Court filled with live music, dance and vibrant yellow, red, and orange marigold flower décor curated by AWD Weddings. Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights, with variations celebrated in other Indian religions symbolizing the spiritual "victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance." Guests are encouraged to dress traditionally.

"Diwali is one of the most cherished religious festivals in South Asia, and we're thrilled to honor our South Asian community by celebrating with them and entertaining all of our guests," said Tom Kovacic, Marketing and Business Development Director at Bridgewater Commons. "Last year's event was so successful that everyone wanted more, and working with Renascent Media, we're delighted to expand our Diwali celebration into a second day with even more performances and displays."

Kicking off the festival at 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, the Center Court program will feature:

- Ganesh Vandana, an opening devotional dance to invoke blessings and officially launch the festival.
- An instrumental music performance with flute by Madhukar, tabla by Prashant, and keyboard by Venugopal.
- Folk dances of India performed by Thangaat Garba Dance Group, Navrang Dance Academy, and Dancing Stars, showcasing dances from



Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and more.

- Sari Walk featuring influencers, socialites, and models presenting saris/outfits draped in traditional styles from across India.

- A music performance by Dr. Avish Jain, Medical Journalist at ABC News and musical sensation who founded his own brand "Musical Avish" representing various styles of Hindi American Fusion music.

- Mini Ramleela performed by Navrang Dance Academy presenting highlights from the Ramayana.

- A Bollywood Flash Mob finale featuring a high-energy dance performance transitioning into a participatory flash mob with audience involvement.

The live performances continue Sunday, October 19 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. with the following:

- Fusion music performed by instrumental band by Raaga Rhythms.

- Dance performances by adults and young students of Nitya Rhythm. With 25+ years of experience in Indian dance, this Flemington, N.J.-based acad-

emy teaches Bollywood, Bharatanatyam, and Kathak to all ages.

- Cancer Awareness Walk presented by My Dream TV USA featuring Miss Bharat pageant winners and community doctors, all dressed in pink.

- Special dance performance by young twin social media sensations @RidhiSidhiTwins.

On both Saturday and Sunday from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., guests can experience free mehndi stations, traditional product sampling, vendor booths including Star Tours, New York Life, Horizon BCBS, LT Foods, Shan Foods, Northlandz and more in Center Court and Lower Level.

Bridgewater Commons began its South Asian cultural celebrations in 2022 with Bollywood dance spectacles in Center Court that featured over 40 performers, drawing hundreds of guests. Last year, the 1.2 million-square-foot center expanded the celebration, hosting spectacular live shows in Center Court filled with music, dance, tradition, crafts, giveaways, and more.

"Our center is not just a business core of the community, it's

a cultural core, too. That's why we also are home to other cultural celebrations, including Lunar New Year and Chinese Mid-Autumn Lantern Festivals, in honor of the unique diversity in

Somerset County," Kovacic continued.

Renascent Media, a pioneer in ethnic marketing and production, is thrilled to spearhead its partnership with Bridgewater Commons to celebrate Diwali.

"Diwali reminds us of the power of light to conquer darkness and of togetherness to overcome division," said Tanvi Prenita Chandra, founder of Renascent Media. "At Renascent Media, we believe in inspiring communities to build a better future. This event is a celebration of harmony, awareness, and shared humanity."

Located along Interstate 287 at the intersections of Route 22 and Route 202/206, Bridgewater Commons is Somerset County's largest shopping, dining and entertainment destination. The 37-year-old center has seen the opening of multiple new retail and dining experiences recently, including Alo Yoga, Miniso, Pop Mart, Fogo de Chão, Shaquille O'Neil's Big Chicken, Club Champion, FACE FOUNDRIÉ, Millburn Deli, and Pure Green.

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Sindhi Youth Festival with Sindhi Cultural Ajrakh Fashion Show announced

NEW DELHI: A special interactive meet was hosted by renowned Sindhi Ajrakh Designer Pooja Motwani from Delhi and Arjan Nankani from Spain, bringing together Sindhi delegates and community leaders to discuss the revival and promotion of Sindhiyat - the spirit of Sindhi culture, tradition, and unity.

The key agenda of the gathering was to explore how to unite Sindhis globally and inspire greater involvement of Sindhi youth in cultural, educational, and social initiatives. After an engaging exchange of ideas, the delegates collectively decided to organize the Sindhi Youth Festival in Delhi - a vibrant celebration dedicated to showcasing Sindhi art, culture, business, and heritage under one grand platform.

A major highlight of the festival will be the Sindhi Cultural Ajrakh Fashion Show, designed and curated by Pooja Motwani, who is the first Sindhi youth to initiate the Ajrakh Cultural Fashion Show movement - blending heritage textiles with modern design to revive and promote Sindhi artistry worldwide.

Pooja Motwani has recently completed a two-month international fashion tour across the USA, in collaboration with re-



puted Sindhi organizations in Houston and other major cities, receiving immense love and appreciation from the community. Her growing recognition has led to invitations to showcase Sindhi Ajrakh fashion at the upcoming Sindhi Conventions in Australia, Toronto, and Dubai in 2026, marking another milestone

in her journey of promoting Sindhiyat through fashion.

The festival is being organized by Sindhi Aman Ji Asha in collaboration with Rahat Aid Foundation. This initiative aims to bring together young Sindhi talents from across India and abroad - celebrating Sindhiyat through creativity, culture,

and community connection.

The meet witnessed the gracious presence of several prominent Sindhi personalities, including S. Kumar (Banaras), Shrikant Bhatia, Suresh Khatri, Sumit, Naresh Jotwani, Sunil Mamtani, Rani Bhambhani, Kishore Ajwani, Jayesh Sharma, Rani Bhambhani and Mahesh Rajani, among others - each sharing valuable insights on preserving cultural identity and empowering the next generation.

Speaking at the event, Pooja Motwani emphasized:

"It's time for us to come together not just to celebrate our roots, but to make our culture relevant for the younger generation. Sindhiyat lives through connection and creativity."

Arjan Nankani said that "This meet is just the beginning. Our goal is to create a global Sindhi network that supports youth engagement, cultural revival, and community growth."

Shrikant Bhatia, the well-known Sindhi media personality and former Vice Chairman of NCPSP, added that he and his team will actively support in promoting the festival and bringing young Sindhi talent on board, ensuring wider reach and youth engagement across the community.

The event concluded with a collective commitment to continue such cultural collaborations globally and to make the upcoming Sindhi Youth Festival with Sindhi Cultural Ajrakh Fashion Show a landmark event for the community - celebrating the timeless beauty of Sindhi heritage and inspiring the youth to carry it forward with pride.

American Town Mayors and Council members shake a leg and win hearts at Hum Sub Diwali 2025

CARY, NORTH CAROLINA: Every year, the Hum Sub Diwali celebration organized by the cultural non-profit Hum Sub lights up North Carolina with vibrant colors, rhythmic beats, and community spirit. This year, the much-loved "Celebrity Segment" once again stole the show - when the mayors and town council officials of Cary, Apex, and Morrisville took to the stage, dancing to Bollywood hits and winning hearts with their infectious energy.

Held at the scenic Koka Booth Amphitheatre, Hum Sub Diwali is a free, daylong festival offering an immersive experience of Indian culture in the American South. Over 15,000 attendees enjoy a rich lineup of classical, folk, and Bollywood performances by talented Third Culture Kids, along with food stalls, artisan vendors, and a cultural exhibition highlighting India's diverse heritage.

Now in its 25th year, Hum Sub Diwali has become the signature celebration of the Festival of Lights in the Carolinas, uniting communities in a joyful blend of



tradition, inclusion, and togetherness. The evening culminates in live performances by artists flown in from India and a grand fireworks display that dazzles the Carolina sky.

The Celebrity Segment, introduced a

few years ago, has grown into a crowd favorite. Local leaders rehearse for weeks, donning colorful costumes sponsored by community businesses, and showcasing the joy of shared cultural connection through music and dance.

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As shutdown drags on, Is a compromise over Health Care costs possible?

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

At the heart of the federal government shutdown, which began October 1, are the spiraling costs of healthcare. Millions of Americans this month are set for sticker shock as they see their monthly Affordable Care Act premiums nearly double, once enhanced premium tax credits expire at the end of the year. ACom news briefing on Oct 10, highlighted this imperative issue.

4 million people will immediately lose coverage. 7 out of 10 Americans surveyed in a new poll say they will not be able to afford higher-cost health care, without seriously impacting their household budget. And very low-income people stand to lose their \$0 monthly premium. The cuts come in amid new rules and restrictions for Medicaid recipients. In total, as many as 12

million Americans stand to lose health care coverage.

Anthony Wright, Executive Director, Families USA pointed out that the current impasse is rooted in changes in federal tax policy. Since the enhanced premium subsidy is about to expire at the end of the

For a person with an annual income of \$65,000, the premium will jump from \$460 to \$1,400 per month, which is tens of thousands of dollars more a year. Congress and the administration chose not to extend the subsidy, which is equivalent to letting millions of people fall out of the insurance

and community clinics will also be in financial crisis due to an increase in non-paying patients.

Jennifer Sullivan, Director of Health Coverage Access and lead for the Beyond the Basics project at the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities said that 93% of insurance market enrollees in the United States rely on tax subsidies, and nearly half have annual incomes less than twice the federal poverty line. If the zero-dollar premium is eliminated, research shows that 400,000 people will immediately lose insurance. She pointed out that since the subsidy was expanded in 2021, the insurance coverage rates of African Americans and Hispanics have increased by 186% and 158% respectively; if the subsidy is suspended, these groups will be the first to bear the brunt and return to pre-pandemic levels.

Since the enhanced premium subsidy is about to expire at the end of the year, policyholders will face the "largest increase in history" when the open registration period arrives on November 1. He said average premiums will rise by 18%, and may double or even triple in some areas

year, policyholders will face the "largest increase in history" when the open registration period arrives on November 1. He said average premiums will rise by 18%, and may double or even triple in some areas.

system, causing the risk pool to shrink and premiums to rise again, forming a vicious cycle. Wright specifically reminded that if 4 million people lose insurance, not only will individuals suffer, but rural hospitals

Indian delegation meets diaspora in New York, lauds its contributions to bilateral ties

NEW YORK: Around 90 members of the Indian-American community joined the parliamentary delegation led by BJP MP P.P. Chaudhary for an interactive session in New York.

The delegation lauded the diaspora's contributions to the US-India partnership and for promoting India in various meaningful ways.

The parliamentarians also welcomed the Indian-American community to be part of the 'Viksit Bharat 2047' journey.

The Indian-origin US Senators Raj Mukherji and Vin Gopal also participated in the discussions organized by the Consulate General of India in New York.

The 12-member parliamentary delegation led by Chaudhary, including N. K. Premachandran, Nishikant Dubey, Poonamben Maadam, Vivek Tankha, Brijesh Chowta, Vamsi Gaddam, Bharat Mathukumilli, Rajeev Rai, Phangnon Konyak, Medha Kulkarni, and Ujjwal Deorao Nikam, is in New York to represent India's stance at the United Nations General Assembly.

During the visit, the delegates met the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, Ambassador Brian C.M. Wallace.

"They discussed various topics of importance at the UN, including UN Security Council reforms. They noted that diaspora



forms a key pillar of the close ties between India and Jamaica," Permanent Mission of India to UN posted on X.

Furthermore, the delegation also met Amandeep Singh Gill, the UN Secretary General's envoy on Technology.

They held an insightful discussion on AI

governance, Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), data protection, and the role of the UN in fostering inclusive technology development.

The meeting also highlighted India's leadership in DPI and inclusive innovation.

Earlier, MP Poonamben Maadam deliv-

ered India's remarks at the Interactive Dialogue in the Third Committee on Advancement of Women.

She emphasized the centrality of ASHA workers in India's community health program and efforts by the Government to strengthen their social security.

She reiterated India's continued focus on and commitment to the cause of women's empowerment.

Additionally, MP Ujjwal Nikam delivered India's statement in the Sixth Committee on Criminal Accords of UN Officials and Experts on Mission.

He said that both member states and the UN must comply with their respective responsibilities in this regard. He also highlighted the importance of contributing towards a trust fund for victims.

On the other hand, MP Bharat Mathukumilli presented India's position in the Second Committee on Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) for Sustainable Development, and Globalization and Interdependence.

He highlighted India's focus on ICTs, science, and culture as enablers for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. He also underlined the need for tailored cooperation with middle-income countries to address their unique challenges. *IANs*

US Congress should 'stand together' to defend ties with India, says Congressman Bera

WASHINGTON: Congressman Ami Bera, a Democratic House member from California, has argued that it's time for the US Congress to "stand together" to defend the "hugely important" India-US relationship.

In an exclusive interview with IANS recently, Bera, who currently serves as the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific, spoke about his attempt to create a bipartisan consensus on India-US ties, his recent Congressional visit to India, the H-1B visa crackdown, and the future of the bilateral relationship.

Below are the excerpts from the interview.

IANs: You recently led a congressional delegation to India and met with officials and industry leaders. What was the sense you got from them amid the current administration's actions?

Bera: I think there were some concerns amongst Indian government officials, certainly inviting Pakistani General to the Oval Office created some concerns. President Trump is taking credit for bringing the five tense days in May to a conclusion. I think that really was the Indians and Pakistan negotiating again.

And then, the \$100,000 H-1B visa fee. India does use about 70 percent of the H-1Bs, a lot of that benefits US companies, tech workers, and doctors that we need here in the United States. In the conversations, from the Congressional perspective, Congress is very strong in favor of the US-India relationship.

We see it as a pillar of not just the Indo-Pacific strategy, but also of global economics. India is the fastest-growing economy in the world. We want to continue to do business with India. I hope we get to zero tariffs between the two countries and actually finally get a trade deal between the two countries.

IANs: What's your overall analysis of the Trump administration's India strategy in the last nine months?

Bera: I'm not sure what the India strategy is, because it seems to be all over the place right now. There doesn't seem to be a coherent strategy, because it seems to go back and forth. At the beginning of the Trump administration, you certainly saw Prime Minister Modi and President Trump embrace, and you thought that this would be a relationship that would move forward fairly quickly. In May, you saw President cozying up to Pakistan. I think that gave some pause and had the Indian government scratching their heads, especially

after the heinous terror attacks that took place in April.

And then, the 50 percent tariff again, we have some concerns about India buying Russian energy, but we were able to get past that in the Biden administration. China buys more Russian oil than India does. So again, I think it's fair for the Indians to say - why are you singling us out on this? And then the H-1B issue, none of this coherently makes sense.

That said, on the defense-to-defense side, we had a chance to visit Western Naval Command. Things continue to go really well.

And I just reaffirmed that you're not going to see American companies making billion-dollar investments in Pakistan anytime soon. They are making those investments in India. You aren't going to see our military doing joint military operations with Pakistan or naval exercises. We are doing all of that with India. So, let's get through these hiccups. But a sense of Congress is, Congress still broadly supports a strong US-India relationship.

IANs: Would you say this reflects a Trump-specific policy rather than a broader US-India strategy, and likely an aberration rather than the norm?

We see it as a pillar of not just the Indo-Pacific strategy, but also of global economics. India is the fastest-growing economy in the world. We want to continue to do business with India. I hope we get to zero tariffs between the two countries and actually finally get a trade deal between the two countries

Bera: What I've learned watching President Trump in these first eight-nine months of his administration is what he says today could be different than what he says tomorrow could be different than what he does the following week. So, I think it bears watching.

But I do think this is a time for Congress, Democrats and Republicans in Congress, to stand together and say - no, here's how

we view the India-US relationship, and that's one thing that we'll be introducing a legislation and a sense of Congress to reaffirm that members of Congress see the relationship as a hugely important one in the 21st Century.



Congressman Ami Bera

IANs: A letter urging President Trump to improve US-India ties was signed by 19 House Democrats on Wednesday, but no Republicans. How do you view their silence?

Bera: I think they're certainly afraid to take on President Trump directly. So, instead of making this about President Trump, let's make it about the US-India relationship.

Let's make it about what we think as members of Congress - Democrats and Republicans.

I also think it's a good time for the diaspora. Once we have a sense of Congress like this, they can actually go to their members of Congress and say - You've talked for a long time about how important this relationship is, here's an opportunity to sign on to it. So again, once this government shutdown is over, we will be introducing that legislation. And again, hopefully, we'll do this in a bipartisan way. Because I don't want the India-US relationship to be a Democratic thing or a Republican thing. It should be an American thing.

IANs: You mentioned in an interview that a few individuals are shaping India policy in the White House. Who are they, and how strong is the current India expertise there?

Bera: I mean, that's of concern. So certainly, in Trump's first term, he had seasoned political folks around him in his cabinet. Secretary Rubio has been a

strong advocate of the US-India relationship, but I don't know what his influence is.

Certainly, a guy like Peter Navarro, who does seem to have the president's ear, has not been a friend of India. You have Stephen Miller, who also seems to be setting immigration policy [who] could be the one driving the H-1B strategy here, because how they rolled this out, it was clear that they didn't even know the details of it. So you saw the Commerce Secretary Lutnick make some statements, and then have to walk it back almost immediately.

And for big policy like this, you don't roll it out that way. Nobody consulted Congress on it. Clearly industry had no idea this was coming either. So again, I'm not exactly sure how they're making policy right now.

IANs: What, in your view, drove the administration's decision to target the H-1B visa program despite its clear impact on key sectors like tech and healthcare?

Bera: I don't think this was a thought-through policy. If you were thinking it through, you would consult Congress, you would talk to industry, get a sense of the impact. I think this was a handful of people inside the White House making a decision, and the President made the wrong decision.

I think this is going to hurt US industry. You are already seeing the medical community, and many hospitals are already struggling to find doctors, and many of our medical students are physicians that are here in the United States are here on H-1B visas as well. So, hopefully that's getting through to the President, and then there will be some rollback of this policy.

The one challenge could be, if I'm a company like Microsoft, maybe I can figure a way through this, or I might just move my business to Hyderabad and set it up there. Because it's a small world right now. If I'm a small start-up in the United States, I can't pay \$100,000 for H-1Bs, and if the workers are in India, I'll just go ahead and move my work to India.

IANs: Could you share your thoughts on Sergio Gor, the new US Ambassador to India? He was confirmed by the Senate two days ago and is a close aide to President Trump, though he doesn't have regional expertise.

LA County Library launches The Californians Powering America photography exhibit

In partnership with Economic Hardship Reporting Project and Magnum Photos

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CA: LA County Library is pleased to announce the launch of The Californians Powering America, a compelling photography exhibit in partnership with the Economic Hardship Reporting Project and Magnum Photos. This powerful showcase will be on display from October 16 through December 31, 2025, at San Fernando Library and La Cañada Flintridge Library.

The Californians Powering America features six immersive visual stories that highlight the vital contributions of immigrant laborers across California's key industries-including agriculture, construction, caregiving, and wildfire recovery. At a time when immigrant communities face increasing marginalization, this exhibit brings their stories to the forefront with empathy, depth, and humanity.

Through the lens of award-winning Magnum photographers and storytellers, visitors will gain an intimate look at the resilience, struggles, and everyday realities of the people powering America's economy-from Central Valley farms to Los Angeles

restaurants, homes, and hospitals.

The exhibit is free and open to the public during library hours.

"This exhibit is a moving tribute to the invisible labor that makes California thrive," said Dr. Skye Patrick, County Librarian and Director of LA County Library. "We are honored to bring these stories to our community and offer a platform for

feed, care for and sustain us, embodying EHRP's mission to produce journalism that exposes inequality, reveals our shared destinies and empowers the public to confront systemic hardship."

"This is a project that has adapted, grown, and been reshaped within the changing context in which the migrant laborer lives in California and in the US at

To celebrate the launch of The Californians Powering America, the Library will host a reception on Thursday, October 16 at San Fernando Library at 6 pm.

Members of the public are invited to join the free reception, which will feature a viewing of the photography exhibit and a conversation with Dr. Skye Patrick, Deborah Jian Lee of the Economic Hardship Reporting Project, Giulietta Palumbo from Magnum Photos, and Magnum photographer Sabiha Çimen.

In addition, the Library will host a special family workshop called, The Story of Us: Preserving Family Legacies Through Image, Art and Sound, held at San Fernando Library on October 18 from 1 to 2:30 pm.

This workshop will feature photos from Sabiha Cimen's book, Hafiz, and will include an activity where families can decorate photo albums to take home.

For more information about the exhibit and upcoming events, please visit: LACountyLibrary.org/Californians-Powering-America.

The Californians Powering America features six immersive visual stories that highlight the vital contributions of immigrant laborers across California's key industries-including agriculture, construction, caregiving, and wildfire recovery

deeper understanding and appreciation."

"Every photograph in this exhibit is a striking testament to the endurance of communities who sustain our country, yet whose stories are too often overlooked," said Deborah Jian Lee, Senior Editor at the Economic Hardship Reporting Project. "These stories spotlight the people who

large," said Giulietta Palumbo, Global Editorial Director at Magnum Photos. "Magnum will continue to document these challenging times and the human beings who are living in them, while always standing for the open dialogue that only arts and its tools can bring. This exhibition is about this dialogue."

US Congress should 'stand together'...

Cont'd from page 30

Bera: He said all the right things at his confirmation hearings. I think since then, he said all the right things about a strong US-India relationship. Hopefully, his proximity to President Trump, the fact that he'll be in Delhi soon, he gets a chance to meet with Indian officials. He gets to see the vibrancy of the Indian economy and the vibrancy of the people, the vibrancy of their democracy, and hopefully, he can take that message back to President Trump. So, that's the positive, he does seem to have the president's ear and the ability to speak directly to the President.

IANS: Some critics say Democrats, despite supporting India, weren't vocal enough when Trump officials were attacking New Delhi. Do you agree with that criticism?

Bera: I have been speaking out. I have certainly been going to the Indian media and making the case, and by putting together a resolution that affirms the strong US-India relationship.

But that is something that I think it's fair, and that's part of the reason why we're

going to put together a sense of Congress resolution. But it shouldn't just be Democrats. We want Republicans to also reaffirm the importance of the US-India relationship. I think that's important.

IANS: As Ranking Member on the East Asia Subcommittee, how do you view the administration's China policy? Some argue that the lack of clear direction toward Beijing is affecting Washington's approach to India.

I would just to look at the 30 years going back to President Clinton, and just because of a few missteps by President Trump in the last few months; we should not toss out what we have been building for three decades

Bera: Going all the way back to President Clinton, through President Bush, President Obama, and even in the first Trump term, and then through the Biden administration, India has been a centerpiece to our Indo-Pacific strategy, not just as a counterweight to China, but also in terms of anchoring peace, stability, de-

mocracy in the region, free markets, maritime security.

I don't think that's changed from the Congressional perspective, but what has changed is whoever is advising President Trump now. What I can do is encourage Congress - Democrats and Republicans to speak with a loud voice, saying our perspective as a different branch of government has not changed. With regards to India again, the hope would be that we get

Prime Minister Modi, and others have handled themselves well. I think they have, for the most part, tempered and moderated their comments. I think [EAM] Jaishankar clearly knows both the United States [and] China. He is a seasoned diplomat. I think India has done a good job recognizing the longer-term relationship between the United States and India should be a positive one.

IANS: Do you think recent tensions have damaged US-India trust, and what are the medium- and long-term implications for the relationship?

Bera: I would just to look at the 30 years going back to President Clinton, and just because of a few missteps by President Trump in the last few months; we should not toss out what we have been building for three decades. My hope would be that we can bring President Trump back into understanding the importance of this relationship. He certainly seemed to have a good, strong relationship with Prime Minister Modi. I also think this is a time for Congress to step up and speak with a loud voice as Democrats and Republicans to reaffirm the relationship. *IANS exclusive*

President Trump back on track with what's been a decades-long strategy of building this relationship.

IANS: Experts have praised India's disciplined messaging and its leadership amid tensions with the US. What's your take?

Bera: I think that the government,

AAPI Announces 2026 Global Healthcare Summit in India

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) has unveiled plans for its 19th Annual Global Healthcare Summit (GHS), scheduled for January 9-11, 2026, in Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

The event is set to address urgent health issues including Tuberculosis (TB), Diabetes, and the role of Ayurveda in contemporary medicine, alongside showcasing advancements in artificial intelligence and healthcare technology.

AAPI President Dr. Amit Chakrabarty said that the summit aims to confront some of India's most significant healthcare challenges while encouraging collaboration and innovation among medical professionals. "This summit will bring together expertise from India and the global diaspora to tackle critical issues and foster new research," Dr. Chakrabarty said.

The summit's agenda spotlights three main themes: eradicating Tuberculosis, managing Diabetes, and integrating Ayurveda into mainstream medical practice.

Following a meeting with Indian President Droupadi Murmu, AAPI pledged sup-



port to the national effort for a TB-Free India, led by Dr. Manoj Jain. Diabetes management initiatives will be directed by Dr. Smitha Joshi while, Ayurveda Consortium activities will be coordinated by Dr. Amit Shah and Dr. Arti Prasad.

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AAPI President Dr. Amit Chakrabarty

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"AAPI's Global Healthcare Summit is dedicated to making quality healthcare both affordable and accessible in India," said Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, President of AAPI. This year, the summit also empha-

tions and research poster presentations are expected to draw participation from leading Indian medical schools, with panel discussions led by international experts and officials from the National Medical Council Board.

GHS 2026 expands its focus to chronic disease prevention, rural health, climate change, and global health concerns. The CEO Forum will address equity, ethics, and physician burnout, while the Women's

Forum will discuss gender bias and leadership in medicine.

Dr. Manoj Jain will present ongoing efforts of the CETI (Collaboration to Eliminate TB in India), with support from the CDC and USAID, offering updates on TB elimination projects and strategies for future engagement. Additional activities include CPR training, mental health awareness campaigns, and initiatives to combat childhood obesity and non-communicable diseases.

Networking, Collaboration, and Strategic Engagement

The summit also provides opportunities for alumni networking, strategic engagement between AAPI and Indian partners, and recognition of outstanding contributions through AAPI Awards. Efforts in dia-

Krishan Kumar noted, "Collaborative relationships fostered by AAPI have paved the way for an exceptional event, with over 300 Indian-origin physicians and surgeons expected to attend."

Secretary Dr. Seema Arora emphasized AAPI's mission to advance healthcare delivery in both the US and India by promoting partnerships and sharing knowledge. Treasurer Dr. Soumya Neravetla highlighted the importance of support from international and Indian medical associations in driving the summit's evolution.

India's healthcare sector is undergoing rapid expansion with growing investments and medical tourism. The summit's international attendance and participation from hundreds of US-based physicians under-

AAPI President Dr. Amit Chakrabarty said that the summit aims to confront some of India's most significant healthcare challenges while encouraging collaboration and innovation among medical professionals. "This summit will bring together expertise from India and the global diaspora to tackle critical issues and foster new research"

betes prevention and TB eradication will be highlighted, reinforcing AAPI's commitment to public health initiatives.

"AAPI GHS is an unmatched opportunity to connect with leaders shaping the future of healthcare," said Dr. Meher Medavaram, President-Elect of AAPI. "We look forward to launching new initiatives and continuing the legacy of our organization's leaders."

AAPI's membership includes prominent medical professionals holding leadership roles worldwide. Vice President Dr.

score the importance of global collaboration for advancing healthcare in India. Since its inception in 2007, the Global Healthcare Summit has been instrumental in building alliances and driving medical progress across the country.

"We anticipate active involvement from international healthcare industry leaders in research, development, and philanthropy," said Dr. Chakrabarty. "GHS 2026 will be a milestone event for exchanging ideas, influencing policy, and shaping next year's healthcare agenda."

9TH ANNUAL SOUTH ASIAN MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

RESEARCH AND COMMUNITY

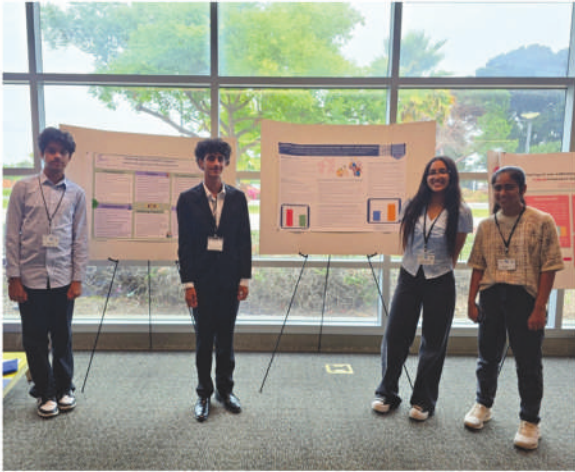


Left to Right- 1st Row - Sanchi, Sia, Aditi, Sohana, Dharni
2nd Row -Deepti, Krish, Aditya Eshaan, Vidhya, Khushee, Kavya, Tanisha, Anchu



Left to Right-Sanchi, Kavya, Dharni, Dr. Raji

The **9th Annual South Asian Mental Health Consortium** in San Francisco, **co-hosted by Saahas for Cause**, also marked the **9th** consecutive year of Saahas Youth's active participation in the conference, created a unique platform for youth to engage, learn, and showcase their voices. Saahas provided opportunities for young participants to connect with mentors across different fields, gain confidence in practicing cultural competency, present their **clinical & research work**, strengthen communication skills, and build networks that support future career growth.



Left to Right-Ishaan, Krish, Sohava, Sia



Left to Right-Sushma, Usha, Deepti, Khushee, Ishaan, Dr. Rohit

The gathering emphasized **intergenerational dialogue**, highlighting their **resilience, community's challenges, and strength within the South Asian diaspora**.

The first part of the day featured **youth-led research presentations** (Picture 2). Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, participants explored how **bias and discrimination are experienced** differently across generations and how these experiences shape coping strategies and mental health outcomes.

The second part highlighted poster sessions (Picture 3), where youth presented their work on themes such as navigating **cultural barriers to mental health support; creating accessible outlets for managing stress; and understanding the influence of socioeconomic status on acculturation**. These sessions offered a creative and professional space for youth to share research and ideas with mentors and peers.

The third part concluded with a **dynamic intergenerational panel** (Picture 4). Seniors, Adults and Youth exchanged perspectives, fostering dialogue that demonstrated how collaboration across generations can inspire empathy, solutions, and collective resilience.

GUJARATI UNITY FESTIVAL 2025: A Grand Diwali Celebration for a Greater Cause

We are thrilled to announce the Gujarati Unity Festival (GUF 2025), a grand celebration presented by Gujaratis of North America (GONA) and Love Sports. This highly anticipated community event will take place on October 25 & 26, 2025, at the Ontario Convention Center in Los Angeles.

GUF 2025 is a charity-driven festival that blends entertainment with purpose, aiming to bring together 2,500 to 3,000 people for two unforgettable days of culture, connection, and compassion. As renowned non-profit organizations, GONA and Love Sports are dedicating all proceeds from this event to support education and youth development projects in India, including:

- * Distribution of school supplies, uniforms, and shoes to children
- * Development of sports complexes and exercise facilities
- * Support for athletic programs and

equipment in rural schools

This initiative continues GONA's mission of giving back, building on its history of supporting over 100 schools across South Gujarat.

EVENT SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS:

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25:

10:00 AM - Opening Puja & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
10:30 AM - Bhavik Haria - Soulful Bhajans
12:30 PM - Lunch & Exhibits
2:00 PM - Ramayana Play in English
3:00 PM - Shantanu Gupta - Inspirational Talk
4:00 PM - Honoring 8 Inspirational Women & Fundraising Ceremony
5:00 PM - Rajiv Satyal - Stand-Up Comedy
8:00 PM - Garba Night & Movie Screenings

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26:

10:30 AM - Meditation & Wellness Session



11:30 AM - Talk by Shantanu Gupta

1:30 PM - Rajiv Satyal Live

2:30 PM - LA Got Talent Show

4:30 PM - Closing Ceremony

Special Features:

Matrimonial Meets: Saturday: 4:00 -

7:00 PM | Sunday: 2:30 - 5:30 PM

Kids Zone: Saturday: 11:00

AM - 10:00 PM | Sunday:

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

This grand event is made possible by the generosity and vision of community leaders, including Dr. Jagdish & Harsha Patel, Ketan & Janki Sharma, Sudhir & Dr. Daksha Kapadia, B.U. and Pushpa Patel, Dr. Anil & Priti Shah (SVM), Dr. Bharat Patel, Jawahar & Varsha Shah, Mahesh & Usha Wadher, Nalini Solanki, Dr. Bharat Barai, Harisinh & Minaxi Chauhan, Dr. Arvind & Jayshree Mehta, and many other donors. Their support,

along with the dedicated leadership of GONA President Pramod Mistry and his hardworking team of volunteers, ensures that this festival continues to uplift and unite communities on both sides of the ocean.

Join us, celebrate, and support the future! Tickets start at \$109 (Kids under 5 are FREE). Bring your family and friends to experience the joy of togetherness - from divine performances and comedy to inspiring talks and dazzling Garba nights. Your presence and contribution will directly help build sports and education facilities for the next generation, empowering young minds and bodies across India.

Let's come together, celebrate our Gujarati pride, and make a lasting difference.

Gujarati Unity Festival 2025 - Where Culture Meets Compassion.

For tickets and details, please visit www.gonaua.org.

SAN empowers local small businesses through targeted training

The South Asian Network (SAN) Small Business Support Program provides education and hands-on training and mentorship to aspiring entrepreneurs wanting to become business owners & operators. Through interactive workshops on the essentials of starting & growing a business, we provide critical information & understanding about various financial products and the importance of building credit and avoiding or reducing debt. In addition, our seasoned small business counselors provide personalized one-on-one counseling and practical financial education helping small business owners learn and be empowered with real-world tools to start, sustain, and scale their business ventures.

Currently, the program is working with over 15 entrepreneurs, helping them secure capital, assisting them with small business loan applications, qualifying them as LA County vendors, strengthening their business plans, helping them learn about cash flow management, and building strong credit profiles. By focusing on high-impact skills such as budgeting, marketing strategies, digital presence, and debt management, SAN empowers entrepreneurs to make smarter business decisions and compete in today's fast-changing marketplace.

Among several entrepreneurs be-

coming business owners is the success story of Vinita Dass, founder and owner of Vinita's Kitchen LLC. Vinita's kitchen is the first & the only pop up shop in downtown Los Angeles offering Desi delicacies. Vinita was mentored and trained by SAN's expert staff and she's now on her way to grow her business, expand her customer base, and build a stronger brand presence in the community.

All of SAN's services are available for free and to everyone who aspires to become financially independent by becoming a business owner / operator.

"At SAN, we believe that when small businesses thrive, our entire community grows stronger. This program is not only helping entrepreneurs build sustainable futures but also fostering economic empowerment of South Asian and immigrant communities in southern California," said Shakeel Syed, Executive Director.

SAN invites the entire community to avail our Small Business Support Program. We not only welcome existing business owners/operators but also aspiring entrepreneurs.

"Supporting small business owners is at the heart of our mission. We are proud to see our community beginning to take charge of their financial lives &



Vinita Dass, the founder and owner of Vinita's Kitchen LLC

become financially independent by starting &/or growing their businesses," said Sufian Mohammad, Small Business Program Manager, SAN.

If you are interested in starting or growing your business, call us at 562-403-0488 to learn more about upcoming workshops and counseling sessions.



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Garba Night by Jewel Entertainment with Aishwarya Majumdar at Cerritos College



L to R: Dr Rakesh Patel, Hiral Trivedi, Alejandro Flores and Kaushik Patel



L-R Dr Rakesh Patel, Janki, Teresa, Claudia, Aishwarya Majumdar, Alejandro, Hiral, Maria & May

India Post News Service

What a spectacular night it was! Cerritos College came alive on September 13, 2025, as the community gathered for an unforgettable Garba and Dandiya Raas evening headlined by none other than the Garba Queen Aishwarya Majumdar

From the very first beat of the dhol, the energy in the hall was electric. Aishwarya Majumdar's soulful yet powerful voice had the audience on their feet, with circles of dancers forming instantly. She delivered traditional Garba numbers, devotional favorites, and high-tempo medleys that kept the crowd dancing for hours without pause.

Memorable Moments

Aishwarya interacted directly with the audience, encouraging both seasoned dancers and first-timers to join in.

The peak of the night came when she performed a medley of popular Garba hits - the crowd erupted, dancing with unstoppable energy.

Community Impact

The event wasn't just about entertainment - it was about togetherness. It showcased the power of cultural traditions to unite people and do MAA AMBAJIS ARADHANA AT THE SAME TIME AND CELEBRATE HERITAGE and create lasting memories in the heart of Southern California.

Food & Festivities

Local food stalls The Cake Corner, sangam pan, sugarcane juice, ice gola, delicious corn, added to the festive atmosphere, serving favorite Indian snacks and drinks, allowing dancers to recharge and dive back into the fun. The mix of music, dance, food, and community created a festival-like atmosphere that people will be talking about for weeks.

Spotlight on the team behind Garba

Night 2025

While the music, colors, and rhythms made the night unforgettable, the true magic of Garba Night 2025 was the vision, dedication, and hard work of its organizing team.

At the heart of the event was Event Co-ordinator Hiral Trivedi, whose leadership and passion turned the vision into reality. From planning every detail to ensuring the flow of the evening, Hiral's tireless efforts ensured a seamless and joyous celebration.

"My dream was to create an evening where culture, music, and community unite," Hiral said. "Watching people of all ages dancing together was the greatest reward. It feels incredible. Months of planning, endless phone calls, meetings, and coordination all came together tonight. The joy on people's faces and the unity we saw on the dance floor made every bit of effort worthwhile. Garba is more than just dance - it's about culture, family, and togetherness, and I'm so proud we could create that experience." Special thanks to my entire volunteers crew. We turned challenges into



Aishwarya Majumdar and Hiral Trivedi

opportunities we are looking forward to do bigger and better experience with every coming year.

Alongside Hiral, the organizers brought their unique strengths to the event's success:

Dr. Rakesh Patel: Brought cultural depth and guidance. His vision was clear: "Garba is not just dance-it is devotion and identity. Our responsibility is to keep this tradition

alive, and together, this dynamic team transformed an ordinary Saturday into a spectacular cultural milestone for Cerritos. Their teamwork proved that Garba is more than dance-it is a celebration of unity, joy, and heritage.

Special thanks to all my sponsors, vendors, media partners, team members and special thanks to community people for coming to Garba night.

Alejandro Flores: Played a key role in logistics and operations. His behind-the-scenes dedication ensured everything from stage to sound to guest experience ran smoothly. "Seeing families smiling and enjoying together made all the hard work worth it," he shared. I felt welcomed and honored by community people around me it was unforgettable, and Radiant Garba Night

Kaushik Patel: curated the cultural and entertainment elements, ensuring the evening reflected both authenticity and excitement. "Bringing Aishwarya Majumdar was a dream fulfilled. She elevated the night into something truly unforgettable," he said.



Japan reports flu outbreak, over 4,000 people affected

NEW DELHI: Japan has reported a significant outbreak of flu, with more than 4,030 people being affected nationwide, according to local media reports.

The country is experiencing a flu season about a month earlier than last year. It is also the second earliest in 20 years, Japan Today reported, citing the health ministry.

"About 3,000 hospitals across the country reported a combined 4,030 flu patients", the report said. Okinawa Prefecture reported the most patients per hospital, followed by Tokyo and Kagoshima.

The caseload has crossed the epidemic threshold, with an average of 1.04 patients per institution, the country's health ministry stated.

More than 100 schools, kindergartens, and childcare centers have been closed due to outbreaks among children.

Flu season in Japan usually spans from December through March. The previous season started in early November and peaked in late December before it was deemed over in April.

In the wake of the rising cases, the ministry urged the general public to take precautions and follow measures, such as hand washing and wearing masks.

While the virus strain is not yet known, it recommended vaccination for vulnerable populations such as young children, the elderly, and anyone with underlying health conditions. *IANS*

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

October 17, 2025

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India Post 37

Young women account for seven out of 10 autoimmune disease patients: Experts

NEW DELHI: Women, especially young, account for seven out of 10 patients with autoimmune diseases, said health experts, emphasizing the need for increasing awareness and early screening among females.

Autoimmune diseases are chronic conditions where the body's immune system mistakenly attacks healthy cells and tissues. Common conditions include rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, thyroiditis, psoriasis, and Sjögren's syndrome. These diseases can affect joints, skin, blood vessels, and even internal organs like the heart or lungs.

The condition is far more common among women, especially between the ages of 20 and 50, when hormonal and lifestyle factors are most active. Many times, with a lack of awareness and other burdens, women tend to ignore their symptoms, leading to worsening outcomes.

"In my outpatient clinic at AIIMS, almost seven out of every 10 patients with autoimmune diseases are women. We see a clear pattern -- women often come late because they overlook

persistent symptoms," said Dr. Uma Kumar, Head of Rheumatology at AIIMS, New Delhi.

"Genetic make-up, hormonal changes during reproductive age and after childbirth, combined

mune diseases," she added, while speaking at the recently held 40th Annual Conference of the Indian Rheumatology Association (IRACON 2025).

The doctors lamented that the

stiffness, or swelling -- dismissing them as minor problems or results of stress or ageing.

Many delay visiting doctors due to family responsibilities, lack of awareness, or social reasons, which allows the disease to progress silently until it becomes more severe.

Kumar urged the need to recognize autoimmune disorders as a major women's health issue in India.

A recent study by Stanford University found that women's bodies produce a special molecule called Xist RNA, which helps control one of the two X chromosomes that they carry.

However, this molecule can sometimes confuse the immune system, making it attack the body's own healthy cells instead of protecting them -- one of the key reasons why autoimmune diseases are seen more often in women.

"In my practice, about 70 percent of autoimmune patients are women, and many have gone through years of wrong treatment before reaching a specialist. We must identify the early signs, especially in women, so they can be referred to rheumatologists sooner. Early diagnosis can prevent long-term disability," said Dr. Pulin Gupta, Professor and Rheumatologist at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.

Dr. Bimlesh Dhar Pandey, from a leading city-based hospital, said that women tend to live with unexplained joint pain or swelling for years before getting diagnosed.

"Many are in their 30s or 40s, juggling family and work. By the time they reach us, the disease has already damaged their joints or organs," said Pandey, urging for more awareness. *IANS*



A recent study by Stanford University found that women's bodies produce a special molecule called Xist RNA, which helps control one of the two X chromosomes that they carry

with stress, obesity, and nutritional deficiencies, can make them more vulnerable to autoim-

condition gets worse in India, because women often ignore early warning signs like tiredness, joint

AMR outpacing advances in modern medicine, resistant infections rising in hospitals globally: WHO

NEW DELHI: Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is rapidly outpacing advances in modern medicine, and resistant infections are rising in hospitals across the globe, said the World Health Organization (WHO) in a new report.

The report, based on data from 104 countries in 2023 and 110 countries between 2016 and 2023, showed that one in six laboratory-confirmed bac-

terial infections causing common infections in people worldwide in 2023 were resistant to antibiotic treatments.

Between 2018 and 2023, anti-

biotic resistance rose in over 40 percent of the pathogen-antibiotic combinations monitored, with an average annual increase of 5-15 percent.



"Antimicrobial resistance is outpacing advances in modern medicine, threatening the health of families worldwide," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

"As countries strengthen their AMR surveillance systems, we must use antibiotics responsibly and make sure everyone has access to the right medicines, quality-assured diagnostics, and vaccines. *IANS*

Heart disease, stroke and diabetes leading death and disability worldwide: The Lancet

NEW DELHI: Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes are the leading cause of mortality and disability worldwide, according to a new study published in the journal The Lancet.

The study, based on the latest analysis of Global Burden of Disease (GBD), and also presented at the World Health Summit in Berlin, showed that the causes of death are shifting from infectious to NCDs -- which now account for nearly two-thirds of the world's total mortality and morbidity.

Ischemic heart disease, stroke, and diabetes were identified as the leading causes of mortality and morbidity across the globe, including in India. This was followed by chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lower respiratory infections, and neonatal disorders.

While diarrheal diseases were the leading cause of deaths in 1990, with an age-standardized mortality rate (ASMR) of 300.53 per lakh population, in 2023, ischemic heart disease caused the maximum deaths, with an ASMR rate of 127.82 per lakh population.

Covid-19, the leading cause of deaths in 2021, plunged to the 20th place in 2023, followed by chronic obstructive pulmonary

disease, lower respiratory infections, and neonatal disorders, the study showed.

Notably, nearly half of all deaths and disability could be prevented by modifying some of the leading risk factors, such as reducing high levels of blood sugar and

rector of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington School of Medicine.

"The evidence presented in the Global Burden of Disease study is a wake-up call, urging government and health care lead-

from 204 countries and territories and 660 subnational locations from 1990 to 2023.

The researchers found that despite population growth and ageing, the 2023 global age-standardized mortality rate has declined 67 percent since 1950, and all countries and territories marked declines.

Global life expectancy returned to pre-pandemic levels at 76.3 years for females and 71.5 years for males, which is more than 20 years higher than in 1950. The number of infant deaths also declined globally.

Despite the progress, the largest increase in deaths was registered among adolescents and young adults, mainly due to suicide, drug overdose, and high quantities of alcohol.

Lead exposure, air pollution, and heat continued to have a more significant impact on global health.

Alarmingly, mental health disorders rose steeply, with anxiety disorders increasing by 63 percent and depressive disorders by 26 percent, the study showed.

In addition, sexual abuse and intimate partner violence were identified as preventable contributors to depression, anxiety, and other health consequences. *IANS*



high body mass index (BMI), said the researchers.

"The rapid growth in the world's ageing population and evolving risk factors have ushered in a new era of global health challenges," said Dr. Christopher Murray, Di-

ers to respond swiftly and strategically to the disturbing trends that are reshaping public health needs," he added.

The study produced estimates for 375 diseases and injuries and 88 risk factors by age and sex globally, analyzing data

Nagaland varsity study explores tea blossoms' potential for wellness products, rural growth

KOHIMA: A Nagaland University-led multi-institute research has unveiled the hidden health potential of tea blossoms that are often discarded as agricultural byproducts, officials said.

According to a varsity official, the study shows that these delicate flowers are abundant in potent bioactive compounds, positioning them as a natural source for health

seven premium cultivars, rather than the traditional focus on the leaves.

Nutraceutical companies could harness tea blossom extracts to create natural energy boosters, relaxation aids, and skin-health products.

Beyond consumer health, the research offers economic opportunities for small-holder tea farmers by opening new rev-

has the chance to position itself as a leader in functional foods and supplements derived from tea blossoms, it said.

Dr Sagarika Das, researcher from the Centre for Biotechnology and Bioinformatics at Dibrugarh University, fronted this groundbreaking research, collaborating with renowned tea biochemist Monoranjan Goswami from Tocklai Tea Research Institute in Jorhat, Assam, and Prof Tanmoy Karak from the Department of Soil Science at the School of Agricultural Sciences, Nagaland University.

This transformative study also garnered contributions from prestigious institutions, including the University of California, the ICAR-Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute in New Delhi, and the Departments of Horticulture and Soil and Water Conservation from Nagaland University and the Department of Chemistry, Dibrugarh University, showcasing an extraordinary alliance in the pursuit of scientific excellence. *IANS*



This study is the first systematic effort in Assam, one of the world's largest tea-producing regions, to analyze the biochemical richness of tea blossoms from seven premium cultivars, rather than the traditional focus on the leaves

supplements and functional beverages. While tea leaves dominate global research and consumption, blossoms remain largely overlooked, he said. This study is the first systematic effort in Assam, one of the world's largest tea-producing regions, to analyze the biochemical richness of tea blossoms from

enue streams through blossom collection and processing. As per the study, this approach also advances environmental sustainability, as utilizing blossoms reduces agricultural waste and contributes to a circular bio-economy. With global demand rising for plant-based, eco-friendly health products, India

New seaweed-based tablet to transform menstrual cups into health tracking tools

NEW DELHI: In a breakthrough, Canadian researchers have enhanced the existing menstrual cup into a safer, easier, and more environmentally sustainable tool, using seaweed, to track women's health.

The new menstrual cup can be leveraged to detect infections, monitor reproductive health, and improve diagnostics for conditions, such as endometriosis and urinary tract infections, said researchers at McMaster University in Ontario.

The new component, described in a paper published in the journal ACS Applied Materials and Interfaces, is a flushable tablet made from highly absorbent seaweed-based material.

It's designed to hold menstrual blood and minimize spills during removal -- a common barrier to wider adoption of menstrual cups.

"This project opened my eyes to how urgently innovation is needed in menstrual care," said Zeinab Hosseinidoust, Associate Professor of biomedical and chemical engineering from the varsity.

"There's been little movement in the conversation around menstrual care. Some of that is due to stigma and some is lack of interest, but cups have the potential to

make a serious difference in the lives of women around the world," Hosseinidoust added.

Beyond convenience and safety, the technology has the potential to significantly reduce the environmental impact of disposable menstrual products and improve access to menstrual care in lower-income communities.

Each cup is designed to last for several years, offering a cost-effective and sustainable solution for users who may not have reliable access to tampons or pads.

Though menstrual cups have long been available, their uptake has been limited due to usability challenges. These new cups address those concerns while opening the door to future health-monitoring capabilities.

The team envisions future versions of the menstrual products equipped with sensors to detect early signs of infections and blood-borne illnesses - using menstrual blood as a rich source of biological information.

"This could be a new form of wearable technology that could be even more valuable than a smartwatch," said associate professor of mechanical and bioengineering Tohid Didar, who co-led the research. *IANS*



RRI scientists deploy coffee-stain effect to spot deadly dyes in food

NEW DELHI: Scientists at Raman Research Institute (RRI), an autonomous institute supported by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), have exploited the phenomenon that makes coffee stains to spot deadly dyes in food.

When a coffee drop evaporates on a tabletop, it creates a distinctive dark circle around the edge. This daily phenomenon, or the coffee-stain effect, is due to the fact that as the liquid dries, particles suspended in the liquid move outward and cluster along the edge.

Using the phenomenon, the team developed a method to detect Rhodamine B -- a fluorescent synthetic dye used in textiles and cosmetics -- in food.

The dye is toxic and causes damage to the skin, eyes, and even the respiratory system. It is also an important environmental contaminant reported to persist in water.

"Dye molecules such as Rhodamine B are banned in products such as food and cosmetics due to their toxicity, but regulators face challenges in monitoring their illegal use, including usage of small quantities in products and a lack of availability of detection equipment," said A. W. Zaibudeen, researcher at RRI. *IANS*



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Kartik Aaryan gets emotional while receiving Filmfare Best Actor Award in front of his parents



"MY MOM AND DAD ARE HERE. AND I AM SO HAPPY THAT THIS MOMENT IS HAPPENING IN FRONT OF THEM. WE HAVE SEEN TV SINCE CHILDHOOD, HOLDING THE FILM TROPHY. I THINK THIS USED TO HAPPEN IN MY HOUSE TOO. WE HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF THIS MOMENT"

MUMBAI: Actor Kartik Aaryan shared a heartfelt moment as he received the Filmfare Best Actor Award in the presence of his parents.

Overwhelmed with emotion, the 'Dhamaka' actor expressed his gratitude and reflected on the journey that brought him to this milestone, making the occasion a truly memorable and touching celebration of his achievements. Kartik posted a video of him receiving his first-ever Filmfare Best Actor honor on Instagram and penned a heartfelt note. The actor captioned his post, "This hits different when you remember where you started. That night... every emotion I'd ever felt found its voice. From the small town boy who only dreamt of this stage, to the man living it - thank you, universe. I didn't just speak that night, I felt every word. This speech wasn't prepared. It was live."

In the video, Kartik said, "There are certain moments in life where you feel that this is happening in real and this is at night where I actually feel that this is a dream. The more I talk about that film, the more I talk about you, Kabir sir, that is less. When I first heard about the story of Murlikant Petkar's journey, I heard a story about a man who never stopped believing in himself."

"When others stopped believing in him, it made me feel personal. I don't know how to put it in words, but that journey came for me in my entire career. It was the best journey of my life. And the two years that we spent together, I owe it to Kabir sir. He is one of the finest directors of Indian cinema. And I am so, so lucky to have worked under your direction, sir. You don't just create frames, you create worlds. And it means a lot that I got this opportunity to work under your direction and with you."

Kartik added, "And I would like to thank Sajid sir, as well as Vardha ma'am, who were like a pillar of strength to the film. After so long, I think 50 years, the story of Murlikant Petkar was coming out. When our film came out, they got the Lifetime Arjuna Award."

"My mom and dad are here. And I am so happy that this moment is happening in front of them. We have seen TV since childhood, holding the film trophy. I think this used to happen in my house too. We have always thought of this moment. And when I became an actor, the first thing was that when will I get a film trophy for Best Actor. And thank you so much for this."

"Thank you, Filmfare. Thank you to all the fans who have given me so much love till date. I love you all. I have always said this. My Godfathers are my fans. And they have supported me the most. I would like to say just one thing. To all the dreamers out there, even if you feel that we won't be able to do this, this journey is going to end here. I would just like to tell you one thing. You all have a champion in you. The champion does fall. But never stops. Thank you so much," the actor concluded.

Kartik Aaryan received his first-ever Filmfare Best Actor award for his stellar performance in the film "Chandu Champion." /ANS

NEW DELHI: Located in the very core of Jaipur, the Pink City, with its rich background and strong gemstone trade, Navratan has become a household name in the world of gemstone industry and is synonymous with authenticity, elegance and excellence. What started small and was anchored on a tradition has developed into a reputable brand that serves connoisseurs, collectors, and jewelry lovers all over the continents.

An organization that values its heritage equally to the creativity of its innovation is a rarity in an industry, and Navratan is a shining example of quality, openness, and classic design. Here is the tale of how a Jaipur-based brand cut its niche in the global arena.

Jaipur: The Precious Jewelry City in India

Jaipur has always been known as the hub of the gemstone and jewel business in India. The city boasts of millennium-old craftsmanship, talented masters, and a well-developed market of colored stones, which is why the city is a great combination of tradition and business. This is the place where Navratan was born, inspired by the royal heritage of the city and the craftsmanship.

Through the marketplace of bustling Johari Bazaar (Johari Bazaar, in English means the market of gemstone experts) to the reserved design studios of master gem cutters, Navratan has adopted the essence of the gemstone culture in Jaipur and made it a brand that considers traditional and at the same time, adopts a modern outlook.

A Trustworthy Brand - Navratan

With ambivalence tainting most aspects of a market, Navratan has stood out because of its uncompromising adherence to authenticity. All gemstones sold by Navratan come certified, natural and ethically procured- a guarantee that has won the confidence of thousands of customers the world over.

The transparent nature of pricing, quality grading and the education of the customers see the brand as unique. It could be a bright Blue Sapphire or a magical Cat's Eye; the buyers are informed as well on the origin, treatment and astrological significance, which give them the authority to make a sound choice.

Expanding Horizons: A Global Footprint

Although the soul of Navratan is still based in Jaipur, its reach has expanded across the frontiers. The brand has enabled the accessibility of premium Indian gemstones for the global population, whether in New York or London, Dubai or Sydney, through a strong online presence and the ability to ship products internationally.

The shopping experience at the site of Navratan is straightforward with an attractive resolution of pictures and certification information as well as individualized suggestions. This digital revolution has seen the brand cater to clients with a wide range of backgrounds - cutting across cultures with the common language of gemstones.

Expertise in Astrological Gemstones

One of the primary advantages of Navratan is that it focuses on astrological gemstones, especially the holy Navratana set. These are nine planetary gems, which are

From Jaipur to the World: Navratan's Legacy in the Gemstone Industry



Ruby Stone, Pearl, Red Coral, Emerald, Yellow Sapphire, Diamond, Blue Sapphire, Hessonite and Cat's Eye; it is believed that these gems can balance cosmic forces and help to improve health.

Navratan blends ancient Vedic knowledge with the latest gemology to make available not only beautiful stones, but also spiritually powerful stones. Having its own astrologers and gem experts, the brand makes sure that each

recommendation is based on the birth chart of the wearer and his or her self-objectives.

Craftsmanship Meets Customization

Navratan adheres to the principles of craft in each of its works. The brand collaborates with the best artisans in Jaipur to design jewelry that incorporates complex design with the glory of gemstones. Since regal rings up to simple pendants, each piece of work is characterized by a balance of tradition

and modernism.

Furthermore, Navratan also provides personalization opportunities, so the clients can create a work that could be their own style and narrative. It can be a custom-crafted engagement ring or a customized astrological talisman; the brand makes visions come true with detail and zeal.

Trusted by Celebrities and Influencers

The fame of Navratan has drawn an increasing number of celebrity customers, fashion icons and spiritual gurus.

They have their endorsements, which are usually organic and sincere to emphasize the credibility and attraction of the brand. It could be a Bollywood celebrity who wears a Navratan gemstone as its source of cosmic power or a lifestyle blogger displaying a piece of handcrafted work, but the brand remains shining in the eyes of the public.

Recently, in the Radhika Anant Ambani wedding, the bride chose Colombian emeralds from the exclusive collection of Navratan, the online gem bazaar to wear an emerald necklace in her sangeet and on the wedding day.

Conclusion: The Shining Legacy

Started in the royal courts of Jaipur and reaching the jewelry boxes of clients all over the world, the journey of Navratan.com can be regarded as one of the tests of vision, values, and versatility. It is not just a brand but a legacy that keeps on growing, inspiring and bringing light to the lives of people by the everlasting magic of gemstones.

Navratan looks to the future, and its mission is straight to its purpose, which is to make the world know about the best gemstones of Jaipur, with its honesty, grace and soul.

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

JAIPUR HAS ALWAYS BEEN KNOWN AS THE HUB OF THE GEMSTONE AND JEWEL BUSINESS IN INDIA. THE CITY BOASTS OF MILLENNIUM-OLD CRAFTSMANSHIP, TALENTED MASTERS, AND A WELL-DEVELOPED MARKET OF COLORED STONES, WHICH IS WHY THE CITY IS A GREAT COMBINATION OF TRADITION AND BUSINESS

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India's Global Capability Centers' hiring increases by 5-7 pc in Q2 FY26

NEW DELHI: India's Global Capability Centers (GCCs) have witnessed a steady 5-7 percent quarter-on-quarter (QoQ) rise in hiring activity in the second quarter of the current fiscal (Q2 FY26), a recent report said.

The quarter reflected a continued focus on building capability rather than expanding headcount, with most demand stemming from AI and data, platform engineering, cloud and financial operations (FinOps) and cybersecurity roles.

"Sectors like BFSI, Manufacturing, Automotive, Energy, Technology and Hardware have become the main pillars of GCC growth, led by AI-enabled credit and risk operations in BFSI, EV and smart-factory programs in manufacturing, semiconductor and embedded AI development in the technology segment," Quess Corp, a staffing and workforce solutions company, said in its report.

According to the report, hiring budgets are now focused on revenue-critical and resilience-focused functions, creating steady demand for platform engineering, data management, and FinOps roles that support these programs.

Bengaluru-led GCC hiring in the July-September period leads with a 26 percent share, followed by Hyderabad (22 percent), Pune (15 percent) and, Chennai (12 percent).

Bengaluru saw strong traction in advanced AI and FinOps roles, while Hyderabad gained momentum in multi-cloud integration and data reliability, the report highlighted.

"India's GCC evolution is entering its most strategic phase yet, one defined by precision, not proliferation. Q2 reflected a measured 5-7 percent QoQ hiring growth, highlighting a shift from scale to capability-led maturity, with AI, FinOps, and platform reliability emerging as core priorities, said Kapil Joshi, CEO-IT Staffing, Quess Corp. *IANS*

Mongolia invites Indian firms to invest in mining, oil exploration

NEW DELHI: Mongolia's Deputy Prime Minister S. Amarsaikhan has highlighted promising opportunities for Indian companies in mining of minerals and oil exploration in his country.

Addressing the 'India-Mongolia Business Forum' held here, Amarsaikhan said there were also huge opportunities in Mongolia for railroad exploration, animal husbandry processing (including wool, leather, and cashew value addition), manufacturing, tourism, healthcare, transport and logistics, banking and finance, ICT, disaster risk reduction, and standards and measurements. *IANS*



Confidence of Indian CEOs in their firms' growth increased to 83 pc in 2025: Report

NEW DELHI: Confidence among chief executive officers (CEOs) in India in their own companies' growth prospects has climbed to 83 percent, up from 68 percent in 2024 - a significant leap that outpaces CEOs globally from 76 percent in 2024 to 79 percent in 2025, as per recent report said.

Despite a decline in global economic confidence -- from 80 percent in 2024 to 63 percent in 2025 -- Indian CEOs remain focused on innovation, resilience, and long-term growth strategies. Rather than retreating, they are prioritizing strategic investments in technology and talent to drive transformation.

"CEOs in India are demonstrating renewed confidence in their organizations' growth prospects, reflecting strong resilience and strategic clarity," KPMG India said in its report.

Meanwhile, AI remains a top investment priority, with 57 percent of Indian CEOs planning to

allocate 10-20 percent of their budgets to AI over the next 12 months. A majority (73 percent) expect returns on AI investments within one to three years.

As much as 86 percent be-

lieve their boards are well-equipped to navigate advanced technology adoption, including leveraging data and AI for sustainable growth, the report noted.



"In an era of global uncertainty, CEOs in India are demonstrating remarkable resilience and a future-focused mindset. By embracing emerging technologies like AI, prioritizing cybersecurity, and advancing

ESG goals, they are confident of navigating complexity," KPMG in India CEO Yezdi Nagporewalla said.

At the same time, a renewed focus on talent strategy, redesigning roles, embedding inno-

vation, and fostering continuous learning is helping organizations stay competitive and ready for what lies ahead, he added.

Integration of AI into organizational processes is cited as the most pressing challenge shaping short-term decision-making.

Technology-related factors such as cybercrime, AI workforce readiness, and successful AI integration consistently rank among the top factors impacting three-year growth, the report highlighted.

Additionally, 91 percent of Indian CEOs advocate for investing in skill development and life-long learning to safeguard future talent.

"74 percent recognize that AI workforce readiness will significantly influence organizational prosperity over the next three years," the report stated.

The report was prepared on inputs from 125 business leaders across industries and sectors. *IANS*

56 pc Indian employers intend to expand their workforce in H2 FY26: Report

NEW DELHI: More than half of employers (56 percent) in India intend to expand their workforce in the second half of the current financial year (H2 FY26), while 27 percent plan to maintain stability and 17 percent foresee rationalization, a recent report said.

Large enterprises are driving most of the hiring momentum, while medium and small businesses are proceeding with a more cautious, return-first approach.

"As India's economy sus-

tains a strong growth trajectory, driven by 7.8 percent GDP growth in Q1 FY2025-26 and



GST reforms, employers are aligning their people strategies to real business outcomes, commissioning milestones, and fes-

tive demand cycles," TeamLease Services, a leading staffing firm, said in its report.

Sectors leading the employment surge include e-commerce and tech start-ups, logistics, and retail, with projected Net Employ-

ment Changes (NECs) of 11.3 percent, 10.8 percent, and 8.1 percent, respectively, revealed the report, based on a survey of 1,251 employers across 23 industries and 20 cities, conducted from June to August.

The automotive, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure segments are also expanding steadily, supported by policy incentives such as PLI and EMPS, localization efforts, and strong domestic consumption. *IANS*

Gold ETFs record 6-fold jump in Sep inflows amid geopolitical tensions, price rise: Report

NEW DELHI: Gold ETFs saw a six fold rise in inflows in September due to geopolitical tensions, central bank purchases, and expectations of US interest rate cuts, as per report of 15 October.

Net inflows increase by 578.28 percent to Rs 8,363.13 crore in September 2025 ahead of Dhanteras, up from Rs 1,232.99 crore last year, the report from ICRAAnalytics said.

Net inflow has witnessed a CAGR growth of 69.53 percent over last 5 years from Rs. 597.26 crore in September 2020, the report noted.

Net assets under management for Gold ETFs surged to Rs 90,135.98 crore in September, nearly doubling from Rs 39,823.50 crore a year earlier, marking a 126.34 per-



cent increase. On a month-on-month basis, net AUM increased by 24.33 percent from Rs 72,495.60 crore in August this year, the report noted.

"Escalating geopolitical tensions, global uncertainties and overall dynamic outlook seem to be boosting the safe-haven appeal of the bullion," said Ashwini Kumar, SVP and Head Market Data, ICRAAnalytics.

Further, investors prefer gold ETFs for their liquidity, transparency, cost-effectiveness, and ease of trading

India, South Korea ties get stronger with tech-driven partnership in chips, green energy

NEW DELHI: In recent years, India-South Korea relations have evolved into a strategically significant partnership with technology-driven collaboration in semiconductors and sustainable energy.

The focus on semiconductors and energy represents a leap from traditional trade ties to deep technological collaboration, essential for securing the future in a competitive global landscape shaped by geopolitical tensions and supply chain realignments, according to an article in India Narrative. South Korea's New Southern Policy provides the diplomatic scaffolding to translate economic and technological cooperation into a broad, resilient strategic partnership, amplifying both countries' influence in the Indo-Pacific, the article states.

The semiconductor partnership aligns closely with India's national ambition to become a global semiconductor hub by 2030. Through the India Semiconductor Mission and a suite of policy incentives, India is building fabrication plants and developing a comprehensive supply chain encompassing chip design, manufacturing, assembly, testing, and packaging. IANS

over physical gold, he added.

The demand for physical gold has steepened generally across various countries, which shall continue further and keep the gold price firm in the festive season and beyond in the near to mid-term, Kumar added.

Kumar also noted that ETFs provide portfolio diversification, inflation protection, and tax efficiency. He recommended strategic entry after short-term corrections, such

as post-Diwali, which could offer attractive opportunities for phased investments.

Currently, there are 22 gold ETFs, including four launched in 2025. As of September 30, 2025, gold ETFs reported average returns of 50.97 percent over one year, 30.36 percent over three years, and 16.93 percent over five years. The top five funds have a five-year CAGR ranging from 16.95 percent to 17.23 percent. IANS

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- Preparation of Budgets and Forecasts.
- Accounting system set-up and implementation services.
- Business tax i.e. sales & use tax and property .

3. Payroll services:-

- Payroll checks, direct deposits.
- Electronic Tax Payments.
- Standard Payroll reports.
- Quarterly/Yearly Payroll Tax returns.

4. Management Services & other Services :-

- Financial management and planning.
- Inventory control and management.
- Formation of Partnerships and Corporations.
- Other advisory services.

India's merchandise exports rise 6.75 pc in Sep despite US tariff hikes

NEW DELHI: India's merchandise exports in September rose 6.75 percent to \$36.38 billion compared to the same month of the previous year, despite the punitive tariffs imposed by the US, according to data released by the Commerce Ministry on 15 October.

The exports in September were also higher on a month-on-month basis than the corresponding figure of \$35.1 billion for August.

"This has been a turbulent year for trade given developments across the world pertaining to supply chains and market access. But despite the turbulence during the first 6 months of FY26, total exports are higher than last year with \$18 billion more than last year. Non-petroleum exports reached \$189.49 billion during the first six months of FY26, highest ever for the period," Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agarwal said here.



However, the country's imports surged faster than exports due to the surge in demand ahead of the festive season.

"Import increase in September 2025 has been higher than exports. Gold, silver, fertilizer and electronics have led to the import surge.

Fertilizer imports have been higher this year so far due to better demand this year," Agarwal explained.

Total goods imports rose to \$68.53 billion in September from \$61.59 billion in the previous month, according to the data.

The government estimated services exports in September at \$30.82 billion and imports at \$15.29 billion, suggesting a total goods and services trade surplus at \$15.53 billion.

Meanwhile, Indian and the US are making headway in their negotiations to conclude the first tranche of the proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) as a team of Indian officials is scheduled to leave for Washington this week for further talks on the issue, according to government officials. *IANS*

Pakistan's debt spiral deepens: Another bailout on the horizon

NEW DELHI: With multiple internal strife, a Taliban offensive at the Afghan border and maintaining harmony with the powerful Pakistan Army, are adding to Islamabad's woes, the miserable economic condition has made it slide into deep debt.

Debtors, including China, reports suggest its total external debt has reached about USD 135 billion in Q2 2025, where the country already owes Beijing an estimated cluster of around USD 30 billion, with China being identified as one of Pakistan's largest bilateral creditors.

Pakistan must meet over USD 23 billion in external debt repayments in the current fiscal year, and the central bank's estimates put total foreign debt repayments and interest at about USD 30.35 billion for the year, say media reports.

As per the Pakistan Economic Survey 2024-25, the country's total debt was Pakistani Rs. 76.01 trillion (approx. USD 267 billion) at the end of March this year, comprising domestic debt of Pakistani Rs. 51.52 trillion (approx. USD 180 billion) and an external debt of Pakistani Rs. 24. 49 trillion (about USD 86 billion). *IANS*



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Philosophy

F.W. NIETZSCHE

Let us not be deceived about how every higher culture on earth has begun! Men whose nature was still natural, barbarians in every terrible sense of the word, predatory people who still possessed an unbroken strength of will and lust for power, threw themselves on weaker, more civilized, more peaceful races of tradesmen perhaps, or cattle breeders; or on old and mellow cultures in which the very last life-force was flaring up in brilliant fireworks of spirit and corruption.

The noble caste always started out as the barbarian caste. Their supremacy was in psychic, not physical strength - they were more complete people (which at any level amounts to saying "more complete beasts"). Corruption, as an expression of the fact that anarchy threatens inside the instincts and that the foundation of the effects, which we call "life," has been shaken: corruption means fundamentally different things, depending on the life-form in which it manifests itself.



F.W. Nietzsche

any further, and maybe even held to be the fundamental principle of society, it immediately shows itself for what it is: the will to negate life, the principle of disintegration and decay.

Here we must think things through thoroughly, and ward off any sentimental weakness: life itself is essentially a process of appropriating, injuring, overpowering the alien and the weaker, oppressing, being

harsh, imposing your own form, incorporating, and at least, the very least, exploiting.

Even a body within which particular individuals treat each other as equal and if this body is living and not dying, it will have to treat other bodies in just those ways that the individuals it contains refrain from treating each other. It will have to be the embodiment of will to power, it will want to grow, spread, grab, win dominance, - not out of any morality or immorality, but because it is alive, and because life is precisely will to power.

People everywhere are lost in rapturous enthusiasms, even in scientific disguise, about a future state of society where "the exploitative character" will fall

Life is a process of exploiting the weak
It will grow, spread, grab, win dominance, because it is alive

The essential feature of a good, healthy aristocracy is that it does not feel that it is a function but instead feels itself to be the meaning and highest justification, and, consequently, that it accepts in good conscience the sacrifice of countless people who have to be pushed down and shrunk into incomplete human beings, into slaves, into tools, all for the sake of the aristocracy.

Its fundamental belief must always be that society cannot exist for the sake of society, but only as the substructure and framework for raising an exceptional type of being up to its higher duty and to a higher state of being.

Mutually refraining from injury, violence, and exploitation, placing your will on par with the other's: in a certain, crude sense, these practices can become good manners between individuals when the right conditions are present namely, that the individuals have genuinely similar quantities of force and measures of value, and belong together within a single body.

But as soon as this principle is taken

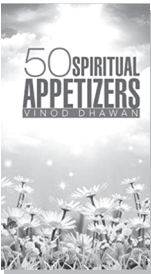
away: - to my ears, that sounds as if someone is promising to invent a life that dispenses with all organic functions.

"Exploitation" does not belong to a corrupted or imperfect, primitive society: it belongs to the essence of being alive as a fundamental organic function; it is a result of genuine will to power, which is just the will of life.

Excerpted from 'Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future.' The 181st birth anniversary of F.W. Nietzsche is observed on October 15

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Should India be seen deferring to the Taliban?

LT GEN PRAKASH KATOCH (RETD.)

The US handed back Afghanistan to the Taliban on a platter after 20 years on August 26, 2021 when the last US troops left Afghanistan, suffering 19 killed while exiting. In these 20 years, the US continued its practice of promoting terrorism by inducting ISIS cadres from Iraq-Syria into Afghanistan (via Pakistan), conducting joint ISIS-US Special Forces operations in Afghanistan (photographic evidence of which exists), and allowing Pakistan to raise the ISKP in Peshawar and push it west into Afghanistan. During the same period, Al Qaeda declared its full support to the Taliban, which continues to date.

Concurrent to the US troops' exit, Indian diplomats hurriedly packed their bags and ran back to India despite the Taliban asking them to stay put, assuring they have nothing to fear. S. Jaishankar was India's foreign minister at that time, who has continued in the same appointment since then,

Questions to Ponder

India has announced the opening of its full-fledged embassy in Kabul, which is an indirect recognition of the Taliban regime ruling the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. Since 2021, Pakistan has had a Taliban ambassador. Also, Taliban has had a political office in Doha since 2013, where the US-EU also interacts with the Taliban. China and Russia have diplomatic missions in Kabul and Beijing has a Taliban ambassador since 2023. But no country has provided a public platform to a Taliban official as India has - a joint press conference with a visiting Taliban minister!

Taliban's human rights record, particularly its regressive misogynistic policies are well known. No doubt developing relations with Taliban is a geostrategic requirement. But why did India have to ban women reporters from attending the joint press conference by the two foreign ministers?

S. Jaishankar was India's foreign minister at that time, who has continued in the same appointment since then, and who warmly welcomed the Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi accompanied by Afghan trade and foreign ministry officials in New Delhi

If India's External Affairs Minister was a lady (Sushma Swaraj or Nirmala Sitharaman), would they have been asked to wear a hijab or burqa to meet Muttaqi? If the government or-

and who warmly welcomed the Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi accompanied by Afghan trade and foreign ministry officials in New Delhi, held discussions with him, as well as a joint press conference with Muttaqi.

About a dozen countries, including China, Russia, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey, have embassies operating in Kabul, while Russia has formally recognized the Taliban administration. With the Taliban rule in Afghanistan, non-Taliban supporters pulled out from the Afghan diplomatic missions in India. Had India not pulled out its diplomats from Kabul in 2021 (notwithstanding Taliban-Pakistan relations), we could have: developed bilateral relations with Taliban, improved economic and trade relations with them; seized the opportunity to not dilute our influence in the region; reassured Hindus and Sikhs in Afghanistan against persecutions; explore investing in Afghanistan's mineral wealth.

ganized anti-China Tibetan protests outside Hyderabad House where Prime Minister Narendra Modi was holding discussions with visiting Chinese President Xi Jinping, wouldn't the presence of women reporters have conveyed the right message to Muttaqi and the Taliban about what India stands for.

Marriage Of Convenience

With regard to cross-border terrorism, it is good that Muttaqi has warned Pakistan and confirmed no Pakistan-based terrorist groups are operating in Afghanistan. But ISIS and the ISKP (which has elements of LeT and ISI) are operating in Pakistan. More importantly, Al Qaeda supports Taliban but is not 'controlled' by Taliban, and Al Qaeda's offshoot AQIS is active in South Asia.

(The author is an Indian Army veteran)
South Asia Monitor

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Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

India lifts temporary suspension on postal services to US, to resume from October 15

NEW DELHI: India announced the resumption of all categories of international postal services to the United States, effective October 15, following a temporary suspension of the services.

In an official release, the Department of Posts of the Ministry of Communications said that the move follows the successful implementation of a new Delivery Duty Paid (DDP) mechanism to comply with updated regulations issued by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

Postal services to the US were earlier suspended on August 22, following Executive Order 14324 by the US Administration, which withdrew de minimis treatment for all postal shipments. The suspension was due to new US requirements for upfront duty collection and remittance on all incoming postal items.

"After extensive system development, coordination with CBP-approved Qualified Parties, and successful operational trials in the Delhi and Maharashtra Circles, India Post has now established a compliant DDP mechanism," the Ministry stated.

Under the new system, all customs du-



ties for postal shipments to the USA will be collected at the time of booking in India and remitted directly to US authorities, ensuring faster customs clearance and hassle-free delivery for recipients in the US.

According to CBP guidelines, postal shipments from India to the US will be subject to a flat customs duty of 50 on the

declared Free on Board (FOB) value, as outlined in the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) tariff.

However, unlike courier or commercial shipments, no additional product-specific duties will be imposed, offering a cost advantage to exporters.

Significantly, India Post will not charge

customers any additional fee for facilitating the DDP process. International postal tariffs will remain unchanged, helping to keep export logistics affordable for MSMEs, artisans, e-commerce sellers, and small traders.

"Importantly, the Department of Posts will not levy any additional charges on customers for facilitating DDP and Qualified Party services. The postal tariffs will remain unchanged, ensuring that exporters continue to benefit from affordable international delivery rates while complying with the revised U.S. import requirements. This measure has been introduced to maintain affordability, support MSMEs, and boost India's exports through the postal channel," the release stated.

All categories of international mail, including EMS, Air Parcels, Registered Letters or Packets, and Tracked Packets, can now be booked for the US from any Post Office, International Business Centre (IBC), Dak Ghar Niryat Kendra (DNK), or via the India Post self-service portal. ANI

EAM Jaishankar, Canadian counterpart Anand agree on 'new roadmap' for India-Canada ties

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar and his Canadian counterpart Anita Anand held discussions in New Delhi to "restore and reinvigorate" the mechanisms necessary to advance bilateral partnership. The two leaders agreed on an ambitious cooperation roadmap for India-Canada ties.

A joint statement released following their talks stated that, in keeping with the priorities that the Prime Ministers of India and Canada had set out for bringing momentum to the relationship, both sides, based on mutual respect for shared democratic values, the rule of law, and a commitment to upholding the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, reached consensus on a 'New Roadmap' for India-Canada relations.

The Ministers recognized that in the context of ongoing global economic uncertainty and rising geopolitical tensions, a strong and resilient India-Canada bilateral relationship is essential.

"Reviving this partnership will not only create opportunities for enhanced economic cooperation but also help

mitigate vulnerabilities arising from shifting global alliances, ensure more reliable supply chains, and reinforce strategic stability in an increasingly complex international environment," it

2024 and the expanding presence of Indian and Canadian enterprises in each other's markets, generating jobs with significant potential for future growth.

The two leaders also acknowledged

economic cooperation. They agreed to work closely together and instructed their respective teams to initiate necessary steps to implement the agreed roadmap. The two nations also agreed to increase



(Combo Picture) External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, during a bilateral meeting with Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand, in New Delhi. (ANI Video Grab)

mentioned.

Both ministers expressed satisfaction over the increase in bilateral trade, which reached USD 23.66 billion in

the important role played by Canadian provinces, six of which maintain representation in India, and by Indian states in advancing mutually beneficial eco-

bilateral cooperation on climate action, environmental protection and conservation.

Cont'd on page 51

Canada seeks stronger partnership with India, with public safety, trade at forefront, says FM Anand

MUMBAI: Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand has reiterated Canada's commitment to elevating its partnership with India, highlighting public safety at home and bolstering economic relations as top priorities.

She emphasized that while domestic public security remains a key focus for the Canadian government, it is also actively working to expand economic engagement with India across a wide range of sectors, including artificial intelligence (AI), energy, agriculture, and climate sustainability.

"I am so happy to be here in India... The main message that Canada is bringing to India is that we are here to elevate the relationship with India," Anand said.

"We have a focus on domestic public security in Canada and at the same time, we are working to strengthen the economic relationship with India across various sectors, which include AI, energy, agriculture and agro-food, climate and environmental sustainability, as well as people-to-people and business-to-business ties," she added.

The Canadian Foreign Minister is currently on a three-day official visit to India, during which she will have engagements with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Exter-

nal Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, and Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal. She is now in Mumbai to participate in an event, as per a release by the Ministry of External Affairs.

Anand also noted that the two areas—public safety and economic cooperation—form the core of Canada's approach to its evolving relationship with India.

"We have a focus on domestic public security in Canada and at the same time, we are working to strengthen the economic relationship with India across various sectors, which include AI, energy, agriculture and agro-food, climate and environmental sustainability, as well as people-to-people and business-to-business ties"

"This is a comprehensive final statement that we released yesterday, and we look forward to working with India in the next iterations of the Canada-India relationship. But as I said, there are two main priorities - public safety at home and economic relationships," she added.

Anand's remarks follow the release of a joint statement recently, after she met with

her Indian counterpart, Jaishankar, to unveil a "New Roadmap for India-Canada Relations".

The roadmap, rooted in mutual respect for democratic values, the rule of law, and sovereignty, aims to strengthen ties.

The roadmap was also aimed at reinvigorating strategic partnerships across trade, technology, energy, climate action, and people-to-people exchanges.

According to the joint statement, the meeting between the two leaders builds on guidance provided by the two Prime Ministers during their meeting on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Canada, where they committed to taking calibrated measures to restore stability and pursue a constructive partnership.

Under the newly agreed Roadmap, India and Canada commit to revitalizing trade and investment ties. Among the first steps will be ministerial-level discussions and the resumption of the Canada-India CEO Forum, with a focus on sectors such as clean technology, infrastructure, agri-food, and digital innovation.

The two countries will be collaborating on renewable energy, decarbonization of heavy industries, plastic pollution reduction, chemicals management, and sustainable consumption, with India and Canada also intending to relaunch the Canada-India Ministerial Energy Dialogue (CIMED) and promote two-way trade and investment in cleaner fuels, grid modernization, and clean technologies, including green hydrogen and carbon capture.

Recognizing that institutional capacity is key, Indian and Canadian High Commissions and consulates will be strengthened with expertise in economic, political, defense, and technological domains to help implement this ambitious agenda. Beyond bilateral initiatives, the Ministers affirmed their shared resolve to engage more actively in addressing global challenges and supporting inclusive, reformed multilateral institutions. ANI

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Cherished friend of India: PM Modi condoles death of Kenya's ex-PM Raila Odinga

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed grief over the demise of former Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga, who passed away earlier in the day at the age of 80, in Koothattukulam, Kerala, after suffering a heart attack during his morning walk.

Referred to Odinga as a "cherished friend of India", PM Modi recalled their meeting during his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat.

Odinga, who was in the state for Ayurvedic treatment, collapsed suddenly and was rushed to Sreedhareeyam Ayurvedic Eye Hospital and Research Centre, but could not be revived. His body has been kept at Deva Matha Hospital, Koothattukulam.

In a post on X, PM Modi said, "Deeply saddened by the passing of my dear friend and former Prime Minister of Kenya, Mr Raila

Odinga. He was a towering statesman and a cherished friend of India. I had the privilege of knowing him closely since my days as Chief Minister of Gujarat, and our association continued over the years."

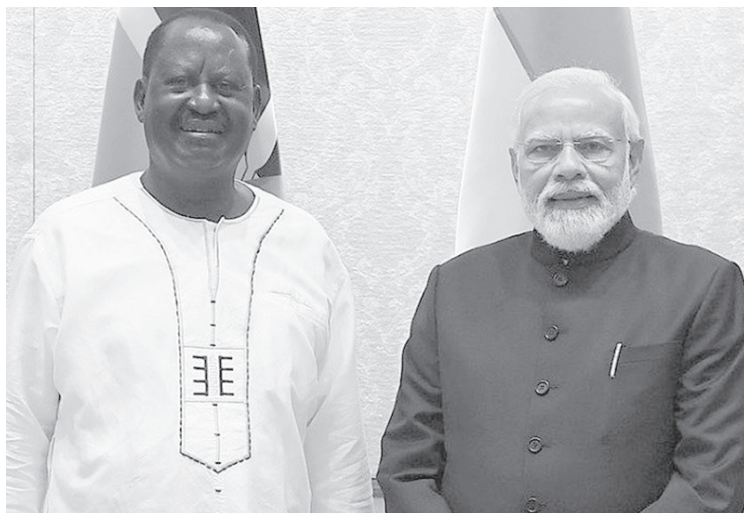
"He had a special affection for India, our culture, values and ancient wisdom. This was reflected in his efforts to strengthen India-Kenya ties. He particularly admired Ayurveda and the traditional medicine systems of India, having witnessed their positive impact on his daughter's health. I extend my deepest condolences to his family,

friends and to the people of Kenya in this hour of grief," he added.

Odinga had arrived in Koothattukulam six days ago, accompanied by his daughter and close family members.

He had been following a routine of morning walks and treatment sessions at the hospital.

Local authorities said the heart attack occurred around 6.30 a.m. during his walk, and he was brought to the hospital in critical condition.



A towering figure in Kenyan politics for over four decades, Odinga served as the country's Prime Minister from 2008 to 2013, during a crucial period of national reconciliation and constitutional reform.

Known for his fiery speeches and grassroots connections, he was a central figure in shaping modern Kenyan democracy.

He played a key role in the power-sharing agreement that ended the post-election violence of 2007-08, emerging as a national leader who advocated dialogue and reform.

Odinga was also a long-time opposition leader and head of the Orange Democratic Movement.

He contested several presidential elections and remained one of Kenya's most prominent political figures.

His career was marked by both fierce political battles and efforts to build a more inclusive political system. *IANS*

India elected to UN Human Rights Council for 2026-28 term

NEW YORK: India has been elected for the seventh time to the United Nations' Human Rights Council for the term 2026-28, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Parvathaneni Harish shared recently.

In a post on X he thanked all the delegations for their support and underscored how the election is reflective of India's unwavering commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

"India was elected to the Human Rights Council for the term 2026-28 @UN for the seventh time today. Thank all delegations for their overwhelming support. This election reflects India's unwavering commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms. We look forward to serve this objective during our tenure", he said.

The Human Rights Council is the main intergovern-



mental body within the United Nations responsible for human rights. Established in 2006 by the General Assembly, it is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe.

The Council, composed of 47 Member States, provides a multilateral forum to address human rights violations and country situations. It responds to human rights emergencies and makes recommendations on how to better implement human rights on the ground.

In a previous statement, the Permanent Mission of India to the UN noted how India's deepening engagement with the United Nations is based on its steadfast commitment to multilateralism and dialogue as the key for achieving shared goals and addressing common challenges faced by the global community. *ANI*

China firmly opposes US restrictive measures targeting maritime, logistics, and shipbuilding sectors

BEIJING: China has expressed strong dissatisfaction with and resolute opposition to the restrictive measures imposed by the United States, which are based on the so-called results of the Section 301 investigation into China's maritime, logistics and shipbuilding sectors, the country's Ministry of Commerce said recently.

A ministry spokesperson, responding to a media query, said the US actions reflect typical unilateralism and protectionism, seriously violate World Trade Organization rules, undermine the principle of equality and mutual benefit in the China-US maritime transport agreement, and inflict severe damage on China's relevant industries.

China announced on October 10 that it will impose special port fees on ships that are US-flagged or US-built, or that are owned, partly owned, or operated by US enterprises, organizations, or individuals, according to the ministry.

The US measures will not only disrupt global supply chains and significantly increase international trade

The US measures will not only disrupt global supply chains and significantly increase international trade costs, but will also drive up domestic inflation in the United States

costs, but will also drive up domestic inflation in the United States, undermine the competitiveness and employment of US ports, and jeopardize the security and resilience of its own supply chains, the spokesperson said, Xinhua news agency reported.

There is also significant opposition from US industry circles, clearly showing that the US approach harms others without benefiting itself, the spokesperson added.

The spokesperson noted that, in accordance with relevant domestic laws and regulations, China has placed certain companies that assisted or supported US investigative actions on its countermeasures list, and has launched investigations into US actions and those of other entities that threaten the security and development interests of China's shipping, shipbuilding and related industries.

Throughout the investigation, China will carry out law enforcement and inquiries in accordance with the principles of openness, fairness and justice, ensuring the full protection of the rights of all parties involved, according to the spokesperson.

China's position is clear and consistent, the spokesperson said. "We will fight, if fight we must. Our doors remain open, should the US wish to engage in dialogue."

China urges the United States to correct its wrongdoings, meet China halfway, and resolve issues of mutual concern through dialogue and consultation on an equal footing, the spokesperson added. *IANS*

US passport slips from top 10 powerful passports list for first time

NEW DELHI: The US passport has fallen out of the top 10 most powerful passports in the world for the first time since the Henley Passport Index was introduced twenty years ago. With visa-free travel to 180 of 227 countries, the US, which was the world leader in 2014, is now tied with Malaysia for 12th place.

With visa-free access to 193 destinations, Singapore remains in the top place, followed by South Korea with 190, and Japan with 189, according to the most recent Henley Passport Index, which is based on data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

Recent changes in access by a number of nations are the cause of the US ranking's decline. The decline has been attributed to a number of factors, including the removal of visa-free entry to Brazil earlier this year, exclu-

sion from China's growing list of countries that do not require a visa, and new entry restrictions imposed by Myanmar and Papua New Guinea.

More recently, the US passport's reputation was further damaged by Vietnam's decision to exclude the US from its new visa-free program and Somalia's implementation of an eVisa system.

The UK has also suffered, dropping from sixth to eighth place since July, the lowest since it topped the index in 2015.

Only 46 nationalities are permitted entry into Washington without a visa, whereas US citizens are granted visa-free travel to 180 locations. According to the Henley Openness Index, which rates nations according to how hospitable they are to foreign tourists, this disparity puts the US

in 77th place.

The US lags Australia and only marginally surpasses Canada, New Zealand, and Japan in the disparity between its own openness and its international travel privileges.

On the other hand, China has made significant strides in the last ten years. It has added 37 more destinations to its list of visa-free travel destinations, moving up from 94th in 2015 to 64th in 2025.

After allowing visa-free travel to 76 nations, 30 more than the US, China is now ranked 65th on the Henley Openness Index. Beijing's increasing focus on global mobility and openness is demonstrated by recent visa-free agreements with Russia, the Gulf States, several South American nations, and European partners. *IANS*



EAM Jaishankar, Canadian counterpart Anand agree on 'new roadmap' for India-Canada ties

Cont'd from page 48

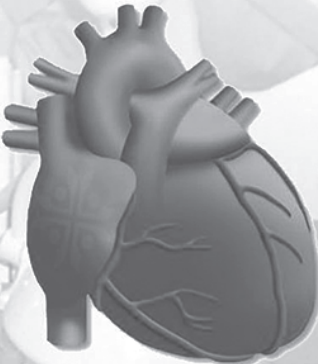
According to the India-Canada joint statement, EAM Jaishankar and Anand agreed to collaborate, exchange information and expertise and support respective climate ambitions in various areas, including renewable energy capacity, decarbonizing heavy industries, reducing plastic pollution, supporting the sound management of chemicals, and ensuring sustainable consumption. Both sides agreed to deepen collaboration to unlock new frontiers in S&T including AI, and digital infrastructure.

The joint statement said, "Noting with satisfaction that people-to-people linkages are central to fostering mutual understanding and building long-term collaboration, both sides agreed to strengthen cooperation in education, tourism, cultural exchange, and professional mobility. Early initiatives in this regard will include: Refreshed collaboration in higher education and research to reflect the increasingly deep talent pools and cutting-edge research in each country. Emphasis on research partnerships in emerging technologies (such as AI, cybersecurity, and fintech), and to expanded Canadian academic presence in India through overseas campuses. Revitalized Joint Working Group on Higher Education as a means to further expand Canada-India academic networks and institutional ties."

The two leaders pledged to expand collaboration on global issues, including working to ensure more effective and inclusive multilateral institutions. Following their talks in New Delhi, Jaishankar said that he and Anita Anand discussed global developments and their responses to shared challenges.

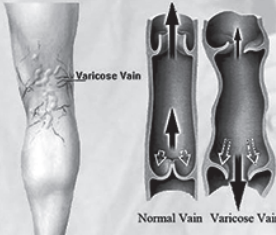
"Delighted to welcome FM Anita Anand of Canada today in New Delhi. Had constructive discussions to restore and reinvigorate the mechanisms necessary to advance our partnership. Also exchanged views on global developments and our responses to shared challenges. We also agreed on an ambitious cooperation roadmap. And to shepherd the process of rebuilding our cooperation so that it delivers on the expectation of our leaders and the interests of our people," Jaishankar posted on X after the meeting. *IANS*

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A Reset in the Making? Modi, Trump Reboot India-US Trade Ties

JAYANTA ROY CHOWDHURY

When Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted about his "good progress achieved in trade negotiations" after a call with President Donald Trump, it was more than diplomatic choreography. It marked a visible thaw in one of the most strained phases of India-US commercial relations in recent memory—a pragmatic reset after months of tariff battles, oil-related sanctions, and stalled dialogue.

For Washington and New Delhi alike, the revival of talks signals both an economic and geopolitical recalibration, one that could reshape India's global posture as it navigates between competing great-power rivalry.

Since early 2025, India has been locked in a bruising trade confrontation with Washington. Punitive tariffs, some reaching

could jeopardize any future alliance of democracies.

Behind the scenes, however, negotiators never stopped talking. Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal's repeated visits to Washington and quiet working-level consultations gradually built a bridge back to dialogue.

By late September, with US midterm politics stabilizing and Washington seeking to rebuild Asian alliances, both sides found reason to de-escalate. The Trump-Modi call capped weeks of intensive diplomacy—an effort to fast-track a long-stalled bilateral trade agreement targeted for signature by November 2025.

Modi, Trump and Optics of Alignment

The optics of the leaders' exchange was deliberate. Modi's public reference to "good

are extremely conscious of their public postures and positions to disengage from an ugly confrontation without losing "face". While Trump can claim victory by pointing out his measures helped bring peace in the Middle East with Indians as major cheerleaders, Modi can claim he has not given up buying Russian oil even as the amount imported is quietly recalibrated.

India's negotiators have tabled an array of targeted concessions to break the impasse. These include phased tariff reductions on select US industrial goods—premium dairy, automobiles, and alcoholic beverages—and conditional market access for American digital services and medical devices.

More significantly, India has offered to fast-track defense and nuclear purchases from US firms, using big-ticket strategic buys as leverage to secure tariff relief on exports. Talks for a defense pact as well for co-production went into the freezer after the public spat between the two leaders over trade and Russian oil.

Once the reset on trade proceeds, it could transform far more consequential realignment in security and technology, with both nations preparing to formalize a planned new 10-year Framework for Major Defense Partnership.

The proposed framework aims to institutionalize joint military planning, streamline defense trade regulations, and expand logistics-sharing, making the transfer of advanced US technologies to India faster and more predictable. It marks the most ambitious structural upgrade in defense ties since the signing of the foundational logistics and communications agreements nearly a decade ago.

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

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For Washington and New Delhi alike, the revival of talks signals both an economic and geopolitical recalibration, one that could reshape India's global posture as it navigates between competing great-power rivalry

50 percent, hit Indian exports ranging from textiles to auto components, a direct consequence of New Delhi's refusal to curb discounted Russian oil imports.

For India, the US measures were seen as excessive and politically tone-deaf, undermining the very strategic trust both nations had cultivated under the Indo-Pacific partnership.

Behind The Scenes Action

For Trump, the issue had turned into another round of embarrassing confrontation with Democrat Senators and Congressmen and leaders from the liberal or progressive Republican faction, who criticized his sudden harsh actions against India, a pivot in US strategies for the Indo-Pacific, as a move which

progress" and Trump's reciprocal praise, calling Modi a "great friend", were designed to project harmony and direction. The gestures also marked a reversal from earlier months, when Modi had conspicuously avoided direct engagement amid frustration over the U.S. tariff barrage.

What emerges now is a carefully managed "reset." The call restored leader-level communication and signaled that political capital is being invested to ensure the trade deal's conclusion.

It is also a personal recalibration: both leaders see the optics of economic cooperation as strategically valuable in an election-heavy year when global trade realignments are redefining alliances.

It also allows both leaders who



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US DUMPS INDIA UK PICKS-UP

As Trump dumps India especially on trade, PM Narendra Modi and UK counterpart Keir Starmer solidified trade and strategic ties in Mumbai, signing agreements to deepen economic links, expand education, and boost defense cooperation recently. The leaders highlighted the new Free Trade Agreement as a significant step, with Starmer emphasizing India's remarkable growth and its path to becoming a developed nation by 2047.

PM Modi described India and UK as 'natural partners' and characterized the deepening partnership as "an example of stability in an uncertain world." Education received a particular boost, with Modi confirming, "Nine UK universities to establish campuses in India," adding "GIFT city will host campuses of three UK universities." The meeting, which included leaders from industry, academia, and culture, aims to leverage the FTA to unlock new trade opportunities, investment, and joint ventures across sectors ranging from technology and finance to defense and education.

The agreements signed last week are expected to accelerate bilateral trade growth, support the establishment of UK university campuses across India, and reinforce cooperation in maritime security and defense technology. In technology and innovation, to establish the India-UK Connectivity and, to create an innovation Centre for AI. Launch of Phase II of the UK-India Critical Minerals Supply Chain Observatory and establishment of a new satellite campus at IIT-ISM Dhanbad.

Establishment of the Critical Minerals Industry Guild to secure resilient supply chains and promote green technologies. On education front to hand over the Letter of Intent for opening of the Campus of Lancaster University in Bengaluru and Campus of University of Surrey in GIFT City. While in the trade co-operation, resetting the India-UK Joint Economic Trade Committee (JETCO), which will support implementation of the CETA and drive economic growth and job creation in both countries. The defense co-operation includes providing flight training instructors to R.A.F. and acquiring multirole missile systems from UK.

The deal envisages cuts in tariffs on goods from textiles to whisky and cars, and allow more market access for businesses in the world's fifth- and sixth-largest economies, aiming to boost trade by a further 25.5 billion pounds (\$34 billion) by 2040.

"This relationship matters more than ever," Starmer told reporters at a press conference before he flew home. "We're opening up new opportunities in India for British businesses, opportunities that other countries simply do not have. It has given us a unique edge."

Modi told a business forum he was confident the two countries would double their trade from the current \$56 billion ahead of their 2030 target. Ever since President Trump raised and singled out India on tariff issues, India's Prime Minister Modi has been busy looking for new partners to offset the losses, which may impact India.

In hindsight it may also be a blessing in disguise for India. India has been in slumber for many decades and this will definitely broaden India's trade with rest of the world. Modi and his team have been busy organizing new trade partners and create new trade-blocks to counter the shocks created by Trump. Politically India has chosen a neutral position on most issues including Gaza and Ukraine conflicts.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

Ankita Lokhande surprises BFF Neha Swami on her birthday

Television superstar Ankita recently took to her social media account to share a video wherein she was seen surprising her BFF and Arjun Bijlani's wife, Neha Swami, on her birthday.

In the video, she was seen landing at Neha Swami's house with a big bouquet of roses and a beautiful flower garland unannounced. The video showed Neha looking very surprised and happy upon seeing her BFF Ankita Lokhande makes her feel special.

Further, Ankita was seen making Neha wear the floral garland lovingly and also gifted the bouquet. Lokhande also expressed how special Neha's birthday was for her. Ankita also wrote an emotional birthday note for Neha's birthday and shared it on her social media account. She wrote, "Happy birthday, Neha! We can't believe how far we have come. IANS

Vidya Balan reveals 'Law of attraction' to get 'Parineeta'

Vidya Balan revealed how she manifested working with 'Parineeta' director Pradeep Sarkar.

Vidya shared a video of herself kick-starting her Monday morning by crooning the beautiful track "Seekho Na Naino Ki Bhasha Piya".

Talking about the melody, the 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa' actress revealed that when she first heard the track, she immediately fell in love with it and started wishing to work with a director like Pradeep Sarkar.

"I love lip syncing to songs and this song i love which is good reason to do it on a Monday morning (Slightly Smiling Face Emoji).

When i watched it for the first time, i was struck as much by the lyrics by @prasoonjoshilive and the song itself as i was by the picturisation...And while I began to secretly harbor a desire to work with the master storyteller #pradeepsarkar," Vidya wrote on her IG.

As luck would have it, Vidya got a chance to work with the filmmaker in her debut movie, "Parineeta". She further went on to be a part of other projects of the team, including Shantanu Moitra.

"Unbeknownst to me, the universe began to work its magic. A few years later, i got an ad film with Dada and then as luck would have it, i got to be in 3 of his music videos too...The highlight was of course that i got to work with the same team of @smudgal @moitrashantanu & #Dada on another album called #Kisson ki chaadar written by @niveditajoshi4 Not just that, this eventually led to me getting launched by Dada in Parineeta (Slightly Smiling Face Emoji)," the 'Ishqiya' actress went on to share.

IANS

TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

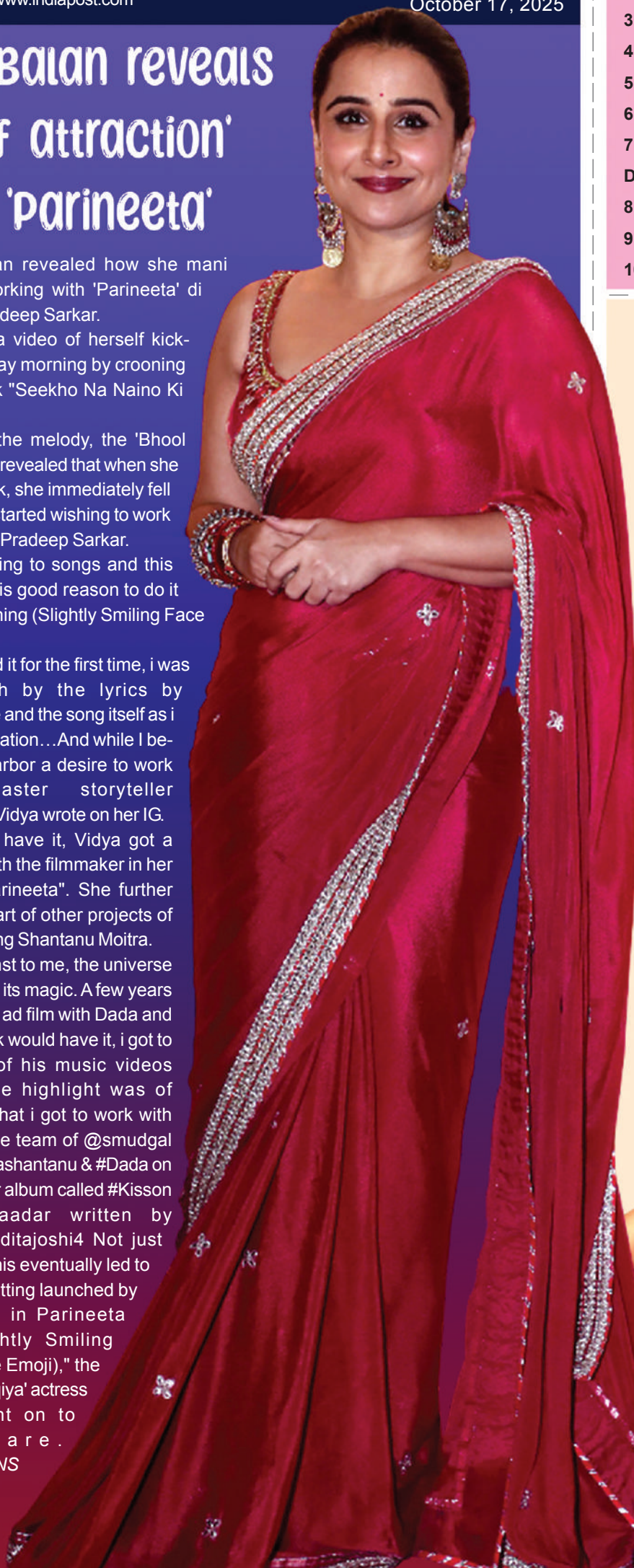
- 1 Saiyaara: **Saiyaara**
- 2 Barbaad: **Saiyaara**
- 3 Pardesiya: **Param Sundari**
- 4 Qayde Se: **Metro ... In Dino**
- 5 Dhun: **Saiyaara**
- 6 Janaab-e-Aali: **WAR 2**
- 7 Deewaniyat: **Ek Deewane Ki Deewaniyat**
- 8 Tum Ho Toh: **Saiyaara**
- 9 Raanjhan: **Do Patti**
- 10 Zamaana Lage: **Metro ... In Dino**

Aditi Rao Hydari celebrates the Wanaparthi saree

Bollywood and South star Aditi Rao Hydari, who hails from the royal family of Wanaparthi in Telangana, has always been extremely proud of her lineage.

The actress recently took to her social media account to share a deeply personal post on the revival of the Wanaparthi saree, a weave that carries both depth and familial legacy. Sharing a series of pictures from an exhibition dedicated to her saree, Aditi wrote, "The revival of the Wanaparthi saree! A saree that has multicultural roots, much like me!"

Elaborating on the culture and heritage, Rao wrote, "My grandfather Raja J Rameshwar Rao worked towards this revival as a young man. IANS





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Priyamani reveals how Ajay Devgn, SRK & Manoj Bajpayee work

Actress Priyamani opened up about her experiences working with Bollywood stars, including Ajay Devgn, Shah Rukh Khan (SRK) and, Manoj Bajpayee.

In an exclusive interview with IANS, the 'Family Man' actress shared how each of these icons has a unique working style, reflecting their individual approach to the craft. Priyamani also expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to collaborate with such talented actors early in her career and hopes to work with them again in the future.

When asked about working with Bollywood legends Ajay, Shah Rukh, and Manoj, Priyamani said each of them is unique and a superstar in their own right. She stated, "Each one of them is unique and a superstar in their own right. Their working styles are very distinct. I feel extremely lucky to have worked with them so early in my career. And yes, given the opportunity, I'd love to work with all of them again."

Priyamani added, "They've all worked extremely hard to reach where they are. Their success is well deserved, and I wish them all the best always."

Priyamani worked alongside Shah Rukh Khan in Atlee's action thriller "Jawan," where she portrayed the character of Lakshmi. The film featured SRK in a dual role - as both a father and his lookalike son - with Nayanthara as the female lead.

She also collaborated with Ajay Devgn in the sports drama "Maidaan," in which the 'Singham' actor essayed the role of Syed Abdul Rahim, the legendary football coach who revolutionized Indian football during its golden era from 1952 to 1962. IANS



Abhishek Bachchan dedicates first Filmfare award to Aishwarya Rai

Bollywood star Abhishek Bachchan was seen getting emotional as he won the Filmfare Award in the Best Actor category for his powerful performance in the movie "I Want to Talk".

This award marked his first-ever Filmfare win in his career that spanned over 25 years. The auditorium erupted in applause as Abhishek took the stage with his family, finally watching from the audience. As Abhishek received the award, his mother, veteran actress and Rajya Sabha MP Jaya Bachchan, looked on with misty eyes as her son began his emotional speech.

Dedicating his achievement to his mother, Abhishek said, "To my mom, who has never been very demonstrative of her desires but quietly prayed that one day her son will get to give this speech and stand up there, thank you for your love, talent, and belief," Abhishek said, pausing to collect himself. He then turned his attention to his wife and daughter, saying, 'I want to thank Aishwarya and Aradhya for allowing me to step out and chase my dreams.' I hope after winning this, they understand the sacrifices they have made for me to stand here today.

Reflecting on his journey, Abhishek said, 'This year marks 25 years of my working in the industry.' I don't even remember how many times I have rehearsed a speech for this award. To finally receive it in front of my family makes it even more special. He added with humility, 'Winning this has been my dream, and today I feel truly grateful.' I want to thank the movie's team and our director, Shoojit Sircar. To all those directors who have given me a chance over the last 25 years, thank you for believing in me. It hasn't been easy, but it's definitely been worth it. The actor also shared an inspiring message for the younger generation. To all the young actors, just for 25 years of hard work and perseverance gets you." IANS



• **"I want to thank Aishwarya and Aradhya for allowing me to step out and chase my dreams.' I hope after winning this, they understand the sacrifices they have made for me to stand here today"**



ELLI AVRRAM 'FEELING GREAT' PERFORMING WITH AKSHAY KUMAR

ElliAvrRam revealed she is "feeling great" about performing with Bollywood hunk Akshay Kumar at the ongoing Filmfare Awards.

During an exclusive conversation with IANS, the 'Kis Kisko Pyaar Karoon' actress revealed that she performed on one of her most beloved Bollywood tracks, "Chura Ke Dil Mera," making the experience all the more special for her.

Speaking to IANS, Ellie said, "I am very excited because I have performed with Akshay Kumar. This is my first Filmfare performance, so I am feeling great about

getting this opportunity. I ended up enjoying myself a lot as I performed on my favorite Bollywood song, which is 'Chura Ke Dil Mera', making it a special moment for me."

Showing her gratitude for being a part of the Filmfare, she added, "Thank you so much, Gujarat, for hosting Filmfare Awards this time and for having me here."

Previously, Ellie shared her approach

"I am very excited because I have performed with Akshay Kumar. This is my first Filmfare performance, so I am feeling great about getting this opportunity. I ended up enjoying myself a lot as I performed"

to fitness, stressing the importance of mental well-being and "lifting heavy weights".

Talking during a book launch event, the 'Mickey Virus' actress spoke about maintaining her mental and physical health.

Elli shared, "I start my day with a 30-minute meditation session, which I practice every day. If I miss it, the entire day feels quite different compared to when I do it." IANS



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Kavita Kaushik's fan thanks her for changing his life

Television actress Kavita Kaushik recently shared a touching message received from an aspiring actor who credited her for changing the course of his life.

The message sent by an actor named Karambeer Singh recalled an encounter that took place in Mumbai during his early days of struggle. In the message, the aspiring artist revealed that he had moved to Mumbai to pursue acting, but due to financial difficulties, he had taken up the job of delivering pizzas.

He narrated how one day, while delivering an order, he met Kavita Kaushik, and he left to ask for a selfie. Upon removing his mask, Kaushik had told him in a caring and firm tone that he was too handsome to be delivering pizzas and should instead pursue acting or modeling. The actor stated that his words left a lasting impact on him and that that very day he quit his job and began pursuing his dream full-time.

Since then, he has worked in multiple advertisements, television series, music videos, and web series. In his message, he thanked Kavita for her encouragement and created a straightforward and open standard for the aspiring actor to take to mind. Responding to his message, Kavita Kaushik wrote that life becomes as big as one makes it and wished him success, advising him to stay focused and dedicated to his work.

For the uninitiated, Kavita Kaushik is best known for her iconic portrayal of Inspector Chandramukhi Chautala, a fearless Haryanvi police officer in the popular sitcom F.I.R., which aired from 2006 to 2015. *IANS*

Vicky Kaushal amazed by Anupam Kher's dance on Tauba Tauba

Actor Vicky Kaushal expressed his admiration for veteran actor Anupam Kher after watching his dance performance on the song "Tauba Tauba."

Sharing his amazement on social media, the 'Uri' actor revealed that it took him a whole day to learn moves that Kher mastered in just seconds. Vicky highlighted the actor's incredible talent and dedication to trying something new even at this stage of his career. Taking to his Instagram stories, the Sanju actor, reposted Anupam's video and wrote, "I took a day to learn what you learnt and aced in 10 secs...absolutely amazing sir!!! @anupamkher," followed by red heart emojis.

Anupam Kher shared his first-ever dance video on Instagram. In the caption, he revealed that he had deliberately avoided dancing throughout his career. The 'Tanvi the Great' actor took his first dance class last month and quickly learned a tricky hook step from choreographer Caesar of the Bosco-Ceaser duo. Sharing the experience, he posted a video showing Caesar guiding him through the hook step of the song "Tauba Tauba." *IANS*

Saiyami Kher: Akshay Kumar, Saif Ali Khan a COMPLETE JOYRIDE

Actress Saiyami Kher, who is currently busy shooting in Kochi for her upcoming film "Haiwaan" alongside Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan, says it has been a "joyride" working with them.

Directed by celebrated filmmaker Priyadarshan, the film marks yet another milestone in Saiyami's career as she collaborates with one of Indian cinema's most iconic directors.

Sharing her excitement, Saiyami, who is working for the first time with filmmaker Priyadarshan, told IANS: "Working with Priyadarshan sir feels surreal. His body of work has been a huge part of Indian cinema and growing up, I've watched and admired his films. To now be on his set as an actor feels really special."

She added: "I feel truly fortunate that I've had the chance to work with some of the finest directors of our country, Rakeysh Om Prakash Mehra, Anurag Kashyap, Neeraj Pandey, R. Balki, Rahul Dholakia and now Priyadarshan sir."

She said that each director has taught her so much and that she has grown not only as an actor but as a human.

Saiyami added: "I feel blessed that my journey has been shaped by such incredible storytellers. Shooting in Kochi has also been a beautiful experience. Being on set with Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan, who bring so much energy, discipline, and camaraderie, has been a complete joyride. It's projects like these that remind me why I fell in love with cinema in the first place."

Talking about "Haiwaan", the film reunites Akshay with actor Saif Ali Khan after 17 years. Directed by Priyadarshan, the film serves as a remake of the 2016 Malayalam thriller Oppam, which was also helmed by the same filmmaker and starred Mohanlal. The cast of the upcoming film also includes Boman Irani and Shriya Pilgaonkar, with Rohan Shankar as the screenwriter. *IANS*

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Often referred to as the birthplace of Lord Rama, Ayodhya is deeply entrenched in Hindu mythology and spirituality. Nestled along the banks of the sacred Sarayu River in Uttar Pradesh, Ayodhya stands first among the seven most sacred pilgrimage sites for Hindus. The name "Ayodhya" itself is deeply intertwined with the Ramayana in which it was known as the capital of the ancient Kosala Kingdom. The Ramayana immortalized Ayodhya through its association with the epic tale of Lord Rama. This ancient city holds immense significance for millions of Hindus, serving as a pilgrimage site where devotees pay homage to Lord Rama and seek spiritual solace.

At the heart of Ayodhya lies the newly inaugurated Ram Temple, a monumental structure that stands as a symbol of devotion and faith. Many Hindus believe that it is located at the site of Ram Janmabhoomi, the mythical birthplace of

Rama, a principal deity of Hinduism. On 22 January 2024, amidst great pomp and celebration, the Ram Temple was inaugurated, marking a historic moment for Hindu devotees around the world. Upon completion, the temple complex became the world's third-largest Hindu temple. Balak Ram or the Infant form of Rama is the presiding deity of the temple which is an architectural marvel drawing pilgrims seeking blessings in his divine presence.

The city is also dotted with several other temples, shrines, and sites associated with the Ramayana, such as the Hanuman Garhi temple, dedicated to Lord Hanuman, and the Kanak Bhawan, a temple dedicated to Lord Rama and his consort, Sita. Nageshwarnath temple, dedicated to Lord

Shiva, and the Treta Ke Thakur temple, is believed to have been the site where Lord Rama performed a yajna (sacrificial ritual) during his reign. Bharat Kund, a sacred pond is believed to be the spot where Lord Rama's brother Bharata performed rituals upon his return to Ayodhya. Other notable landmarks include Ram ki Paidi, a series of ghats along the banks of the Sarayu River where devotees gather for religious rituals and holy baths; the Tulsi Smarak Bhawan, dedicated to the renowned saint-poet Goswami Tulsidas, and the Guptar Ghat is where Lord Rama is believed to have taken Jal Samadhi (immersed himself in water) before leaving the earth. Each attraction adds to the rich tapestry of Ayodhya's cultural and spiritual heritage.

One of the most anticipated events in Ayodhya is the Ayodhya Deepotsav, a grand festival celebrated with great fervor and enthusiasm. Started in 2017, the festival is celebrated around Diwali. During this festival, the entire city is illuminated with millions of earthen lamps, breaking the Guinness World Record with over 22.23 lakh diyas lit up on Ram ki Paidi. Additionally, Ayodhya is esteemed in Jainism, as it marks the birthplace of four of the religion's 24 Tirthankaras. Pilgrims and tourists flock to this ancient city to pay homage to Lord Rama and explore the myriad temples, shrines, ghats, and historical sites that dot its landscape.

Places to visit In Ayodhya

Ram Mandir: Translating to Ram's Birthplace, the Ram Janmabhoomi is believed to have been the birthplace of the Hindu deity, Lord Ram. According to the Indian epic Ramayan, Ram, Lord Vishnu's seventh manifestation, is said to have grown up along Ayodhya's river Sarayu. Located in the ancient city of Ayodhya, he Ram Janmabhoomi is a highly revered site for Hindu devotees.

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