



Dr. Romesh Japra, Founder and Chairman of Americans4Hindus

Dr. Japra's Global vision for Ethical AI

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Maha Shivaratri celebrates at Fremont Temple

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'Everyone isn't looking out for you'

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INDIA POST SURVEY
survey@indiapost.com

This week's question
 Will Bangladesh's new PM accept PM Modi's invitation?

Last week's result
 Are the recent elections in Bangladesh fair?
 YES 42% NO 58%

INDIA AI SUMMIT

India AI Summit 'moment of pride' for Global South, says PM Modi; calls for responsible, ethical use



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with French President Emmanuel Macron, Brazil President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic, Netherlands PM Dick Schoof, Mauritius PM Navin Chandra Ramgoolam, Kazakhstan PM Olzhas Bektenov, Greece PM Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Finland PM Petteri Orpo, Croatia PM Andrej Plenkovic, Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay, and other global leaders at AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said it was a moment of pride for the Global South that the AI Impact Summit is being hosted in India, while underlining the urgent need for the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence in a rapidly evolving technological era.

Addressing the India AI Impact Summit 2026, the Prime Minister welcomed global leaders and dignitaries, describing the gathering as unprecedented in scale and significance.

"I welcome you all to the biggest and most historic AI Summit in the world. India, where this summit is going, is a country that represents 1/6th of the world; it is a youth nation, a center of the

world's largest tech pool and tech ecosystem. India makes new technology as well as adopts it," he said.

"It is a matter of pride for the Global South that the AI summit is being organized in India," he added.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during the Opening Ceremony of India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi. (DD News/ANI Video Grab)

During his address, an AI-enabled sign language interpretation was displayed in the backdrop, underscoring the practical applications of the technology being discussed at the summit.

Reflecting on the transformative potential of artificial intelligence, the Prime Minister said technological revolutions often begin in ways that are difficult to fully comprehend at the outset.

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Microsoft to invest \$50 billion to bring AI

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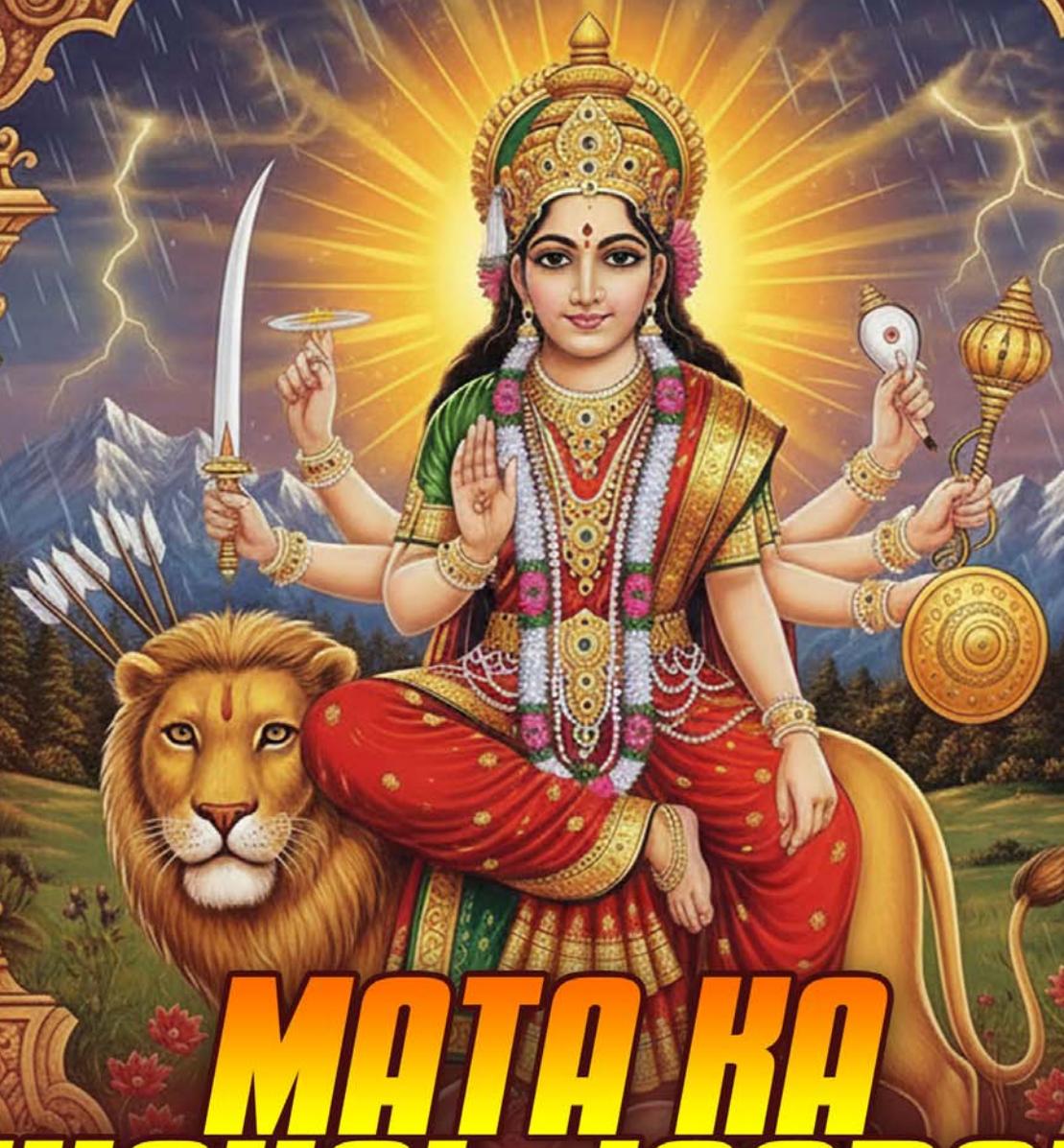


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Bollywood:

'Everyone isn't looking out for you'



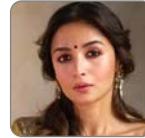
Actress-producer Richa Chadha has spoken about an episode of professional sabotage early in her career by someone she deeply trusted

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Alia Bhatt a BAFTA presenter

Alia has joined the list of the BAFTA presenters for 2026 alongside some prominent personalities such as Cillian Murphy, Kate Hudson, and Sadie Sink



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INDIA AI SUMMIT



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Microsoft said it is on pace to invest \$50 billion by the end of the decade to help bring AI across the Global South

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The Fremont Hindu Temple witnessed an overwhelming turnout, as thousands of devotees gathered to celebrate Maha Shivaratri dedicated to Lord Shiva

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INDIA AI SUMMIT

India AI Summit 'moment of pride' for Global South, says PM Modi; calls for responsible, ethical use



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Google CEO Sundar Pichai, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, Meta Chief AI Officer Alexandr Wang, and other dignitaries at AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it was a moment of pride for the Global South that the AI Impact Summit is being hosted in India, while underlining the urgent need for the responsible and ethical use of artificial intelligence in a rapidly evolving technological era.

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"It is a matter of pride for the Global South that the AI summit is being organized in India," he added.

During his address, an AI-enabled sign language interpretation was displayed in the backdrop, underscoring the practical applications of the technology being discussed at the summit.

Reflecting on the transformative potential of artificial intelligence, the Prime Minister said technological revolutions often begin in ways that are difficult to fully comprehend at the outset.

"When signals were first transmitted wirelessly, no one imagined that the world would one day be connected in real time. Artificial Intelligence is one such transformation of human history. What we are seeing and predicting today is just the beginning of its impact. AI is making the machines intelligent, but above all, it's multiplying human capability," he said.

ity," he said.

He observed that the pace of technological change has accelerated dramatically in recent years.

Earlier, it would take decades to witness the full impact of a new technology, he noted, but today "the journey from machine learning to learning machine is also faster, deeper and wider."

Highlighting the enthusiasm among young people, the Prime Minister said the global youth are not merely adopting AI but actively shaping its future.

"The pace with which the world's youth are embracing and adopting AI and

taking ownership of it is exemplary. There is tremendous enthusiasm, especially among young people who have come here for the AI Summit," he said.

Stressing that technological advancement comes with responsibility, PM Modi said the world must think beyond immediate gains.

"Along with the present generation, we also have to worry about what form of AI we will transfer to the coming generations. Therefore, the real question today is not what AI can do in the future. The question is, what do we do with AI in the present?" he said.

Drawing a parallel with nuclear energy, he added, "Such questions have arisen before humanity. The most powerful example is nuclear power. We have seen its destruction, and its positive contribution has also been seen."

Describing AI as a transformative force, he cautioned against its misuse. "AI is also a transformative power. If it goes directionless, then it will cause destruction; if it goes in the correct direction, then it will become a solution," he said, reiterating the importance of responsible and ethical deployment of artificial intelligence. IANS



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaks during the Opening Ceremony of AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi. Attendees also seen (@narendramodi/ANI Photo)

Highlights ethical AI as Phagwara-born Dr. Romesh Japra calls for human-centered global framework

ASHOK KAURA
India Post News Service

PHAGWARA/DELHI: California based, Phagwara-born, Dr. Romesh Japra, Founder and Chairman of Americans4Hindus (A4H), while participating in India-AI Summit 2026 in New Delhi, delivered a detailed perspective on the ethical and democratic responsibilities accompanying the rapid expansion of AI technologies has emphasized that India is not merely participating in the AI revolution but is positioned to influence its moral and strategic direction globally.

In his address Dr Japra said "The India-AI Impact Summit 2026" brought together an influential assembly of global leaders, policymakers, technologists, and innovators at India Mandapam, underscoring India's growing role in shaping the global direction of Artificial Intelligence. Convened under the leadership and invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the summit focused on advancing AI from conceptual dialogue to measurable, real-world impact grounded in ethics, accountability, and inclusive growth.

In his remarks, Dr. Japra described the summit as a "defining global inflection point," stressing that artificial intelligence must remain anchored in human values. He articulated that AI systems must be designed to serve civilization, protect democratic institutions, and elevate human potential rather than replace or undermine it. He further highlighted the importance of establishing globally coordinated ethical standards to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability in AI deployment across sectors.

Addressing the transformative role of AI in healthcare, Dr. Japra detailed how predictive diagnostics can enable early disease detection, significantly improving survival rates and reducing healthcare costs. He noted that AI-assisted robotic precision in surgeries is enhancing procedural accuracy while minimizing recovery time for patients. Additionally, he pointed to the growing potential of personalized and precision medicine, where AI-driven data analytics can tailor treatments to individual genetic



Dr. Romesh Japra at AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi

profiles, ultimately redefining patient care outcomes. However, he cautioned that equitable access and patient data protection must remain central to implementation strategies.

On governance and democracy, Dr. Japra emphasized that AI can strengthen transparent, data-driven decision-

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making processes in public administration. He outlined how responsible AI tools can improve policy analysis, enhance civic engagement, and increase institutional accountability. At the same time, he warned against the risks

of algorithmic bias, misuse of data, and insufficient oversight, calling for robust legal frameworks and ethical guardrails to safeguard democratic systems.

The summit's central theme, "From Vision to Action: India Leading the AI Impact Movement," was structured around three pillars - People, Planet, and Progress - reinforcing the need for technology that empowers humanity, aligns with sustainability goals, and promotes inclusive economic development.

Americans4Hindus reaffirmed its commitment to supporting ethical and responsible AI innovation, strengthening democratic institutions, and advancing U.S.-India collaboration for global progress. Dr. Japra underscored that technological leadership must be accompanied by moral clarity and international cooperation.

As the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 concluded, participants characterized the gathering as a decisive step toward operationalizing AI in ways that prioritize human dignity and shared prosperity. For Dr. Romesh Japra, whose journey began in Phagwara, the summit represented both a personal and professional milestone - reflecting India's expanding influence in shaping the global future of artificial intelligence.

India built what no one else did: Macron shares street vendor's story hails Delhi's tech leap at AI Summit

NEW DELHI: French President Emmanuel Macron recounted a compelling story at the India-AI Impact Summit 2026, highlighting India's digital transformation through the example of a Mumbai street vendor who, a decade ago, was unable to open a bank account but now seamlessly uses online payment systems.

Opening his keynote address with a warm 'Namaste', the French President expressed gratitude to the hosts, saying, "Thank you very much for welcoming us to this magnificent city and this magnificent country. It is great to be back after my 2024 state visit for this Artificial Intelligence Impact Summit hosted by you, Mr Prime Minister."

Macron then shared an anecdote to underline India's technological strides.

"I want to begin with a story. Ten years ago, a street vendor in Mumbai could not open a bank account -- no



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks during the Opening Ceremony of India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi. (DD News/ANI Video Grab)

address, no papers, no access. Today, the same vendor accepts payments on his phone instantly and for free from anyone in the country. That is not just a tech story; it is a civilization story. India built something no other country has built -- a digital identity for 1.4 billion people," he said.

Emphasizing the scale of India's digital infrastructure, he added, "India built something that no other country in the world has built. A digital identity for 1.4 billion people. A payment system that now processes 20 billion transactions every month. A health infrastructure that has issued 500 million digital health IDs."

Speaking about the India Stack Open Interoperable Sovereign, the French President said, "That is what this summit is about. We are clearly at the beginning of a huge acceleration, and you perfectly described it during your interventions." IANS

Struck by pace of change in India, must approach AI boldly: Sundar Pichai

NEW DELHI: Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai said that he is struck by the pace of change in India, and we must approach AI boldly as it can improve billions of lives.

bre optic cables, including four new systems between the US and India, as part of the India-America Connect initiative.

"In India, we are helping farmers protect their livelihoods. The

Indian government sent AI-powered forecasts to millions of farmers, alerting them about bad weather last year," he told the gathering.

"We won't realize AI's full benefits unless we work together," Pichai added.

He further stated that we are on the cusp of hyper-progress and must approach AI boldly, as it can improve the lives of billions.

"For 50 years, predicting protein structures was a grand challenge and a blind spot that stalled drug discovery. Today,

over three million researchers in 190 countries are using it to develop malaria vaccines," he informed.

Google is establishing a full-stack AI hub in India as part of its

\$15 billion infrastructure investment.

According to Pichai, Google is infusing artificial intelligence (AI) at all levels in India to improve healthcare, support

startups, agriculture and more.

"The country must ensure strong investments go into AI research and into spreading the use of AI across all sectors," he mentioned. *IANS*



Google CEO Sundar Pichai meets Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in New Delhi. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

Speaking at the 'India AI Impact Summit 2026' here, Pichai said the company is also building a vast network of subsea fi-

Holding AI summit in India has 'special meaning' for shaping its future: UN chief

NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS: United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that holding the AI summit in India has a "special meaning" because shaping the future of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology cannot be monopolized by a coterie of few countries or billionaires.

"AI must belong to everyone. We must replace hype and fear with shared evidence - and close knowledge gaps", he said during the inauguration of the India AI Impact Summit at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.

"Meeting in India has special

meaning", he said. "It brings this conversation closer to the realities shaping much of the world because the future of AI cannot be decided by a handful of countries - or left to the whims of a few billionaires".

Speaking before world leaders, tech titans, and participants from over 100 countries, he thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and France's President Emmanuel Macron for convening the summit.

The discussions at the New Delhi summit will lead to the UN's Global Dialogue on AI Governance in Geneva to be held in July, he said. *IANS*



Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres speaks during the Opening Ceremony of India AI Impact Summit 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, in New Delhi. (DD News/ANI Video Grab)

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"AI going to affect everybody across world": Tech leaders hail Impact Summit, echo PM Modi's "force multiplier" view

NEW DELHI: The AI-India Impact Summit 2026 strengthens India's role as a key platform for shaping the global AI agenda. Anchored in the Seven Chakras and the Three Sutras of People, Planet, and Progress, the Summit advances a development-oriented framework for artificial intelligence.

By linking policy with implementation and innovation with public purpose, the Summit establishes a structured approach to responsible AI deployment. It aligns technological advancement with inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The Summit positions India as a convener and partner in global AI cooperation, supporting shared standards, collaborative frameworks, and scalable solutions for public good. It marks a transition from dialogue to delivery, reinforcing India's commitment to responsible, inclusive, and development-focused AI pathways.

Demis Hassabis, CEO of Google DeepMind has appreciated India for hosting the seminal Global AI Impact, noting that it comes at an opportune time as the

world is on the cusp of Artificial Generative Intelligence.

The DeepMind CEO highlighted several areas where AI is making strides and underscored the importance of the AI Summit in promoting global dialogue and cooperation to mitigate risks that may arise from the technology.

Demis Hassabis hailed the gathering of the top minds from India and across the

everybody across the world. It's very important to have summits like this to bring the international community together to make sure the opportunities benefit the whole world and how do we mitigate the risks- which would need international cooperation and the first step to that is to have international dialogue," he said.

Kris Gopalakrishnan, co-founder of Infosys and chairman of Axilor Ventures

Demis Hassabis, CEO of Google DeepMind has appreciated India for hosting the seminal Global AI Impact, noting that it comes at an opportune time as the world is on the cusp of Artificial Generative Intelligence

world at the Summit and said, "We are at a threshold moment where Artificial Generative Intelligence is on the horizon in the next 5-8 years. So this summit comes at a critical moment as we start seeing more autonomous AI systems. The opportunities are incredible."

He highlighted the avenues where AI can play a crucial role-- science, medicine, climate change, human health.

"AI is going to be the most transformative technology in human history that's just on the horizon now and it is going to affect

emphasized that the true impact of AI will be determined by the applications built and deployed using the technology.

"I believe that we can become the top three in the world in different aspects of AI. The impact of AI will be through the applications that we deploy using AI. India is a huge country with a large number of applications and a large number of developers. At the application level, India can actually become number one," Gopalakrishnan said, underlining the country's strength in building and deploying AI-driven solutions. ANI

Pakistan's stance on ISF remains opaque as Sharif travels to Washington

ISLAMABAD: As US President Donald Trump prepares to share details regarding United Nations-approved stabilization force for Gaza, Pakistan has not revealed its stance on whether it would send its troops for International Stabilized Force (ISF), the local media reported.

Recently, Trump stated that member states of Board of Peace have committed to send thousands of personnel for ISF ahead of the first meeting scheduled for February 19 in Washington. However, officials in Pakistan have neither confirmed nor denied about Pakistan's potential participation in ISF.

Trump is expected to present a reconstruction plan for Gaza and reveal the structure and mandate of the ISF. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is set to participate in the first formal meeting of the Board of Peace, Pakistan's leading daily 'The Express Tribune' reported.

Pakistan's security and Foreign Office sources have not confirmed or denied any commitment, stating that discussions were being held. One official, who requested anonymity, said, "No decision has

been made public."

The issue was discussed during the meeting held between Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir and US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on the sidelines of the Munich Security Dialogue. None of the two sides shared details about it. However, diplomatic sources have indicated that the mandate of the ISF was being analyzed, the Pakistani media reported.

Pakistan expressed support for Trump's 20-point Gaza peace initiative and joined the Board of Peace after its establishment was backed by a United Nations Security Council resolution. However, Pakistan has publicly declared that its participation in any force would rely on a clearly defined and limited mandate.

Earlier, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar stated that Pakistan would only consider participating in Gaza force if its role is restricted to peacekeeping and humanitarian stabilization and not to disarm Hamas or attack any other Palestinian group, The Express Tribune reported. IANS

"India can leverage US innovation to build AI tools for citizens," says White House AI Policy Advisor Sriram Krishnan

NEW DELHI: The United States regards India as a crucial potential partner in efforts to secure global supply chains for artificial intelligence and semiconductors. Underlining this facet, Sriram Krishnan, Senior White House Policy Advisor on Artificial Intelligence, stressed on partnerships with India to leverage US innovation to build tools for Indian citizens.

Speaking at a special session on the sidelines of the AI-India Impact Summit in the capital, Krishnan said, "All the leading model companies are based in the US. The US is by far putting in the most investment in dollars, right? Like it's easily over a billion dollars between this year and next year, that to just going vertical on the GPUs, on advanced AI chips, Nvidia and TPUs are really the only game in town for everyone. So these are just the facts of life and I think for every country, you know, our pitch is that we want to be the best partner when it comes to AI. India, I think the question is; how do you bring AI to make improve the quality of life as citizens? And, for example, the way we are trying to do it I just give you one example is on education." he said.

"We've set up this Education Task Force, which is all about, how do we bring AI into the classroom, not to replace teachers, but to make sure they're enabled. And we can talk about that in healthcare. When people talk about what a country like India should do, I think about, how do you use AI leverage, all of this investment leverage, all of the innovation happening in America, which we think is the best in class, and then build, you know, the services, the tools, which, you utilize for your citizens," he added.

Krishnan also highlighted America's AI Action Plan, which he said has three policy pillars - Accelerating Innovation, Building AI Infrastructure, and Leading International Diplomacy and Security.

"We came in with the perspective that AI is something we want to embrace, (there) is optimism that it is useful in all of our daily lives and there is a role for America and all of our allies to play in it. And we came up with something called the AI Action Plan. ANI

LS Speaker Birla attends Bangladesh PM Rahman's swearing-in, conveys PM Modi's invitation to visit India

DHAKA: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla attended the swearing-in ceremony of Bangladesh's new Prime Minister Tarique Rahman in Dhaka and conveyed a personal invitation from Prime Minister Narendra Modi to visit India at the earliest convenience.

According to a release from the Lok Sabha Secretariat, on behalf of the people of India, Birla extended warm congratulations to Tarique Rahman and reiterated that India stands ready to support Bangladesh's efforts to build a democratic, progressive, and inclusive nation.

He also reaffirmed India's commitment to strengthening the enduring partnership between the two neighboring countries.

On the sidelines of the ceremony, Birla met with several other leaders, including Mohamed Muizzu, President of the Maldives, and Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan, underscoring India's engagement in the region.

PM Modi also extended a warm invitation to the BNP chairman to visit India at a mutually convenient time.

In his letter, PM Modi also invited Tarique's wife, Zubaida Rahman, and daughter, Zaima, to accompany him. ANI

PM Modi, President Macron launch India-France Year of Innovation 2026 at Gateway of India

MUMBAI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron jointly inaugurated the India-France Year of Innovation 2026 at the iconic Gateway of India in Mumbai, marking a significant milestone in the strategic partnership between the two nations.

The ceremony concluded with a lighting show at the Gateway of India showcasing the shared values and vibrant heritage of both nations.

The launch ceremony witnessed the presence of business leaders, start-ups, researchers, and other innovators from both countries.

Earlier, India and France elevated their bilateral ties to 'Special Global Strategic Partnership,' with PM Modi noting that the friendship between the two countries has 'no boundaries' and the partnership can 'reach from deep oceans to the tallest mountains.' PM Modi underscored the depth and significance of the India-France relationship.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron, during the inauguration of India-France Year of Innovation 2026 at the Gateway of India, in Mumbai. (DPR PMO/ANI Photo)

Speaking during the joint press conference with the French President, PM Modi

said, "The strategic partnership between the two countries is one of the oldest, and

with the help of President Macron, we have deepened the ties and given it more energy in recent times. Based on this trust and vision, we are elevating our relationship to a Special Global Strategic Partnership. This partnership is not just strategic. In this era of unpredictable global dynamics, this partnership will provide global stability and progress."

French President Emmanuel Macron also said that relations between India and France are one of "ambition and trust."

Macron said, "I thank you for your warm welcome on my fourth official visit to India... The bilateral relationship between India and France is truly remarkable and unique. This relationship is one of trust, openness, and ambition. We have also decided today to elevate this partnership to a Special Strategic Partnership, granting it a new status. There is no doubt about that, because we have complete faith in this relationship, and we have been doing so for the past eight years. ANI

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US Congressman Ro Khanna slams Trump on Taiwan policy

WASHINGTON: A senior Democratic lawmaker has sharply criticized President Donald Trump over remarks suggesting he discussed future US arms sales to Taiwan with Chinese President Xi Jinping, calling the move a break from long-standing American policy.

Indian American Congressman Ro Khanna, Ranking Member of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, said Trump's comments were "alarming."

"Trump's admission that he is discussing future US arms sales to Taiwan with Xi is alarming and a blatant violation of US policy and the Six Assurances," Khanna said in a statement.



Ro Khanna

His remarks followed President Donald Trump's comments about consulting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping regarding arms sales to Taiwan - an issue that sits at the heart of US-China strategic tensions.

Khanna argued that such consultations would run counter to established US commitments toward Taiwan, particularly the so-called Six Assurances, a set of policy principles dating back to the Reagan administration.

"His statement shows just how Trump treats Taiwan as a 'bargaining chip' in trade negotiations with China. It shows he is more eager to make bad deals with America's strategic competitors than strengthen ties with long-standing friends like Taiwan. It is not only an affront to the security of Taiwan's 23 million people, but a stain on America's global credibility," Khanna said. IANS

COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

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February 20, 2026



Thousands celebrate Maha Shivaratri at Fremont Hindu Temple



India Post News Service

FREMONT, CA: The Fremont Hindu Temple witnessed an overwhelming turnout, as thousands of devotees gathered to celebrate Maha Shivaratri, one of the most sacred festivals dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple premises were filled with devotion, chanting, and spiritual fervor as families from across the Bay Area participated in the auspicious celebrations.

The festivities began in the early evening and continued late into the night, in keeping with the traditional observance of Maha Shivaratri. Special Abhishekam rituals were performed for Lord Shiva, accompanied by the chanting of Vedic hymns and the sacred mantra "Om Namah Shivaya." Devotees offered milk, bilva leaves, fruits, and flowers, seeking blessings for health, prosperity, and spiritual growth.

Devotional bhajans added to

the uplifting atmosphere, drawing participation from youth groups and community members. Volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure smooth darshan arrangements and to accommodate the large crowds. The temple was beautifully decorated with flowers and traditional lighting, creating a serene and divine ambiance.

Following the religious cer-

emonies, Priti Bhoj was distributed to thousands of attendees. Many devotees observed fasting throughout the day and broke their fast at the temple after midnight prayers.

Temple organizers expressed gratitude to sponsors, volunteers, and community members for making the event a grand success. "It was heartwarming to

see such a strong turnout. Maha Shivaratri reminds us of the power of devotion, inner reflection, and community unity," said a temple representative.

The celebration highlighted the vibrant cultural and spiritual fabric of the Bay Area's Hindu community and reaffirmed the Fremont Hindu Temple's role as a center for faith, tradition, and service.



Ameen Moslehi appointed new County of Santa Clara, Chief Information Officer, to lead technology department

Moslehi had been serving as acting CIO since 2024, leading the effort to rapidly bring Regional Medical Center online after acquisition

SANTA CLARA COUNTY, Calif.: Santa Clara County Executive James R. Williams has appointed Ameen Moslehi as Chief Information Officer (CIO) to lead the nearly 1,000-strong Technology Services and Solutions (TSS) workforce that keeps County operations running in order to serve 2 million residents as well as those who work in and visit Santa Clara County.

Moslehi has served as acting CIO since the departure of his predecessor in October 2024, providing executive leadership and strategic oversight for the technology operations that support the County's key functions, including healthcare, public safety, justice, finance, social services, and general government responsibilities.

In that role, he led the TSS team in collaboration with other County departments to rapidly assimilate Regional Medical

Center into the Santa Clara Valley Healthcare network after its purchase last year, migrating more than 50 software systems, deploying 1,549 devices, and getting an electronic health records system up and running. It was a process that typically takes more than nine months, accomplished in 80 days.

Moslehi has served as acting CIO since the departure of his predecessor in October 2024, providing executive leadership and strategic oversight for the technology operations that support the County's key functions, including healthcare, public safety, justice, finance

"To say Ameen has a proven track record is an understatement," said County Executive James R. Williams. "In the short

time he has been Acting CIO, he has shown innovation and optimization in our day-to-day processes that have saved the County money without compromising service quality. He has also taken on new and daunting challenges, like the Regional Medical Center transition, that have been vital to the County's commitment to the

community."

The leadership role involves partnering with the County Executive and Board of Supervisors to align technological innovation and investments with the County's priorities and ensure reliable, secure, and efficient delivery of technology services to clients.

"Ameen reflects the values held by his department and the County organization: integrity, accountability, compassion, and inclusivity," said Deputy County Executive David Campos. "And he brings a highly specialized technical lens to the table - he has the ability to see things that can be improved, or savings that can be achieved, and find a way to do it while maintaining top quality service for our clients."

Moslehi's other accomplishments include completing various projects across the organization, such as a new computer aided dispatch system for County 911-Communications, an inmate tracking system for the Sheriff's Office, and an improved case management system for the Office of the Medical Examiner. He also led TSS in modernizing the County's online infrastructure and migration to cloud-based platforms and guided the department through an \$8 million budget re-

duction in the past fiscal year, doing so while preserving operational stability and critical services.

Moslehi is a champion of transparency in the workplace and has positioned TSS as a key collaborating agency within the County for other departments to partner with on various projects and needs.

Since joining the County in 2006, Moslehi has served in an array of positions, from technical support to application analysis to senior IT management and director positions. Moslehi earned a master's degree in public administration from National University and a bachelor's degree in management information systems from San José State University.

"I look forward to continuing my work leading the technology team for Santa Clara County," Moslehi said. "Technology is foundational to delivering reliable, equitable services to our community. TSS has an incredibly talented and committed workforce, and together we will build on that strength, modernizing our systems, strengthening our partnerships, and ensuring we are prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead."

About The County Of Santa Clara

The County of Santa Clara government serves a diverse, multicultural population of 1.9 million residents in Santa Clara County, Calif., making it more populous than 14 states in the United States. The County provides essential services to its residents, including public health protection, environmental stewardship, medical services through the County of Santa Clara Health System, child and adult protection services, homelessness prevention and solutions, roads, park services, libraries, emergency response to disasters, protection of minority communities and those under threat, access to a fair criminal justice system, and many other public benefits.

US: Indian man accused of sexual assault, larceny detained by ICE

WASHINGTON DC: The US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has accused an Indian man of several offences including the sexual assault of a minor and has him detained.

Sharing the details in a post on X, ICE said he was accused of sexual assault of a child under 13 years of age, shoplifting and public disorder. The post added, "Vodela Yashaswi Kottapalli, a criminal illegal alien from India, has pending charges for sexual assault and larceny in New Jersey. We'll keep him in custody pending removal proceedings."

Under Trump 2.0, ICE has been heavily cracking down on illegal aliens in the country.

Previously, ICE had also shared details last December of an Indian truck driver involved in a fatal motorway accident in Oregon that killed two people in the United States.

US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said Kumar entered the country "illegally" through Arizona in November 2022 and was subsequently granted work authorization and a commercial driving license by California state authorities.

The case followed several similar accidents involving Indian nationals driving heavy goods vehicles in America. In recent months, US authorities have highlighted at least three other fatal crashes involving undocumented Indian lorry drivers in Florida and California.

Formed in 2003 through a merger of the investigative and interior enforcement elements of the former US Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, ICE now has more than 20,000 law enforcement and support personnel in more than 400 offices in the United States and around the world.

The agency has an annual budget of approximately \$8 billion, primarily devoted to three operational directorates -- Homeland Security Investigations

(HSI), Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) and Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA). A fourth directorate - Management and Administration (M&A) - supports the three operational branches to advance the ICE mission. ANI

Previously, ICE had also shared details last December of an Indian truck driver involved in a fatal motorway accident in Oregon that killed two people in the United States

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Women spoke out, then and now

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

Speakers at the ACom briefing on Feb 13 discussed the prevalence of sex trafficking in the US; how women and girls are often gaslighted or arrested by law enforcement when they find the courage to speak out; and the difficulty of prosecuting sex trafficking cases.

Courtney Litvak, a sex trafficking survivor, shared her experience at the event. She stated that she was a victim of sex trafficking at the age of 17 during high school, and was taken to multiple states over the past three years all starting at school. She recalled that she was a senior in high school, preparing for college and planning her future, when she was drugged and sexually assaulted by an older man after a school event. She tried to report the incident to the school and relevant authorities, but received no ef-

fective protection. Litvak pointed out that, according to the law, human trafficking cases involving minors do not require proof of coercion or duress to constitute a crime; however, in practice, victims often have to endure questioning and repeated interrogation. She described how,

Litvak pointed out that, according to the law, human trafficking cases involving minors do not require proof of coercion or duress to constitute a crime; however, in practice, victims often have to endure questioning and repeated interrogation

in the absence of institutional support, perpetrators use emotional manipulation and intimidation to isolate victims and reinforce the psychological pressure that "no one will believe you." Many victims

are not immediately aware that they are in a trafficking situation, nor are they able to escape the environment immediately.

Dr. Michele Goodwin, Professor of Constitutional Law and Global Health Policy, Georgetown University points out that the United States has a long history

the beginning. She also questions whether the release of only a portion of the complete archives, including the names and images of some victims, could cause further harm to their privacy and dignity.

Jacquelyn Aluotto, Co-Founder and President of No Trafficking Zone stated that the global human trafficking industry is estimated to be worth \$245 billion annually, representing a highly profitable yet relatively low-risk form of crime. She pointed out that human trafficking exists in different "market models," including street sexual exploitation, transnational trafficking through the modeling industry and visa systems, and the sexual trafficking of minors within schools. She explained that traffickers often use social networks among teenagers on campus for "peer recruitment," using monetary rewards or so-called "referral fees" as incentives.

California commits \$25 million to cleanups and job pathways: Transforming communities while creating opportunities

SACRAMENTO: Caltrans today announced it has awarded \$25 million to 90 local projects that will improve lives and communities by supporting litter and graffiti removal efforts across California. These projects are funded through the Community Cleanup and Employment Pathway (CCEP) grant program through Clean California, a signature initiative under Governor Gavin Newsom.

"The Clean California program is demonstrating how these investments can strengthen communities," said California Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin. "Governor Newsom's vision for more vibrant public spaces is being realized by linking community improvements with paid job training to create opportunity, stability, and long-term success for Californians."

"These grants do more than fund cleanups; they're investments in people and provide hope and opportunity," said Caltrans Director Dina El-Tawansy. "By

partnering with local agencies and workforce development organizations, we're investing in our under-resourced communities by creating jobs, restoring pride, and proving that when we care for our neighborhoods, we care for each other."

Through these competitive grants, CCEP supports litter abatement and pub-

"The Clean California program is demonstrating how these investments can strengthen communities," said California Transportation Secretary Toks Omishakin. "Governor Newsom's vision for more vibrant public spaces is being realized by linking community improvements with paid job training to create opportunity, stability

lic space beautification efforts on locally owned public rights-of-way. Along with litter and graffiti abatement, a core component of this program is to create pathways to employment through partnerships with

workforce development organizations. These pathways connect justice-impacted individuals, people experiencing homelessness, at-risk youth, and others with meaningful job training and paid transitional employment opportunities.

The grants will also provide funding to promote public education and anti-littering

campaigns across the state to be recognized as a Clean California Community. One hundred percent of this year's funding (\$25 million) will benefit underserved communities.

Projects include:

- \$580,000 to support the expansion of SF Public Works' Tenderloin Clean Workforce Development Program
- \$251,000 to support the Trinidad Rancheria Harbor District Beautification and Workforce Development Initiative in Humboldt County
- \$300,000 to support the Clean Selma: Second Street and Downtown Arts Corridor Revitalization project in Fresno County
- \$172,000 to support the City of Lancaster's Community Cleanup & Youth

Workforce Development program

- \$600,000 to support the Clean National City Revitalization & Employment Pathway program in San Diego County

A complete list of grant recipients can be found here.

These investments are more than just grants. They are catalysts for change. By combining community beautification with workforce development, Clean California's CCEP program is restoring pride, creating opportunities, and building stronger, safer neighborhoods across the state. Together, we're proving that when we invest in people and places, we pave the way for a cleaner and more connected California.

Since launching Clean California in July 2021, Caltrans and its local partners have picked up 3.5 million cubic yards of litter from highways and public spaces - the equivalent of filling more than 150,000 residential garbage trucks with debris and trash. Caltrans has hosted more than 650 free dump days in communities throughout the state - resulting in the collection of 15,500-plus mattresses and 57,000 tires. The initiative has drawn more than 10,000 community clean-up volunteers and created 18,267 jobs, including positions for individuals who were formerly incarcerated, on probation, or experiencing housing insecurity.

For more information about transportation and other infrastructure projects funded with state and federal investments, visit build.ca.gov.

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Over 40 lakh visitors from 100 nations: BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi marks two years of global inspiration

ABU DHABI: The BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi celebrated its second anniversary recently, marking two years of spiritual service and cultural harmony in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Since its inauguration by Mahant Swami Maharaj on February 14, 2024, the Mandir has welcomed over four million visitors from more than 100 countries, emerging as a global symbol of peaceful coexistence and shared human values.

More than 8,000 devotees, dignitaries,

speaks at two. In the same way, the Mandir has now begun to speak to the world -- and its message is harmony." He noted that the Mandir's message has resonated consistently with millions of visitors, including ambassadors, faith leaders, tourists, and community representatives from across the globe.

The evening honored H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan for his longstanding commitment to cultural coexistence and unity in the UAE.

"Mandir Talks to the World" brought together diplomatic voices who described it as a bridge between heritage and modern diplomacy, shaped not only by stone but by friendship and goodwill.

"Mandir Talks to the Families" captured the lived experiences of residents who shared how the Mandir has become a welcoming spiritual home -- a place where traditions are celebrated openly and where acts of service strengthen family bonds.

"Mandir Talks to the Communities" reflected on how the Mandir has become a unifying hub for diverse traditions, fostering inclusion, volunteerism, and social cohesion.

"Mandir Talks to the Future" featured children leading four collective pledges -- Self Positivity, Family Values, National Harmony, and Environmental Responsibility -- symbolizing the Mandir's commitment to shaping responsible, compassionate future generations.

Blending traditional craftsmanship with modern sustainability, the BAPS Hindu Mandir stands as a landmark of civilizational collaboration. Yet, its true strength lies in its impact: inspiring faith, strengthening families, serving society, and advancing harmony.

As it enters its third year, the Mandir continues to embody the UAE's commitment to peaceful coexistence and the enduring belief that faith, service, and unity can help build a more hopeful and harmonious world. *IANS*

The event reflected the BAPS temple's growing role, not only as a place of worship but as a living institution that strengthens families, connects communities, and promotes harmony across cultures

diplomats, and families gathered for the special anniversary assembly themed "Mandir: Our Family, Our Future".

The event reflected the BAPS temple's growing role, not only as a place of worship but as a living institution that strengthens families, connects communities, and promotes harmony across cultures.

Swami Brahmviharidas delivered the keynote address on behalf of Mahant Swami Maharaj, who inspired and inaugurated the Mandir two years ago to the day.

Drawing a meaningful analogy, he shared, "A child begins to walk at one, but

In his address, he described the Mandir as "a powerful symbol of shared human values" and a reflection of the deep and enduring friendship between India and the United Arab Emirates. He emphasized the UAE leadership's vision of fostering mutual respect across faiths and cultures, expressing hope that the Mandir will continue to provide spiritual strength, moral guidance, and community upliftment for generations to come.

The anniversary program featured "Mandir Talks", highlighting the Mandir's expanding global and societal impact.

Sikh MPs in Canada spark community debate over remarks on two legislations: Report

OTTAWA: The recent controversy over remarks made in Canada's House of Commons by Sikh MPs has ignited debate within the Sikh communities at home and abroad.

Critics allege that certain Sikh MPs projected the two Canadian legislations centering on immigration and border act as measures to prevent criminals, including extortionists, from seeking asylum even though the bills primarily deal with border procedures, processing timelines, and administrative reforms rather than introducing new criminal-based prohibitions, a recent report said.

According to a report in 'Khalsa Vox', whether these remarks stemmed from misunderstandings, political framing, or rhetorical overreach has now become part of a broader public debate.

"The presence of Sikh representatives in public office has long been a source of pride for our global community. From local

councils to national parliaments, Sikh politicians symbolize decades of struggle, migration, and civic engagement. Yet with that visibility comes a profound responsibility: to speak with clarity, honesty, and integrity, especially when discussing laws that shape immigration, security, and the lives of vulnerable newcomers," it detailed.

For observers, the report said, this moment offered an opportunity for deeper reflection - not only on the policies in question but also regarding the ethical responsibilities of Sikh leadership within democratic institutions.

"Sikh politicians often carry dual expectations. On one hand, they represent all Canadians regardless of background. On the other, many Sikhs view them as informal ambassadors of community values rooted in seva (service), sach (truth), and fearless advocacy. When parliamentary debates touch on immigration or pub-

lic safety, Sikh MPs are scrutinized not just as lawmakers but as symbols of a diaspora shaped by refugee histories and civil rights struggles," it stated.

"This dual identity means that accuracy matters more than ever. Even the perception of exaggeration or misrepresentation risks eroding trust - both among constituents and within the Sikh community itself. Political messaging may score short-term points, but it can weaken long-term credibility if claims are later questioned," it further noted.

The report highlighted that discussions on border security and asylum reform strike a deep chord among Sikhs due to their historical experience. From exclusionary immigration policies in the early 20th century to contemporary challenges faced by Punjabi migrants, Sikh history in Canada has been intertwined with the quest for equitable treatment under the law. *IANS*

Priya Mani, Mohit Raina roped in for Indo-US immigrant family drama

MUMBAI: Indian actors Priya Mani and Mohit Raina have been roped in to headline a yet-untitled Indo-U.S immigrant family drama, directed by Harsh Mahadeshwar.

"This project is very close to my heart because it explores identity and belonging in a deeply honest way," Raina said.

Priya said that what drew her to this film instantly was the "emotional truth of the story".

"I'm grateful to be part of a project that brings together such committed collaborators to tell a story that will connect with audiences across borders."

The project centers on the true story of an immigrant family's experience navigating cultural identity and belonging in America. U.S.-based Red Bison Productions has partnered with Mumbai's Azure Entertainment on a cross-border feature film marking the Indian company's inaugural Hollywood collaboration, reports variety.com.

Principal photography is set to commence in April, with filming planned across New York and New Jersey, as well as Delhi and Jammu-Kashmir in India.

Mohit added: "Being part of Azure Entertainment and Red Bison Productions' first Indo-Hollywood collaboration makes it even more special, as it represents a meaningful step toward global storytelling."

Additional casting details and the film's title will be revealed at a later date. The film was previously launched with a different title and cast in 2023 and has since been revamped and redesigned, reports variety.com.

Romila Saraf Bhat, founder of Red Bison Productions, said: "From its inception, this story demanded a global voice and an honest cinematic treatment. With Priya Mani and Mohit Raina leading the cast, and an inspiring narrative that spans continents, we are creating cinema that is deeply personal yet universally resonant."

Prashant Ramesh Mishra, CEO and co-founder of Azure Entertainment, described the venture as pivotal for his company's expansion strategy. *IANS*

Indian passport climbs to 75th rank on Henley index

NEW DELHI: India's passport has improved its position in the global rankings, moving up to the 75th spot on the latest Henley Passport Index, which tracks the world's most powerful passports. This marks a clear rise from last year, when India was ranked 85th.

The improvement suggests that Indian travellers now enjoy better international access, with more countries offering visa-free or visa-on-arrival entry.

According to the latest data, Indian passport holders can currently travel to 56 countries without needing a visa in advance.



The Henley Passport Index ranks passports based on how many destinations their holders can enter without a visa. A higher ranking reflects stronger global mobility and easier travel for citizens.

While the recent jump is a positive development, India's passport performance over the long term has been uneven. Although it has become stronger compared to last year, it is still not at its historical best. IANS

Immigration

POST

Lyons said "no US citizen is subject to immigration enforcement and that doesn't happen." Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Rodney Scott confirmed that filming officers "is not a crime."

US Senate battle over ICE tactics raises immigration concerns

WASHINGTON: A sharp political fight erupted in the US Senate over federal immigration enforcement tactics and civil liberties, in a debate closely watched by immigrant communities, including Indian visa holders and green card applicants.

The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee examined "Operation Metro Surge," a large-scale Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) deployment in Minnesota.

The operation followed protests and clashes between federal agents and demonstrators.

Two US citizens - Renee Goode and Alex Preedy - were killed in separate encounters with federal agents. Their deaths dominated the hearing.

Committee Chairman Sen. Rand Paul said the goal was "to restore public trust." He said "in a free society filming government officials in public is a constitutional right."

He warned that officials must avoid rhetoric that inflames ten-

sions.

Ranking Member Sen. Gary Peters accused federal officers of using "violent and heavy

Keith Ellison called the surge "the largest single immigration enforcement surge our country has ever seen." He urged lawmakers



Rand Paul

Committee Chairman Sen. Rand Paul said the goal was "to restore public trust." He said "in a free society filming government officials in public is a constitutional right"

handed tactics." He said the administration had "spun a narrative that falsely painted the victims as violent agitators."

Minnesota Attorney General

to "end it now." He said Minnesota was not refusing lawful cooperation and added that "targeted enforcement is not the problem."

Republican lawmakers

pushed back.

Rep. Tom Emmer said Minnesota leaders had "turned Minnesota into a safe haven for criminal, illegal aliens." He called the unrest "entirely preventable."

On the second panel, ICE Acting Director Todd Lyons said officers faced threats and assaults. "ICE couldn't go do arrests without being violently assaulted," he said.

Lyons said "no US citizen is subject to immigration enforcement and that doesn't happen." Customs and Border Protection Commissioner Rodney Scott confirmed that filming officers "is not a crime."

Both officials said investigations into the shootings are ongoing. Scott said he was "committed to transparency" and that body-camera footage would be released "when it's appropriate."

Lawmakers also debated cooperation between Minnesota officials and federal agencies. Paul suggested that clearer coordination over final deportation orders could reduce tensions. IANS

Migration "went too far": Hillary Clinton at Munich Security conference says it "needs to be fixed in humane way"

MUNICH: Former US Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton has called for "secure borders that don't tor-

"It went too far, it's been disruptive and destabilizing, and it needs to be fixed in a humane way with secure borders that don't torture and kill people and how we're going to have a strong family structure"

ture and kill people" during the Munich Security Conference in Germany.

"There is a legitimate reason to have a debate about things like migration," Clinton said, demanding a halt to mass migration.

"It went too far, it's been disruptive and destabilizing, and it needs to be fixed in a humane way with

secure borders that don't torture and kill people and how we're going to have a strong family structure because it is at the base of civilization," she added.

The former US Secretary of State who was participating in a panel titled "The West-West Divide: What Remains of Common Values" said "migration has been a huge flashpoint."

"More people were deported under my husband (Bill Clinton) and Barack Obama without killing American citizens and without put-

ting children into detention camps than were in the first Trump term or this first year of Trump's second



Hillary Clinton

term," she said.

A Fox News analysis of Hillary Clinton's remarks stated that during her 2016 presidential campaign, she supported the then US President Barack Obama's executive actions that deferred immigration enforcement against millions of children and parents in the country illegally and wanted to end the practice of family detention. Clinton also planned on continuing Obama's policy of deporting violent criminals. ANI

Tamil Nadu CM Stalin urges PM Modi for citizenship status for Sri Lankan Tamils living in state

NEW DELHI: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to provide citizenship pathways and long-term visa relief for Sri Lankan Tamils who have been residing in the state for decades.

In a post on X, Stalin appealed for a "humane legal solution" for the Sri Lankan Tamils living in Tamil Nadu, stating that many of them had arrived in India with the approval of the Government of India and should not be treated as illegal immigrants.

"Hon'ble @PMOIndia Thiru. @NarendraModi, please provide a humane legal solution for Sri Lankan Tamils living in Tamil Nadu for decades by enabling citizenship pathways, granting long-term visa relief, and removing

"Honorable Prime Minister, Sri Lankan Tamils living in Tamil Nadu came here with the support and approval of the Government of India. They have been living on Indian soil for over 30 years. Furthermore, 40% of them were born on our soil!" the CM wrote in the post

administrative barriers that keep them in legal uncertainty," Stalin wrote.

He further claimed that 40 percent of these Sri Lankan Tamils were "born on our soil" and asked for the Government of India's support in providing citizenship to them.

"Honorable Prime Minister, Sri Lankan Tamils living in Tamil Nadu came here with the support and approval of the Government of India. They have been living on Indian soil for over 30 years. Furthermore, 40% of them were born on our soil!" the CM wrote in the post.

"Therefore, they should not be considered illegal immigrants. The Government of India must come forward to provide legal solutions, including citizenship, for them,"

he added.

The CM further noted his requests to the Union Government in this regard. He asked for the rescission of earlier administrative instructions, the waiver of passport and visa requirements, the delegation of powers to district-level authorities, and formal clarification regarding registered Sri Lankan Tamil nationals sheltered in India up to 9 January 2015.

"I request the Union Government to consider: Rescinding earlier administrative instructions that bar consideration of citizenship applications from Sri Lankan Tamils, Issuing an executive clarification waiving passport and visa requirements, where appropriate, for the purpose of citizenship or long-term visa applications, based on verified identity documentation issued by the Government of Tamil Nadu, Delegating appropriate powers to designated district-level authorities for streamlined processing, Formally clarifying

the legal status of registered Sri Lankan Tamil nationals sheltered in India up to 9 January 2015," the CM requested the Prime Minister.

Earlier, Chief Minister MK Stalin reflected on Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's (DMK) victorious history and expressed hopes for the party's win in the upcoming state assembly elections.

Addressing the gathering at the party's booth agents' conference in Tirupathur, the Chief Minister urged DMK workers to work diligently for the upcoming elections. He asked them to inform the public about the government's schemes and policies and to "ensure at least 50 votes each" to secure victory in 200 constituencies. ANI

Jamaat's electoral surge near India frontier triggers vigil before West Bengal polls

NEW DELHI: The completion of the Bangladesh elections has come as a major relief not only for the people of the neighboring country, but for India as well. However, Indian agencies are closely watching the areas in which the Jamaat-e-Islami registered major victories along the West Bengal border.

Ties with Bangladesh had literally come to a standstill under Muhammad Yunus and now with the Bangladesh Nationalist Party's (BNP) Tarique Rahman set to take over as Prime Minister, New Delhi is confident that ties would be reset.

However, the Jamaat-e-Islami ended up with 70 seats and worryingly, a majority of them are along the West Bengal border. Though it has also won a few seats along the border with Meghalaya, but that is a smaller number when compared to how it performed along the border with West Bengal.

Intelligence Bureau official says that this is a major concern for the security agencies. The Jamaat and its stooges always focused on large-scale illegal immigrations into India through West Bengal.

Moreover, with West Bengal elections round the cor-

ner, the Jamaat will use all its might to try and disrupt law and order in the Indian state.

Another worry is that there are a lot of Hindus who are in a minority who live in these areas where the Jamaat has won. The Jamaat may step up efforts to target them, although in their manifesto, they assured the Hindus of safety and protection, the official added.

While this is the best performance that the Jamaat has put up in all the elections that it has fought so far, it still seemed bitter after the results were announced. They questioned the fairness with which the votes were counted.

They are visibly upset and will look to disrupt peace, especially in those areas where they are strong. This could affect border security as the Jamaat has performed best in areas that share a border with India.

Another official said that ahead of the West Bengal elections, the Jamaat is likely to step up illegal immigration efforts. This is being done with the aim of creating demographic changes ahead of the elections so that the situation becomes communally volatile, the official added. IANS

Six Bangladeshi citizens linked to Awami League arrested in Kolkata for illegal stay

KOLKATA: Kolkata Police have arrested six Bangladeshi nationals from a hotel in central Kolkata for overstaying in India after their visas expired, the police said.

Officers from Park Street police station raided the hotel in Collin Street, after receiving information that six Bangladeshis were hiding in the city in fear of returning to their country, as their visas had expired a long time back. In the initial investigation, the police have learned that all these Bangladeshi youths are members of the Awami League.

After the unrest in Bangladesh, they fled to Kolkata on medical visas, fearing attack. Six valid Bangladeshi passports have been recovered from them.

The arrested have been identified as Abir Hossain, Mohammad Mamun Rashid, Mohammad Alimun Gazi, Azam Mollah, Faizal Amin and Zaidul Islam. Among them, Azam Mollah is a Bangladeshi singer.

Even after coming to Kolkata, he has been singing in familiar circles. After being arrested, Azam did not want to part with his guitar. He also requested the officers of Park Street Police Station to let him sing. However, when they were produced before the Bankshall Court on 16 February, the judge ordered that all six of them be kept in judicial custody till February 27.

Police sources said that the arrested persons are between 25 and 35 years old. They are mainly residents of Noakhali and Tangail in Bangladesh.

All six of them left the country separately last year due to the turbulent situation in Bangladesh. They came to Kolkata with a visa due to medical treatment for physical illness. They contacted each other here. Gradually, they started staying in different hotels. Some of them also looked for work here. Among them, singer Azam Mollah was also singing in the circle of acquaintances.

According to police sources, their visas started expiring in November last year. By January, everyone's visas had expired. But none of them wanted to return to Bangladesh, fearing for their lives. They started staying at a hotel on Collin Street about seven days ago, where they were arrested.

Even after their arrest, the arrested Bangladeshis, members of the Awami League, told the police that they did not want to return to the country. However, a senior officer of Kolkata Police said, "The process of 'pushing them back' to Bangladesh will continue as per the law after the end of their sentence." IANS

\$198M World Bank boost for India rooftop solar

WASHINGTON: India's ambitious rooftop solar expansion plan has secured a \$197.67 million guarantee from the World Bank Group's guarantee arm.

The five-year backing supports refinancing of a \$500 million World Bank loan to the State Bank of India for grid-connected solar systems serving commercial and industrial users.

The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), which houses the World Bank Group Guarantee Platform, issued the guarantee to Citibank N.A. for its non-shareholder loan to SBI, a media release said.

The rooftop solar installations provide clean energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by displacing more expensive and carbon-intensive thermal generation. The loan funds a national program delivering grid-connected rooftop solar photovoltaic (GRPV) systems to commercial and industrial customers across India.



"MIGA's guarantee will support SBI's growing portfolio of renewable energy in India and contribute to India's climate goals," said Tsutomu Yamamoto, MIGA Managing Director. "In addition, MIGA-IBRD cooperation on the project is another example of One World Bank Group collaboration to achieve private capital mobilization."

India has outlined ambitious plans for a clean energy transition. Investment needs are estimated at between \$160 billion and \$300 billion annually to reach net zero by 2070. SBI, one of the country's largest banking and financial services institutions, has been mandated to facilitate at least 7.5 percent of its domestic gross advances as "green" financing. *IANS*

TechBiz POST

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Google aiming to infuse AI at all levels in India: Sundar Pichai



NEW DELHI: Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai said Google is infusing artificial intelligence (AI) at all levels in India to improve healthcare, support startups, agriculture and more.

Pichai earlier met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and discussed India's growing work in artificial intelligence and how Google can collaborate with the country's talented students and professionals. *IANS*

AI Summit: Microsoft to invest \$50 billion to help bring AI to Global South

Pic Courtesy-Reuters



NEW DELHI: US tech giant Microsoft said it is on pace to invest \$50 billion by the end of the decade to help bring AI to countries across the Global South.

Brad Smith, Vice Chair and President of Microsoft and Natasha Crampton, Vice President and Chief Responsible AI Officer of Microsoft, said in a blog post that AI usage in the Global North is roughly twice that of the Global South.

"And this divide continues to widen. This disparity impacts not only national and regional economic growth, but whether AI can deliver on its broader promise of expanding opportunity and prosperity around the world," they wrote.

Smith said the 'India AI Impact Summit' has rightly placed this challenge at the center of its agenda.

"For more than a century, unequal access to electricity exacerbated a growing economic gap between the Global North and South. Unless we act with urgency, a growing AI divide will perpetuate this disparity in the century ahead," he mentioned.

Microsoft also announced the launch of Elevate for Educators in India to strengthen the capacity of two million teachers across more than 200,000 schools, vocational institutes, and higher education settings.

"Our goal is to help the country's teaching workforce lead confidently in an AI-driven future. The program will be delivered in partnership with India's

"And this divide continues to widen. This disparity impacts not only national and regional economic growth, but whether AI can deliver on its broader promise of expanding opportunity and prosperity around the world"

national education and workforce training authorities, expanding equitable AI opportunities for eight million students," the company said.

Microsoft has devised a five-part program to drive AI impact: Building the infrastructure needed for AI diffusion; Empowering people through technology and skills for schools and

nonprofits; Strengthening multilingual and multicultural AI capabilities; Enabling local AI innovations that address community needs; and Measuring AI diffusion to guide future AI policies and investments.

"One thing that is clear this week at the summit in India is that success will require many deep partnerships. These must span borders and bring people and or-

ganizations together across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors," the company noted.

In its last fiscal year alone, Microsoft invested more than \$8 billion in data center infrastructure serving the Global South. This includes new infrastructure in India, Mexico, and countries in Africa, South America, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East.

AI skills are foundational to ensuring that AI expands opportunity and enables people to pursue more impactful real-world applications.

"With the launch of Microsoft Elevate in July, we committed to helping 20 million people in and beyond the Global South earn in-demand AI skilling credentials by 2028. After training 5.6 million people across India in 2025, we advanced this work by setting a goal last December to equip 20 million people in India with essential AI skills by 2030," said the company.

Microsoft Research is also advancing Samiksha, a community-centered method for evaluating AI behavior in real-world contexts, in collaboration with Karya and The Collective Intelligence Project in India.

Samiksha encodes local language use, culturally specific communication norms, and locally relevant use cases directly into core testing artifacts by surfacing failure modes that English-first evaluations routinely miss. *IANS*

500 H125 light helicopters to be manufactured in K'taka: Minister

KOLAR: Karnataka Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil announced that 500 H125 light helicopters will be manufactured over the next 20 years at the country's first private-sector helicopter assembly facility.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron virtually inaugurated the unit from Lok Bhavan in Maharashtra on 17 February.

The minister stated that the commencement of operations marks a historic milestone for the state.

Patil noted that 17 acres were allotted for the project soon after he assumed office as Industries Minister. He expressed satisfaction that the facility was completed and inaugurated in a record 1.5 years.

He added that swift approvals, effective coordination, infrastructure readiness, and active industry engagement ensured the timely implementation of this initiative.

Following France, the US, and Brazil, Karnataka now hosts the world's fourth H125 helicopter manufacturing and Final Assembly Line (FAL) facility, further strengthening the state's aerospace ecosystem.

He said the establishment of a Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facility alongside the assembly unit reflects Karnataka's industry-friendly environment.

Initially, the unit will manufacture 10 helicopters per year, with plans to scale up to 500 over the next two decades. The facility will handle key activities, including integrating avionics, hydraulic circuits, components, fuel systems, and engines.

The Minister expressed pride that Karnataka secured the project despite strong competition from Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat.

Airbus holds nearly 80 percent of the global market share in the single-engine helicopter segment, with about 4,300 helicopters in operation worldwide. These aircraft have logged over 38 million flying hours.

Patil stated that the state has the necessary reliability and engineering expertise to manufacture H125 helicop-



ters and reaffirmed the government's commitment to working with the Centre to further develop the sector.

The facility represents India's growing capabilities and expanding global partnerships. It is expected to create significant opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and generate employment.

Patil added that the project will provide the state's youth with greater access to advanced technology-driven sectors. *IANS*

Tech firms should be incentivized by govts to call out China-linked cyber attacks: Report

NEW DELHI: Failure of tech companies to publicly attribute cyber attacks to China weakens deterrence, leaves the public under informed and reduces pressure on governments to tackle the threat, a new report has said.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute, in the report, criticized US cybersecurity company Palo Alto Networks Inc. for not publicly attributing the cyber campaign to China, adding that it was due to concerns about potential retaliation against the firm or its clients.

It noted that technology firms avoid naming China due to commercial concerns including market access and fears of retaliation. It contrasted the approaches of two US firms, namely Google and Palo Alto, where one issued a generic alert about a global espionage campaign and another publicly identified China as the leading source of cyber threats.

Google's Threat Intelligence Group publicly com-

mented that China leads cyber threat campaigns by volume, including operations targeting defense suppliers and next-generation technologies such as drones and uncrewed systems, the firm noted.

"Without a patriotic partnership between Western governments and industry, both players will continue treating their relationships with China as too big to fail, forcing them to tolerate security threats for fear of financial insecurity," it said.

"But prudence and diplomacy cannot mean authoritarian states - in this case China - can do whatever they like while we suffer in resigned silence," the report said.

Government should partner with industry to reduce incentives for silence and reward firms that demonstrate transparency and support evidence-based attribution. The reward can be "through accumulation of both reputational capital and exclusive access to markets," it suggested. *IANS*



AI Summit positions India as bridge-builder between Global South and West

NEW DELHI: The 'India AI Impact Summit 2026' in the national capital is being seen as refreshingly different from the discussions on AI in the US and Europe as it focuses on a more pragmatic, inclusive vision centered on human progress and equitable growth.

"Hosted by the world's largest democracy and the first major AI summit in the Global South, it challenges the prevailing narrative and positions India as a credible bridge-builder in a fractured technological landscape," according to an article in online publication One World Outlook.

"From Washington to Brussels, policymakers should view the New Delhi Summit not as competition but as a complement. The West's strengths in frontier research and safety standards are indispensable, but they must be married to the scale and urgency of the developing world," the article written by Daniel J. Kaplan states.

If the summit delivers a shared roadmap for global AI governance that balances innovation, inclusion, and responsibility, it could mark a turning point, the article observes.

The article highlights that the AI debate in the West has swung between hype and alarm. While optimists like Sam Altman of OpenAI and Sundar Pichai of AI-



phabet emphasize AI's transformative potential to solve climate challenges, cure diseases, and boost productivity, the regulators and ethical minded intellectuals warn of job displacement, bias amplification, misinformation, and even existential risks.

However, India with its 1.4 billion strong population, massive digital infrastructure that includes Aadhaar and UPI and the world's largest talent pool of STEM graduates is in a position to reframe AI not as a threat to be contained but as a tool for inclusive development, the article observes.

It further observes that AI summits held in the UK and France have been dominated by a handful of powerful nations and companies, with developing economies relegated to the role of rule-takers rather than co-authors. In contrast, the India AI summit brings together over 20 heads of state, including France's Emmanuel Macron, Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, and others, alongside tech CEOs from OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, Microsoft, and Nvidia while more than 100 countries are participating. *IANS*

FedEx to invest Rs 2,500 crore for fully automated cargo hub at Navi Mumbai airport

NAVI MUMBAI: Express transportation company FedEx announced it will invest over Rs 2,500 crore in setting up a fully automated cargo hub at Navi Mumbai International Airport in partnership with the Adani Group.

"The Rs 2,500 crore long-term investment by FedEx will support the proposed 300,000 sq. ft. facility, designed as a regional consolidation and redistribution hub and developed in partnership with Adani Airport Holdings Ltd. (AAHL)," according to a FedEx statement.

The hub leverages the NMIA's multimodal infrastructure to strengthen Western India's international trade corridor. Once operational, the hub is expected to create more than 6,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities across logistics, warehousing, transportation and allied services, the statement said.

The ground-breaking ceremony for the facility was held at the cargo terminal site of the Navi Mumbai International Airport in the presence of Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, AAHL Director Jeet Adani, FedEx President and CEO Raj Subramaniam, and FedEx CEO, Airline and COO, International, Richard Smith.

In his remarks on the occasion, Jeet Adani said: "This development reflects NMIA's long-term vision of building integrated infrastructure that strengthens India's trade competitiveness. With its



proximity to Jawaharlal Nehru Port, industrial corridors and multimodal transport networks, NMIA is uniquely positioned to support high-growth export sectors and enhance Maharashtra's role as a global logistics gateway."

FedEx MEISA President Kami Viswanathan said: "India's competitiveness in global trade will increasingly depend on the reliability and speed of its logistics infrastructure. Establishing this hub at NMIA allows us to integrate global network strength with India's fastest-growing trade corridor, providing greater certainty, speed and efficiency to customers."

The development will support trade

flows across Southeast Asia, West Asia, Europe, and the United States, embedding global network connectivity directly within India's primary trade corridor. Equipped with advanced automated sorting systems, dimensional scanning, high-speed screening technology and dedicated aircraft parking bays, it will enable simultaneous processing of inbound and outbound shipments and enhance routing flexibility and transit time predictability, particularly for high-value and time-sensitive sectors such as electronics, engineering goods, pharmaceuticals and perishables. The improved reliability is also expected to strengthen export-import ca-

pabilities for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) while contributing to lower logistics costs and faster turnaround times, the company statement said.

The NMIA's cargo infrastructure is planned to commence with an initial handling capacity of approximately 0.5 million metric tons (MMT) annually, scaling in phases to around 3.25 MMT in its final development stage. This calibrated capacity expansion supports the airport's long-term strategy of positioning the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) as one of India's most advanced air freight and logistics gateways. *IANS*

India, UK join hands to launch Offshore Wind Taskforce

NEW DELHI: New and Renewable Energy Minister Pralhad Joshi and the UK's Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy launched the India-UK Offshore Wind Taskforce on Monday 16 February.

British High Commissioner to India Lindy Cameron was also present on the occasion.

Describing the India-UK Offshore Wind Taskforce as a working mechanism rather than a symbolic platform, Joshi said it has been constituted under Vision 2035 and the Fourth Energy Dialogue to provide strategic leadership and coordination for India's offshore wind ecosystem.

While the United Kingdom has demonstrated global leadership in scaling offshore wind and developing mature supply chains, India brings scale, long-term demand and a rapidly expanding clean energy ecosystem, he observed.

Calling the Taskforce a "trustforce",

Joshi said it reflects the confidence that India and the United Kingdom can work together to address real execution challenges. He urged that the platform deliver time-bound workstreams, measurable



New and Renewable Energy Minister Pralhad Joshi and the UK's Deputy Prime Minister David Lammy

milestones and visible progress, converting global lessons into solutions tailored to Indian conditions.

He outlined three practical pillars for cooperation: ecosystem planning and market design, including refined seabed leasing frameworks and credible revenue-certainty mechanisms; infrastructure and supply chains, including port modernization, local manufacturing and specialized vessels; and financing and risk mitigation through blended finance structures and mobilization of long-term institutional capital.

The minister emphasized that the next phase of India's transition must strengthen reliability, grid stability, industrial depth and energy security, and that offshore wind has a strategic role in this journey. Promising offshore wind zones have been identified off the coasts of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, along with grid planning and required studies and surveys have been conducted through the National Institute of Wind Energy for the initial projects. *IANS*

Qualcomm commits up to \$150 million for Strategic AI Venture Fund in India

NEW DELHI: In conjunction with Qualcomm CEO Cristiano Amon's participation in the 'India AI Impact Summit' here, the chip major recently announced plans to invest up to \$150 million through Qualcomm Ventures to back Indian startups across all stages.

The US-based company aims "to support India's rapidly expanding technology and AI startup ecosystem, with a focus on AI for automotive, IoT, robotics and mobile," it said in a statement.

"Through our new Strategic AI Venture Fund, Qualcomm is investing in companies that are advancing the next chapter of AI in India," said Cristiano Amon, President and CEO, Qualcomm.

AI is entering a new phase where intelligence is built directly into devices and systems people depend on every day, from smartphones. *IANS*

Big relief for cancer patients: Chemo services to reach district hospitals

NEW DELHI: In a major step to strengthen cancer care in India, the government has announced the setting up of Day Care Cancer Centers (DCCCs) in district hospitals across the country over the next three years, according to the official statement.

The decision was announced in the Union Budget 2025-26, with 200 centers planned to be established during period 2025-26.

The move aims to bring chemotherapy services closer to patients' homes and reduce the pressure on big tertiary hospitals.

Cancer treatment usually requires multiple hospital visits over several months. Patients must undergo regular chemotherapy cycles and follow-ups for effective results.

For many people, especially those living in rural areas or from economically weaker sections, travelling frequently to city-based tertiary hospitals is both physically exhausting and financially stressful.

Costs related to travel, stay, food and loss of daily wages add to the burden. Patients undergoing chemotherapy are often weak and need a caregiver to accompany them, which further increases expenses and income loss for families.

By offering chemotherapy at district hospitals, the new centers are expected to significantly reduce travel distance and indirect costs. This will help families save money and reduce disruption to their daily lives. *IANS*

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

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Under PM Modi, number of AIIMS has increased from 6 to 23: Nadda



Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami presents a degree to a student during 8th Convocation Ceremony of Swami Rama Himalayan University, in Dehradun. Union Minister JP Nadda and others also present. (@pushkardhami X/ANI Photo)

DEHRADUN: Showcasing the increase in number of AIIMS from 6 to 23 in 11 years, Union Health and Family Welfare Minister J.P. Nadda urged fresh medical graduates to uphold the highest ideals of the profession, and

dedicate their skills to the service of humanity.

Speaking at the 8th Convocation Ceremony of Swami Rama Himalayan University, Dehradun, Nadda highlighted the transformative strides made in India's

health sector under Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the number of AIIMS increasing from 6 to 23 in just over a decade.

Pointing to the expanding access to advanced tertiary healthcare services across the country, the Minister said that institutional deliveries have risen to nearly 89 percent, reflecting strengthened maternal healthcare systems.

The Minister noted that the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has declined from 130 per lakh live births a decade ago to 88 per lakh live births, while the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has reduced from 39 per thousand live births to 27 per thousand live births, demonstrating sustained progress in maternal and child health outcomes.

Citing estimates from the World Health Organization and UN agencies, Nadda stated that

India has achieved a significantly faster decline in the Under-5 Mortality Rate over the past decade compared to the global average, underscoring the impact of focused policy interventions and expanded healthcare access.

Referring to tuberculosis control efforts, he noted that India has recorded a substantial decline in TB incidence, outperforming the global average reduction through sustained public health measures and community-based interventions.

The Union Health Minister also highlighted India's historic Covid-19 vaccination drive, under which more than 220 crore vaccine doses, including precautionary and booster doses, were administered nationwide, demonstrating the scale, resilience, and efficiency of India's public health system. *IANS*



Union Health Minister JP Nadda with President Emmanuel Macron during the inauguration of the Indo-French Centre for AI in Health during RUSH 2026 at AIIMS, in New Delhi. (@JPNadda X/ANI Photo)

AI must be measured by its impact on lives addressing health inequities: Anupriya Patel

NEW DELHI: When India speaks of AI in healthcare, it is not limited to sophisticated algorithms or the promise of precision alone, but is measured by the extent to which technology touches lives and addresses health inequities across the country, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Anupriya Patel, said recently.

Speaking in a session during the 'India AI Impact Summit 2026' at Bharat Mandapam here, she highlighted the transformative role of AI in advancing public health outcomes and strengthening India's healthcare delivery systems.

Patel said that "AI for India, as our Prime Minister Narendra Modi envisions, is not merely Artificial Intelligence but All-Inclusive Intelligence."

As India advances towards the vision of a Viksit Bharat by 2047, health forms one of the most critical pillars of development.

India's vast and diverse population, the rural-urban divide, and the dual burden of communicable and non-communicable diseases present unique challenges.

In such a context, she underscored, technology - particularly AI - becomes an indispensable enabler.

"AI has been integrated across the entire continuum of healthcare-from disease surveillance and prevention to diagnosis and treatment," said the minister.

The Media Disease Surveillance System, an AI-enabled tool that monitors dis-



Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Anupriya Patel with Member of NITI Ayog V K Paul and CEO of Royal Phillips Roy Jacobs, at the 'India AI Impact Summit 2026', in New Delhi. (@AnupriyaSPatel X/ANI Photo)

ease trends in as many as 13 languages, generates real-time alerts, and strengthens outbreak preparedness.

This system, she said, showcases the power of AI in augmenting India's disease control efforts and enhancing surveillance capacity.

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has launched AI-based tools for genomic surveillance, capable of predicting potential zoonotic outbreaks even before transmission from animals to humans occurs. Such predictive capabilities, she emphasized, repre-

sent a paradigm shift in preventive public health.

The minister also highlighted the deployment of AI-enabled handheld X-ray machines and Computer-Aided Detection tools for tuberculosis (CA-TB), which have brought advanced diagnostics closer to communities.

These innovations have contributed to approximately 16 percent additional case detection in TB. Furthermore, AI-based tools predicting adverse TB treatment outcomes have helped achieve a 27 percent decline in negative treatment

results, strengthening India's fight against tuberculosis.

The government has actively worked towards building a strong AI ecosystem in healthcare, including the establishment of three Centers of Excellence for AI at AIIMS Delhi, PGIMER Chandigarh, and AIIMS Rishikesh to integrate world-class AI expertise into public healthcare delivery.

Artificial Intelligence is poised to become a transformative force in public health, provided it is deployed responsibly, ethically, and at scale, said experts at the session. IANS

CCPA slaps Rs 5 lakh fine on Snapdeal for selling non-BIS compliant toys, warns others

NEW DELHI: The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) recently imposed a penalty of Rs 5 lakh on Snapdeal for the sale of non-BIS compliant toys on its platform, in violation of consumer rights.

The regulator said it has taken strict action against e-commerce entities and sellers for the sale of toys in violation of the mandatory Toys (Quality Control) Order, 2020 and prescribed Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) standards.

In this regard, the CCPA imposed the penalty on Snapdeal (Ace Vector Limited) "for engaging in unfair trade practices and misleading advertisements by facilitating the sale of non-BIS compliant toys on its platform".

The CCPA, led by Chief Commissioner Nidhi Khare and Commissioner Anupam Mishra, issued a final order against Snapdeal, according to a statement by Ministry of Consumer Affairs.



According to the regulator, Snapdeal earned fees amounting to Rs 41,032 from the sale of these non-compliant toys through just two identified sellers: Stallion Trading Company and Thriftkart.

Many listings lacked essential information, such as the manufacturer's name, address, and mandatory BIS certification numbers. The platform relied solely on seller self-declarations without independent verification, which the CCPA deemed 'inadequate' for preventing the listing of hazardous products.

"Snapdeal took its defense as it acts as a 'marketplace e-commerce entity' similar to a physical shopping mall," said the CCPA. IANS

'Less than 30 percent of children diagnosed with cancer survive in Pakistan'

ISLAMABAD: Around 10,000 children are diagnosed with cancer in Pakistan each year, but fewer than 30 percent of them survive due to delayed diagnosis, limited treatment facilities and financial difficulties, health experts stated at an awareness session, local media reported.

Addressing a "Health Wise" session on childhood cancer recently, jointly organized by the Indus Hospital and Health Network, experts stated that nearly 400,000 children and adolescents suffer from cancer across the world each year, with about 80 percent of cases reported from low and middle-income nations, Pakistani daily The Express Tribune reported. IANS

Ten-month-old infant becomes Kerala's youngest organ donor

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: In a heart-rending yet profoundly inspiring act, a 10-month-old baby girl, who lost her life in a road accident, has become the youngest organ donor in Kerala, offering hope and healing to others even in death, officials said.

Alin Sherin Abraham, hailing from Mallappally in Pathanamthitta district, was declared brain dead following a tragic road accident.

In the middle of unimaginable grief, her parents chose to donate her organs so that other lives could be saved.

Their decision has touched the hearts of many across the state.

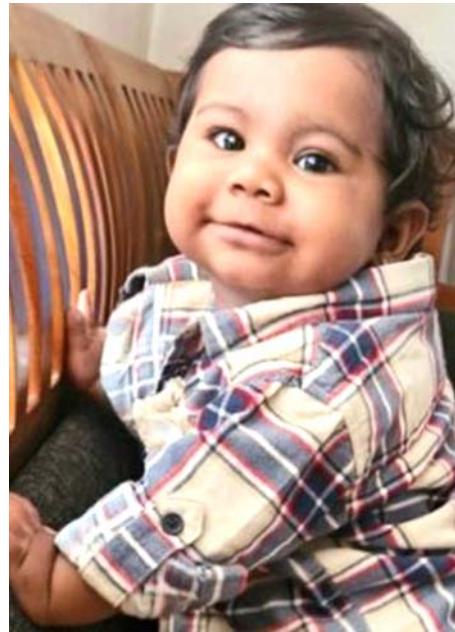
The infant's kidneys, liver and heart valves are being donated.

Her two kidneys will be transplanted to a 10-year-old child undergoing treatment at the S.A.T. Hospital attached to the Thiruvananthapuram Medical College.

The organs are being transported by road to ensure timely transplantation procedures.

State Health Minister Veena George expressed deep appreciation for the family's extraordinary gesture.

Sharing her condolences, she said the parents' decision to think of others' lives even at a time of intense personal sorrow



reflects remarkable courage and humanity.

She also conveyed that the state government stands in solidarity with the grieving family.

"The loss of a child is an immeasurable tragedy. Yet, in choosing organ donation, Alin Sherin's parents have transformed their personal pain into a beacon of hope for families awaiting life-saving transplants. Their act underscores the growing awareness about organ donation in Kerala and the life-affirming impact such decisions can have," Veena George said in her social media page.

While nothing can compensate for the loss of their daughter, the knowledge that her organs will give other children and families a renewed chance at life may offer some solace.

"In remembering Alin Sherin, Kerala also remembers the quiet strength of her parents who, in the darkest of moments, chose compassion over despair and life over loss," Minister George said. IANS

Pak faces double burden of malnutrition and obesity; women and children most affected

NEW DELHI: Pakistan is facing the double burden of malnutrition and obesity, intensifying pressures on the national health system and public well-being, a new report has lamented, adding that widespread consumption of nutrient-deficient foods has compounded Pakistan's long-standing malnutrition crisis, hitting women and children the hardest.

According to a report in Business Recorder, a recent assessment by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) revealed the deep structural distortions within the country's food system that are eroding nutrition, and by extension weakening public health and long-term development outcomes.

According to the report, while the system generates sufficient calories to feed the population, "it fails to deliver the volume and diversity of healthy and nutritious foods required for a balanced diet". IANS

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ED attaches Rs 7.72 cr assets in Adarsh credit co-operative society case

JAIPUR: The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Jaipur, has provisionally attached movable and immovable properties valued at approximately Rs. 7.72 crore under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, on 09.12.2024 in connection with the case of Adarsh Credit Co-operative Society Ltd and others.

The investigation was initiated based on FIRs registered by the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Rajasthan Police. As per the allegations, the main accused, Mukesh Modi and Rahul Modi, in collusion with their associates, collected crores of rupees from investors and members of the society. These funds were allegedly siphoned off through the Adarsh Group of Companies, its directors, firms, LLPs, and related entities, causing wrongful loss to investors and corresponding wrongful gain to the accused.

The ED investigation revealed that Mukesh Modi and his family members exercised effective control over the Society and its financial operations. Investors, many from economically weaker sections, were lured with assurances of abnormally high returns, resulting in the collection of funds amounting to thousands of crores of rupees. *IANS*

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For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

NEW DELHI: Union Home Minister Amit Shah termed the inauguration of the new Prime Minister's Office 'Seva Teerth' by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a historic step towards placing public service above all at the very heart of Indian democracy. *IANS*



Project Mannat launched in Bariatu, introducing a premium residential concept for professionals and NRIs

RANCHI: Minu Enhance Developers has announced the launch of Project Mannat, a premium residential development located in Bariatu, one of Ranchi's steadily growing residential corridors. Designed with a focus on space, privacy, and long-term value, the project aims to address the rising demand for structured, well-planned housing among professional families and non-resident Indians (NRIs) connected to the region.

Strategically positioned on Bariatu Road and in proximity to key institutions including Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Project Mannat benefits from strong connectivity while retaining a relatively peaceful residential environment. The location has increasingly attracted homebuyers seeking proximity to healthcare, educational institutions, and arterial city routes, making it a viable choice for both end-users and long-term investors.

The development is planned as a ground plus thirteen-storied residential tower comprising approximately 55 units. Notably, the



project does not offer any units below 3 BHK configurations. The available options include 3 BHK and 4 BHK apartments, along with select 5 BHK penthouse units. Buyers seeking larger living spaces are also provided with the flexibility to merge adjacent apartments, allowing for customized layouts that accommodate

extended families or larger households.

One of the distinctive design elements of Project Mannat is its elevated residential planning approach. The ground, first, and second floors are dedicated to parking and shared amenities, while residential apartments begin from the fourth floor onward.

This layout enhances natural light, ventilation, and privacy across all units. Elevated living also minimizes direct road exposure, offering residents a quieter and more secure environment.

According to the developer, the planning philosophy behind the project integrates contemporary architectural standards with practical local requirements. The focus remains on providing spacious layouts, efficient circulation areas, and optimized structural planning rather than compact high-density housing models that have become common in urban expansions.

The project includes amenities intended to support health, recreation, and community engagement. Dedicated fitness areas, recreational spaces, and common zones have been incorporated to serve different age groups.

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Real estate oversight must go AI-first as urban population heads to 80 crore by 2050: MoHUA Joint Secy

NEW DELHI: India's real estate regulatory architecture must shift towards artificial intelligence-led oversight and machine-to-machine digital integration even as the country prepares for an unprecedented urban expansion, a senior official in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) said.

Addressing the National Urban & Real Estate Development Conclave organized by NAREDCO at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, Kuldiip

Narayan, Joint Secretary, MoHUA, said India's urban population is projected to grow from around 50 crore at present to



nearly 80 crore by 2047-2050, and may even exceed that level.

"Whether we like it or not, our urban population will cross 80 crore by 2050. We have to adapt, and we have to carefully align our actions," he said, underscoring that more than half of the built-up space required by 2050 is yet to be constructed.

Over the next 20-25 years, India will have to

significantly expand housing supply while simultaneously undertaking large-scale brownfield redevelopment, he said. However, housing cannot be treated in isolation. Urban planning, public transport and housing must function as an integrated framework.

"Talking about them separately is an urban policy error," he remarked, adding that resilient and sustainable urban services will be essential to support such population growth. *ANI*

Homes priced Rs 1 crore and above constitute 50 pc of total sales in India: Report

NEW DELHI: The overall residential market in India continues to exhibit underlying resilience, supported by a stable macroeconomic backdrop and recent repo rate cuts, a report showed on Monday.

Premium segments (homes priced Rs 1 crore and above) now constitute 50 percent of total annual sales in the country.

While the overall market remained resilient with 3,48,207 units sold in 2025 and sales of units priced over Rs 1 crore rose by 14 percent year-on-year (YoY), the affordable housing segment - homes priced under Rs 50 lakh, experienced a significant decline of 17 percent YoY, said the report by Knight Frank India for the second half last year (H2 2025).

The report notes that the slowdown is largely confined to lower ticket segments. Consequently, homes priced above Rs 1 crore now dominate the landscape leaving a comparatively much smaller footprint of affordable housing sales across India.

This trend was particularly evident in cities like Delhi-NCR, said the report.

"The affordable housing segment faces pronounced pressures, with demand declining 17 percent YoY and supply contracting more sharply by 28 percent YoY. This divergence signals a structural shift in the market, as capital allocation and buyer preference increasingly gravitate toward higher-value homes," said Shishir Baijal, International Partner, Chairman and Managing Director, Knight Frank India.

The marked slowdown in new affordable launches highlights developers' reluctance to commit capital to this

segment, as they focus on premium housing, which is shaping the current housing cycle, he mentioned.

In 2025, the affordable housing sector faced a significant supply crunch as well, as developers pivoted away from lower-ticket projects, leading to a 28 percent YoY drop in new launches for units priced under Rs 50 lakh



and an 9 percent decline in the Rs 50 lakh-Rs 1 crore category.

This lack of fresh supply resulted in 7 percent contraction of unsold inventory in the sub-50 lakh segment, even as the broader market underwent a major structural shift toward premiumization, the report said. IANS

Why is location an important criterion for senior living projects?

HARINI BALASUBRAMANIAN

Location greatly influences property-buying decisions. Good connectivity, availability of social infrastructure and future growth potential attract buyers to a particular locality. This is true for any real estate project, including senior living projects - a niche segment that is rapidly growing across key cities like Bangalore, Chennai and Hyderabad. For a senior citizen looking to reside in a residential community, location matters more than any other factor. It covers aspects such as proximity to healthcare facilities, neighborhood safety and accessibility to public transport. In this guide, we discuss the link between location and the growth of senior living projects.

Proximity to healthcare and other social amenities

Elderly people need facilities such as clinics, diagnostic centers, geriatric care, and hospitals. More importantly, proximity to such facilities is crucial when considering emergencies. The outskirts of cities such as Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, and Bangalore are witnessing the development of several hospitals and medical hubs. Thus, developers target these locations for launching their projects.

A well-developed social infrastructure significantly enhances an area's livability. Moreover, integrated townships with retail shops, pharmacies, temples and parks offer a

self-sustained living environment for residents. This is particularly beneficial for senior citizens.

Connectivity and easy accessibility

Buyers often check for connectivity and easy accessibility to main roads, workplaces and public transportation when choosing a home. Some buyers, especially working professionals or frequent travellers, even prefer staying close to airports or railway stations. The preferences for senior homebuyers are similar. It is crucial that the location where a senior living project is planned should have well-developed physical infrastructure, including wider roads, reduced traffic congestion, and the presence of everyday conveniences. The lack of these facilities in a given location can lead to inconvenience and higher commuting costs.

Safety and comfort

Neighborhood safety and security are key concerns for buyers investing in a residential project. Further, the topography of the area, whether it is prone to floods, water-logging, etc. or if the climate is extremely hot or cold, influences property decisions, especially for the elderly.

www.housing.com

Funding to be considered through charitable institutions for Affordable housing: Manohar Lal Khattar

NEW DELHI: Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said that his ministry will encourage a proposal to set up charitable institutions to fund housing, particularly in the affordable segment, since banks and other such entities do not come forward to fund housing units in the affordable sector.

Addressing the NAREDCO Conclave 2026 on its second day here, Khattar on Saturday indicated that a dedicated fund could be set up to finance stalled housing projects from the pre-RERA period, in line with broader industry suggestions, so that both their promoters and buyers can reach a win-win settlement.

The Union Minister also indicated that the government would work towards development for nearly 700-750 slum settlements in and around the NCT, for which a policy framework is being deliberated by various stakeholders across government authorities at a high level.

With the take-off of this proposal, affordable housing would receive a much-needed boost in and around the NCT.

Elaborating on the issue of establishing charitable institutions to fund affordable housing in LIG and EWS segments, according to a National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO) statement, Khattar pointed out that money could be organized through CSR contributions in such proposed charitable institutions to generate funds for poorer sections of the society, since banking and financial institutions are barely proactive in supporting this section.

NAREDCO suggested increasing the SWAMIH fund size to support stalled housing projects.

Khattar is also reported to have said that a fund could be set up to support housing projects approved before RERA, with the size of the fund to be decided after discussion. In this context, it was suggested that the government may consider establishing a dedicated fund to arrange financing for reviving stalled housing projects.

On the issue of cheaper land for affordable housing, the Union Minister suggested that cheaper land could not be made available for this section of housing. What could be done to encourage the availability of land for such projects is through cross-subsidization, provided a consensus emerges on the issue.

Earlier, speaking on the occasion, Kuldip Narayan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, stated that housing projects can come up at the center of major cities, where land parcels on which empty buildings are raised and are of no use for decades.

Such a land could be identified through Google maps and brought to use for the stated purpose, said the Joint Secretary, adding that on rental housing, the government is working on it as soon as a detailed feasibility done on this, a thinking will emerge on the issue. ANI

Huma Qureshi hails Rajkummar Rao

Actress Huma Qureshi has heaped praise on Rajkummar Rao, describing him as "one of the most committed actors of our times," after a picture of him appearing to have gained weight began circulating on social media. The actor had later clarified that the transformation was for a role he would be seen playing on screen.

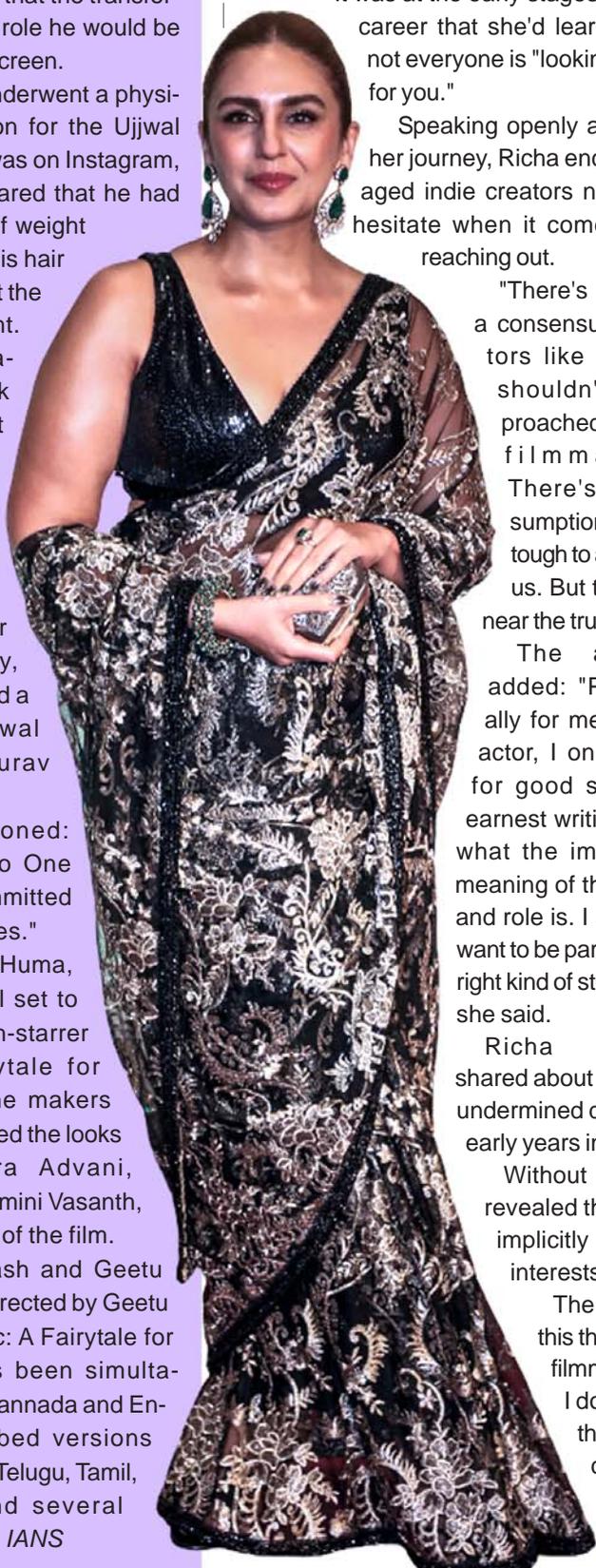
Rajkummar underwent a physical transformation for the Ujjwal Nikam biopic. It was on Instagram, the actor had shared that he had gained 9-10 kg of weight and even made his hair look thinner to get the part visually right. While simultaneously doing look tests for his next biopic on Sourav Ganguly.

Huma, who is a close friend of Rajkummar, took to her Instagram story, where she shared a picture of Ujjwal Nikam and Sourav Ganguly.

She captioned: "@rajkummarao One of the most committed actors of our times."

Talking about Huma, the actress is all set to be seen in Yash-starrer "Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups". The makers had earlier unveiled the looks of Yash, Kiara Advani, Nayanthara, Rukmini Vasanth, and Tara Sutaria of the film.

Written by Yash and Geetu Mohandas and directed by Geetu Mohandas, Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups has been simultaneously shot in Kannada and English, with dubbed versions planned in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and several other languages. *IANS*



Richa Chadha: "EVERYONE ISN'T LOOKING OUT FOR YOU"

Actress-producer Richa Chadha has spoken about an episode of professional sabotage early in her career by someone she deeply trusted and said that it was at the early stages of her career that she'd learn that not everyone is "looking out for you."

Speaking openly about her journey, Richa encouraged indie creators not to hesitate when it comes to reaching out.

"There's sometimes a consensus that actors like me often shouldn't be approached by indie filmmakers. There's an assumption that it's tough to approach us. But that's not near the truth."

The actress added: "Personally for me as an actor, I only care for good scripts, earnest writing, and what the impact or meaning of the story and role is. I always want to be part of the right kind of stories," she said.

Richa also shared about being undermined during her early years in the industry.

Without naming names, she revealed that someone she trusted implicitly had worked against her interests at a crucial stage.

The actress added, "Given this thought of reservations of filmmakers to approach me. I do recollect very strongly that at the very start of my career i had to learn the hard lesson that everyone isn't so looking out for you." *IANS*



TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

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

Actress Kriti Sanon was seen flaunting her new haircut in her latest social media post, terming it as her 'kinda therapy'.

Kriti looked absolutely adorable and pretty in a layered cut with bangs. While it is not certain if this new haircut is for a particular project or just to break the monotony, the new style looks absolutely stunning on the 'Tere Ishq Mein' actress.

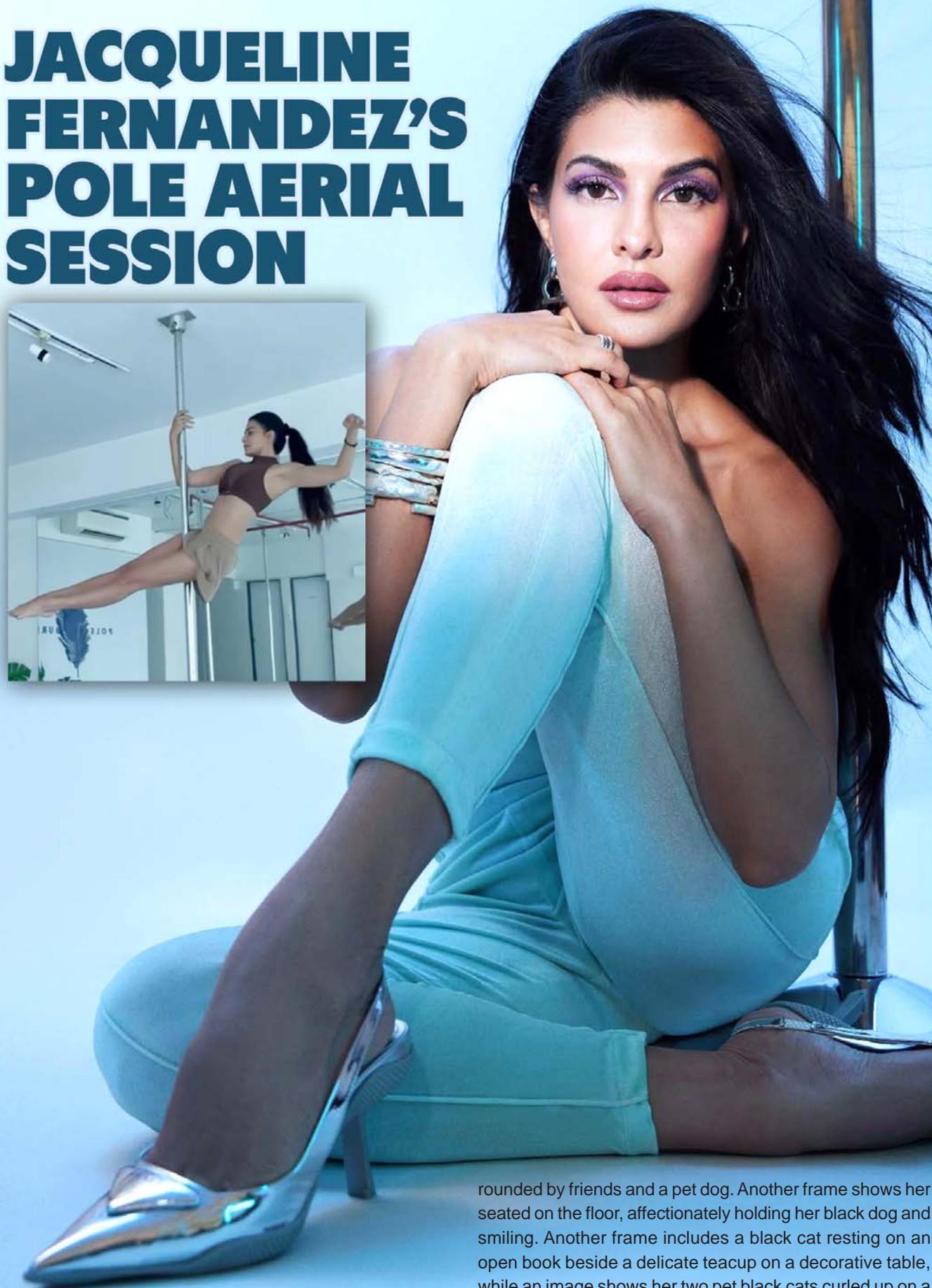
Posting a couple of goofy clicks in her new hairdo, Kriti penned the caption, "A good Haircut is my kinda therapy! It's an instant reset, mood uplift & new energy! (sic)"

Recently, Kriti made headlines during her younger sister Nupur Sanon's wedding with singer Stebin Ben in January this year. *IANS*

Kriti Sanon flaunts new haircut: 'my kinda therapy'



JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ'S POLE AERIAL SESSION



Actress Jacqueline Fernandez seems to be setting fitness goals, and this time around with her dedication to pole aerial training.

The actress took to her social media account to share a glimpse of her 'February so far'. One of the highlights of the carousel was her intense pole workout session, where she showcased her strength, balance and flexibility.

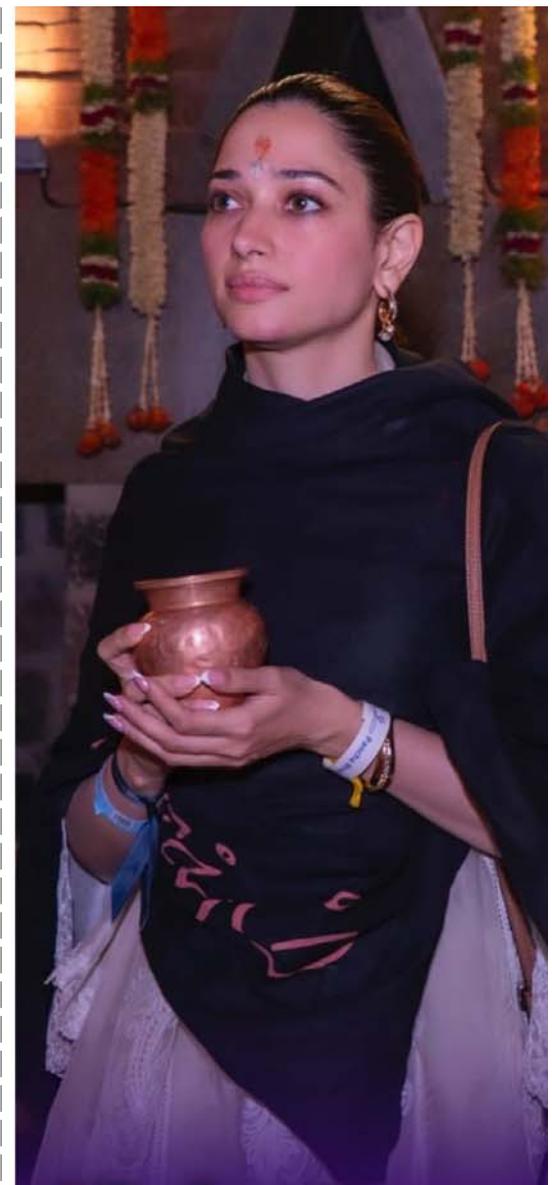
In one video from the carousel, Jacqueline is seen inside a bright studio, holding onto a vertical pole as she practices a pole aerial routine. Dressed in a brown sports wear and matching shorts, and her hair tied back in a sleek ponytail, the actress appears dedicated and well trained.

The carousel post also features candid moments from her personal life. One image captures Jacqueline sur-

rounded by friends and a pet dog. Another frame shows her seated on the floor, affectionately holding her black dog and smiling. Another frame includes a black cat resting on an open book beside a delicate teacup on a decorative table, while an image shows her two pet black cats curled up on a white bedspread. In a separate frame, Jacqueline is seen enjoying a video call with model Anusha Dandekar over breakfast, with a cup of coffee, juice and flowers placed on the table. The carousel post also includes glimpses of her time out with friends, capturing fun and carefree moments.

She captioned the post as, "Feb 2026 so far Faith, God, friends, family, and showing up everyday."

On the professional front, Jacqueline Fernandez made her Bollywood debut with *Aladin* in 2009. The movie that was directed by Sujoy Ghosh was a fantasy adventure film also starred Amitabh Bachchan and Riteish Deshmukh. She has been a part of several successful films including *Murder 2*, *Housefull 2*, *Race 2*, *Kick*, *Housefull 3*, *Judwaa 2* and *Bhoot Police*, among others. *IANS*



All about Tamannaah Bhatia's Maha Shivratri

Bollywood beauty Tamannaah Bhatia celebrated the auspicious occasion of MahaShivratri in the company of fellow devotees, surrounded by dance, music, and inner peace.

Tamannaah attended the grand Mahashivratri celebration at the Isha Yoga Centre in Coimbatore and even chose to share her fulfilling experience on social media.

Describing how they spend MahaShivratri in her own words, Tamannaah wrote on her IG, "Shivratri at Isha is not quiet. It's an all-night vigil. Drums in the distance. Voices rising in chant. Artists offering their art as seva. Annadanam being served with the same devotion as a prayer. Thousands of people choosing to stay awake, not out of compulsion, but participation. It's alive. (sic)."

She added that Shiva, in his Nataraja form, is a reminder that existence itself is movement.

"Creation is not static. It is rhythm. Energy in motion. And at the center of that motion - Stillness", Tamannaah added. *IANS*

Alia Bhatt joins the list of BAFTA PRESENTERS alongside Cillian Murphy, Kate Hudson

MUMBAI: After proving her mettle in Bollywood, actress Alia Bhatt is also constantly making a mark for herself on the international platform.

Adding another feather to her cap, Alia has joined the list of the BAFTA presenters for 2026 alongside some prominent personalities such as Cillian Murphy, Kate Hudson, and Sadie Sink.

The British Academy recently released its star-studded list of presenters for the 2026 BAFTA Film Awards, slated to take place on February 22.

The list includes some heavyweights like Aimee Lou Wood, Bryan Cranston, David Jonsson, Delroy Lindo, Gillian Anderson, Glenn Close, Olivia Cooke, and Patrick Dempsey.

Aaron Pierre, Alicia Vikander, Erin Doherty, Hannah Waddingham, Kathryn Hahn, Kerry Washington, Little Simz, Maggie Gyllenhaal, Mia McKenna-Bruce, Milly Alcock, Minnie Driver, Noah Jupe, Regé-Jean Page, Riz Ahmed, Stormzy and Warwick Davis will also be presenting the award this year.

REFRESHING YOUR MEMORY, BEFORE ALIA, PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS WAS A PRESENTER AT BAFTA BACK IN 2021. ADDITIONALLY, DEEPIKA PADUKONE ALSO GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD IN 2024

Many celebs who have been nominated for the award will be playing a dual role as presenters. They are Ethan Hawke, Michael B. Jordan, Kate Hudson, Miles Caton, Emily Watson, and Stellan Skarsgard.

Refreshing your memory, before Alia, Priyanka Chopra Jonas was a presenter at BAFTA back in 2021. Additionally, Deepika Padukone also got the opportunity to

present the prestigious award in 2024.

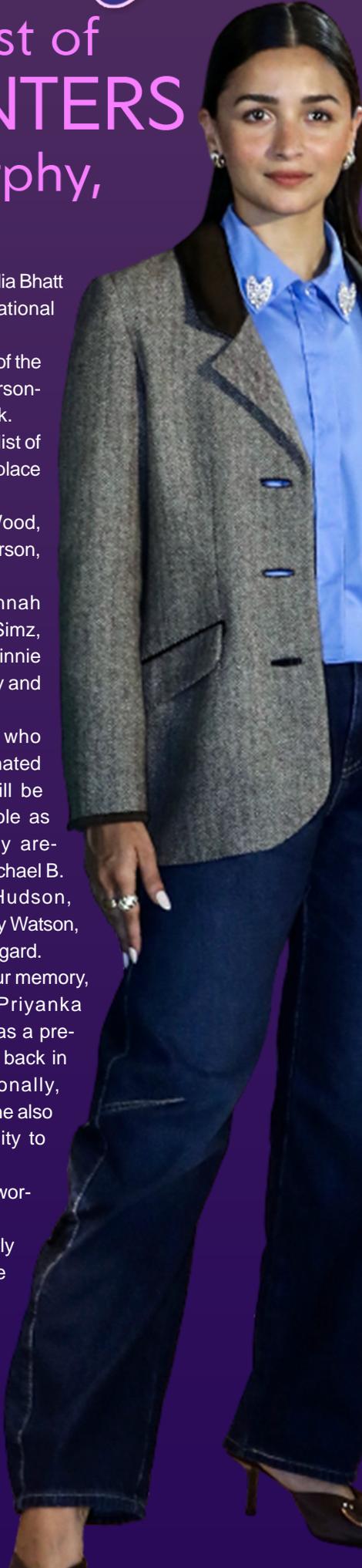
Before BAFTA, Alia made quite a splash with her praiseworthy looks at Cannes and the MET Gala.

Talking about Alia's movie commitments, she is presently working on Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "Love And War", where she will be seen sharing the screen space with her husband Ranbir Kapoor and 'Raazi' co-star Vicky Kaushal.

During a recent Instagram live, Ranbir shared that the project, which was expected to be out this year, might be delayed.

Over and above this, Alia will also be joining the YRF's spy universe with "Alpha".

Sharvari, Anil Kapoor, and Bobby Deol will also play prominent roles in the drama, which is being made under the direction of Shiv Rawail. *IANS*



GRANDEST NORTH INDIA MAHASHIVRATRI CELEBRATION SETS NEW BENCHMARK AT BHARAT MANDAPAM

NEW DELHI: Delhi witnessed one of North India's most distinctive and grand Mahashivratri celebrations as PEACE Program -- the Corporate Workshop Wing of Divya Jyoti Jagrati Sansthan (DJJS) -- organized an extraordinary spiritual conclave at Bharat Mandapam Amphitheatre. Held under the divine guidance of Divya Guru Shri Ashutosh Maharaj Ji, Founder & Head of DJJS, the evening seamlessly blended practical spirituality with culture, science, and cutting-edge technology.

With a remarkable footfall of nearly 3,000 attendees, the state-of-the-art amphitheater resonated with devotion and dynamism as corporates, academicians, doctors, professionals, and youth gathered to celebrate Mahashivratri in a never-before-seen format.

Sadhvi Tapeshwari Bharti, Principal Coordinator of the PEACE Program, remarked,

"Divya Guru Shri Ashutosh Maharaj Ji has always inspired us to explore spirituality in a rational and practical manner. This event reflected that vision, orchestrated in the light of our glorious Sanatan Sanskriti. We aimed to present the techno-scientific perspective of Lord Shiva's Third Eye meditation and highlight its urgent relevance in today's times."

Co-Coordinator Sadhvi Dr. Nidhi Bharti added,

"After months of research, we designed sessions encapsulating deep, life-transforming insights derived from Lord Shiva's ideals. From fitness and relationships to work-life balance, we sought to offer time-tested solutions to stressed and unsettled minds."

Where Devotion Met AI: A Digital Spiritual Kickstart

The celebration commenced with a first-of-its-kind AI-powered digital experience zone. Devotees whispered prayers into a digital Nandi installation and witnessed their sankalpas being symbolically offered to Lord Shiva. Holographic virtual pilgrimages to Kedarnath, Amarnath, and Kashi captivated visitors, merging reverence with technological innovation and setting the tone for an infotainment-style Mahashivratri exploration. *PNN*

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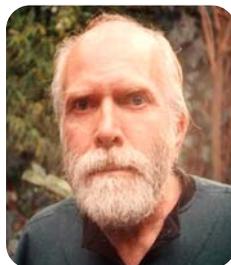
ROBERT ADAMS

How do you know that you're close to Self-Realization. You have a feeling, a complete understanding, that everything you see, everything in the universe, in the world, emanates from your mind. In other words, you feel this. You do not have to think about it or try to bring it on. It comes by itself. It becomes a part of you.

The realization that everything that you see, the universe, people, worms, insects, the mineral kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, your

body, your mind, everything that appears, is a manifestation of your mind. You have to have that feeling, that deep understanding, without trying.

So you ask yourself: "What do I think about all day long?". Of course, if you fear something, if you worry, if you believe something is wrong somewhere, if you think you're suffering from lack or limitation, or sickness, anything, then you're out of it completely, because



Robert Adams

to? You say 'my finger', 'my eye'. Who are you referring to? You couldn't be talking about your body, because you are saying it's 'my' body, as if you own it. Who owns it? This proves to your Self that you're not your body.

So do not identify your Self with the body and the world. Therefore the First Principle to see how close you are to Self-Realization is: You are not feeling that you are identified with the world. You're separate. And you're feeling happiness because your natural state is pure happiness.

Once you identify with worldly things, you spoil it. The happiness disappears. It dissipates. But when you're separate from worldly things happiness is automatic. Beautiful, pure happiness. It comes by itself.

You have to have a strong feeling, a deep realization, that you are unborn. You are not born, you do not experience a life, and you do not disappear, you do not die. You are not born, you have no

Do not identify body with your Self
Once you identify with worldly things, happiness disappears

you're not understanding that all these things are simply a manifestation of your own mind.

And if you worry about these things, you become attached to false imagination. That's called false imagination. You've been attached to habit energy for many years, and all these attachments and beliefs come from habit energy. It's like watching a TV show and becoming one of the characters, even when you know that you're not on the TV. But you believe you're one of the characters in the TV show.

So it is with the world. Do not get involved. I don't mean you become passive. I mean your body does what it's supposed to do. Remember, your body came to this earth to do something. It will do something without your knowledge. It'll take care of itself. Don't worry. But do not identify your body with your Self. They're different.

Your body is not your Self. And I'll prove this. When you refer to your body what do you say? Don't you say 'my body'? Who is this 'my' you're referring

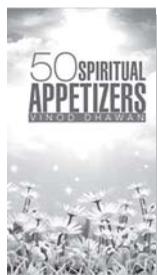
life, and you do not die. You have to feel this, that you are of the unborn. Do you realize what this means?

I know it's hard to comprehend. How do I exist if I was not born, I have no life and I do not disappear in old age? You exist as "I AM". You have always existed and you will always exist. You exist as Pure Intelligence, as Absolute Reality. That is your true nature.

Excerpted from 'Silence of the Heart vol-2'. The 98th birth anniversary of Robert Adams was observed on January 21

50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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Pakistan: A cricket defeat is merely a symptom of a deeper malaise

MAYANK CHHAYA

In a striking juxtaposition, in the week that the news came of Imran Khan, Pakistan's most celebrated cricket icon and its incarcerated former prime minister, practically going blind in his right eye, the country's cricket team trucked under to India in the T20 World Cup match in Colombo.

The sorry twin spectacles of Pakistani cricket team's 61-run defeat and Khan's tragic loss of eyesight in prison are in a way manifestations of a society long trapped in deeper and nearly incapacitating crises across a spectrum of life. From the existential dangers posed to the state by the violent Baloch subnationalism to its unending economic pauperization, and from its leaders indulging in acts of embarrassing ingratiation to the United States to its military's absurd stranglehold over its civil society, there is such an extraordinary convergence of destructive forces.



Look of Defeat

On the face of it, all these may seem like unconnected crises, but they do all flow from a single fountainhead of a society that has never really fully coalesced as a nation-state.

Beyond the risible asides such as whether the Indian and Pakistan cricket players should shake hands or look at one another with surly suspicion, what stood out in the Colombo T20 World Cup match was that Pakistani cricketers seemed to have a pall of defeat hanging on them permanently. It was almost as if the team members carried their own little versions of their native country in peril.

On the other hand, the optics of a cricketing hero, once a hedonist and head of a nuclear-armed country eroding away in a prison cell since August 5, 2023, is also an indicator of a society where the ruling elite is at odds with its people. That the 73-year-old Khan had reportedly been complaining about his diminishing eyesight for the past three months or so has enraged

his supporters in his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party as well those Pakistanis who recognize that their country is in far more serious crisis than a T20 defeat here or a former prime minister going partially blind there.

Crisis of Confidence

That the largest province of the country, namely Balochistan, which represents 44 percent of the country's territory with a population of 14.8 million, 5.9 millions of whom are ethnic Baloch people, is pushing for secession underscores the kind of deeper malaise coursing through the country. The Baloch insurgency is now in its 20th year and is showing no sign of abating. If anything, it has become worse.

On the economic front, although since mid-2023, there has been some improvement in the country's economic indicators, much of that can be attributed to the fact that bilateral and multilateral creditors,

who together hold around 85 percent of Pakistan's external debt, have committed to rolling over principal repayments that come due. There has been some increase in its foreign exchange reserves to \$12 billion or so from a paltry \$4 billion in June, 2023, enough then only for two weeks' worth of imports. However, the overall economic situation remains distressed with high unemployment exacerbated by poor

governance.

In the midst of all this Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has made a habit of unctuous flattery of his benefactors such as the United States, Saudi Arabia and Turkey as a policy preference. This is even as his military chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, struts about both domestically and internationally projecting an air of untrammled ownership of Pakistan.

More than 60 percent of Pakistan's 241.5 million population (2023) is below the age 30, with a median age of about 20. It is one of the youngest nations in the world living in a country that has remained adrift since its creation. Cricket was once a source of national confidence for young Pakistanis, but in recent years even that has vanished. The T20 defeat is just another instance of the crisis of confidence gripping the country that is also debilitating its cricket team.

(The writer is a Chicago-based journalist, author and commentator) South Asia Monitor

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

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

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Rethinking Bangladesh's foreign policy: Test for a more assertive "Bangladesh First" doctrine

MD. SAIFUL ISLAM SHANTO

With the final ballots verified on February 12, 2026, the 13th National Election has triggered a profound transformation in Bangladesh's diplomatic trajectory. This milestone does more than just seat a new government; it fundamentally resets the nation's engagement with the global community. Following the landslide victory of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP)-securing 209 seats and a decisive two-thirds majority-the incoming administration inherits a landscape defined by both immense volatility and strategic opportunity.

As the nation prepares for the official transition of power, the world is witnessing the birth of a "Bangladesh First" doctrine. This isn't merely a change in leadership, but a shift toward a more assertive, sovereign foreign policy aimed at navigating the complex rivalries of the 21st century.

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Shifting the Narrative

The most immediate and delicate challenge for the new government lies in its relationship with India. Following the events of August 2024 and the subsequent transitional period, the bilateral bond has faced unprecedented strain. The presence of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in India remains a friction point, yet the early signs of 2026 suggest a pragmatic "reset." Prime Minister Narendra Modi's congratulatory call to Tarique Rahman on February 13, 2026 signals New Delhi's recognition of the changed political reality. However, the path forward requires

addressing deep-seated issues that have long simmered. The new administration must prioritize the resolution of the Teesta River water-sharing treaty and take a firm stance against border killings by the Border Security Force (BSF). By shifting the narrative from a "special relationship" with a single party to a "State-to-State" partnership based on mutual respect and equity, Bangladesh aims to balance essential security cooperation with India while ensuring its own strategic autonomy.

Simultaneously, Bangladesh finds itself as a primary theater for the deepening competition between the United States and China. As of 2026, China remains Bangladesh's largest trade partner and a dominant force in infrastructure and defense, recently evidenced by the 2025 agreement for a state-of-the-art drone manufacturing plant and ongoing discussions for J-

10CE fighter jets. On the other hand, the United States, through its Indo-Pacific Strategy, is actively pitching defense alternatives and seeking to counter Chinese influence in the Bay of Bengal. The new government must master the art of "strategic hedging"-leveraging Chinese investment for development while maintaining the robust security and democratic ties that Washington demands. This balancing act is not merely political; it is survival. With 80% of Bangladesh's exports, primarily Ready-Made Garments (RMG), destined for Western markets, maintaining favor with the U.S.

and the European Union is a non-negotiable economic necessity.

Economic and Humanitarian Dimensions

Economic diplomacy is perhaps the most time-sensitive pillar of post-election foreign policy. The clock is ticking toward November 24, 2026-the scheduled date for Bangladesh's graduation from the status of a Least Developed Country (LDC). While graduation is a mark of pride, it brings a "double whammy" of challenges: the loss of Duty-Free Quota-Free (DFQF) market access and a significant reduction in concessional financing. Projections for 2026 suggest that without new trade agreements, the country could face an annual export loss of approximately \$8 billion. In the EU alone, tariffs on Bangladeshi apparel could jump from zero to an average of 12%. The incoming Ministry of Foreign Affairs must move with surgical precision to negotiate the EU's GSP+ scheme and pursue Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with major partners like Japan, South Korea, and the ASEAN bloc. Restoring "data integrity" is a prerequisite for these negotiations; the world requires transparent statistics on GDP and inflation, which hovered around 8.7% in early 2026, to rebuild investor confidence.

The humanitarian dimension of foreign policy also demands a renewed, more aggressive approach. The Rohingya crisis, now entering its ninth year in 2026, has reached a critical juncture.

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INDIA'S POSITION IN AI RACE

India's hosting of its first major AI Impact Summit 2026 marks a defining global inflection point; positioning and transitioning from dialogue, to demonstrable impact. Anchored in the principles of People, Planet and Progress, it envisions a future where AI advances humanity, fosters inclusive growth, and safeguards shared principles for larger good for the planet, which India claims as the core ethos of its culture. World leaders from 20 countries and delegates from 46 countries attended this Summit.

India's position in the global AI race is rising but not at par yet with the world's leading AI powers. It stands as a rapidly developing contender, backed by strong talent, expanding digital infrastructure and, growing national ambition. However, to truly compete with front-runners such as the United States and China, India must accelerate investment, research, and innovation at an unprecedented scale. India's greatest strength is the scale and success of its national digital platforms. Systems like, Aadhaar, UPI and DigiLocker, form a powerful foundation for deploying AI across services, governance and the economy. Few countries have comparable population-scale infrastructure, capable of supporting widespread AI integration.

India produces millions of engineers and has one of the world's largest developer communities. This gives the country a long-term talent advantage. Many global AI companies rely heavily on Indian researchers, data scientists, and engineers. Policy efforts such as, the IndiaAI Mission and the national AI strategy, created by NITI Aayog show that India recognizes AI as a core strategic priority. Plans for national compute grids, AI innovation centers, and academic-industry collaborations are steps in the right direction. AI-first startups in healthcare, fintech, agriculture, and enterprise solutions are emerging quickly.

Venture capital interest is increasing, and Indian firms are beginning to build domain-specific large language models and generative AI tools. India still depends heavily on imported GPUs and lacks large-scale AI supercomputers. High-end research output is significantly lower compared to the US and China. Funding for deep-tech R&D remains limited, and India-specific high-quality datasets are still underdeveloped. To compete globally, India must, first establish national AI supercomputing clusters, provide affordable compute access to startups, researchers, and industry, accelerate semiconductor manufacturing and chip design capabilities. Without sufficient compute, India cannot train frontier-scale AI models or support advanced research. India must significantly expand public and private R&D funding.

AI needs large, clean datasets. India should build, multilingual datasets covering its 22 official languages, public datasets in healthcare, agriculture, climate, and transportation, strong privacy frameworks to protect citizens, introduce national AI curricula in universities and post-doctoral research. India can drive productivity by deploying AI in, governance and public services, healthcare, education, agriculture, and law, manufacturing and smart cities. India should deepen cooperation with democratic nations, join AI safety and standards groups, and partner internationally for chip supply chains and research exchange.

India's direction is positive, its potential enormous, and its digital foundation unmatched. But to catch up with leading AI nations, India must scale its compute, research, and innovation with urgency. If these steps are taken decisively, India can emerge as a major global AI power over the coming decade.

DARJEELING

"TOY TRAIN AND HIMALAYAN TEA GARDENS CAPES"

Darjeeling, the former summer capital of India under the British Raj, has evolved into one of India's most sought-after hill stations. This picturesque hill destination in West Bengal is ideal for a romantic honeymoon. Darjeeling, nestled among acres of tea estates, is 2,050 meters above sea level and thus has a cool climate all year long. Darjeeling is often clubbed with destinations in Sikkim its neighboring state, making it a perfect starting point for exploring the wonders of the Eastern Himalayas.

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway established back in 1881 is conferred the title of World Heritage Status by UNESCO. The train begins its journey from the plains and rises to over 2000 meters above sea level, offering breathtaking views of the mountains as it chugs along. Darjeeling is also famous for its tea plantations with over 86 tea estates responsible for producing the worldwide famous 'Darjeeling Tea'.

The third highest peak in the world and the highest in India, the Kanchenjunga, is

visible from here, and you can enjoy a panoramic view of the peak. Some of Darjeeling's most popular attractions include monasteries, botanical gardens, a zoo, and the Darjeeling-Rangeet Valley Passenger Ropeway cable car, which is the longest Asian cable car. Tiger Hill is a fantastic spot to see the sunrise over the mountains in all its fiery glory.

The best time to visit Darjeeling is between April to June when the weather is pleasant. However, a lot of people also prefer visiting the place during the winter months from October to December. The months of July to August received heavy rainfall, a lot of roadblocks are observed in the hill station and hence visiting Darjeeling during these months is not very advisable.

PLACES TO VISIT IN DARJEELING

Darjeeling Himalayan Railway: The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway also referred to as the DHR, and lovingly called the 'Darjeeling Toy Train', is a 2 feet narrow gauge train that runs between New

Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling, in West Bengal, India. The construction of this 88-kilometre long railway line took place between 1879 and 1881, and a ride on this train route has been a coveted experience ever since. A journey in the Darjeeling Toy Train has amazing sights with pleasing mountain views and pass by villages and local shops on the way, with children merrily waving at them.

Batasia Loop: Perhaps one of the most picturesque train routes in all of Darjeeling, the Batasia Loop is a lush green toy train pathway that is meant to minimize the elevation of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. The unique design of this magnificent attraction allows the track to wrap around itself through a hilltop tunnel. One of the most enchanting aspects of the Batasia Loop is its unmatched natural beauty which is a wonderful sight to behold.

Darjeeling Ropeway: Darjeeling is renowned across the world as one of the

most picturesque hill stations, where one can witness a myriad of exquisite landscapes, from the glorious snow-capped mountains to the charming valley replete with verdant tea estates. For this reason, the Darjeeling Ropeway finds itself as a prime attraction of Darjeeling, giving its passengers an array of divine panoramic views as they travel across the magical valley.

Japanese Peace Pagoda: Located on the slopes of Jalapahar hills in Darjeeling, the Peace Pagoda, or the Japanese Peace Pagoda is one of the peace pagodas designed to establish unity, harmony and goodwill amongst people belonging to different sects of society. www.holiday.com

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