



India, Qatar aim to double annual trade in 5 years

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'US tariffs on steel sector unlikely to impact India'

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PAK EPICENTER OF TERRORISM

Pak is global epicenter of terrorism, harboring UN-listed terrorist entities: India in UN Security Council

UNITED NATIONS: India has denounced Pakistan as "a global epicenter of terrorism" and called it an irony that Islamabad claims to be at the forefront of fighting terror.

"Pakistan is a global epicenter of terrorism, harboring more than 20 UN-listed terrorist entities and providing state support to cross-border terrorism," India's Permanent Representative Parvathaneni Harish said recently at the Security Council.

"Hence it is a supreme irony when Pakistan pats itself on the back as being at the forefront of the fight against terrorism," he said.

"India," he added, "has been a victim of acts of terror perpetrated by this country through terror groups such

as Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Harkat ul Mujahidin (HuM), among dozens of others."

Responding to Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar raising Kashmir, Harish said, "In fact, it is Pakistan that is in illegal occupation of parts of Jammu and Kashmir."

He pointed out that the people of Jammu and Kashmir region again in last year's election made their adherence to India clear.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir have only last year taken part in a successful election and have voted in large numbers to choose their government," he said.

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Kash Patel moves a step closer to FBI directorship

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112 illegal Indian immigrants deported from US

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This week's question
 Will EU agree to US-Russia peace deal to end war?

Last week's result
 Will Trump attack Hamas if hostages not released by Saturday?
 YES 40% NO 60%



Prime Minister Narendra Modi exchanges greeting with Delhi CM Rekha Gupta after her swearing-in ceremony (left). Supporters attend the oath-taking ceremony of the newly elected Delhi government, at Ramlila Maidan in New Delhi. (ANI Photo/Amit Sharma & Shrikant Singh)

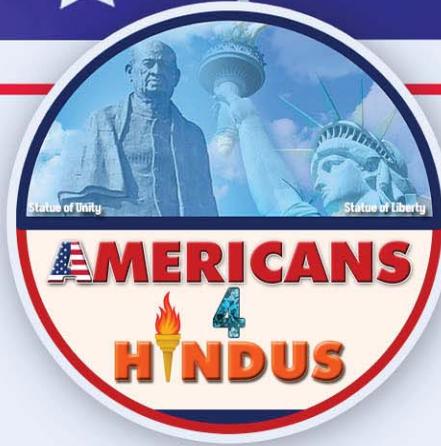
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To empower the Indian Diaspora and make their voice strong and effective in countries of their adoption. RJ Media conglomerate offers a credible, professional and complete package of news, opinion, entertainment, networking and information.

HIGHLIGHTS

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Kriti Sanon shoots for 'Tere Ishk Mein'

'Tere Ishk Mein', a spiritual sequel to superhit film Raanjhanaa, is one of the highly anticipated movies in Bollywood this year

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PAK EPICENTER OF TERRORISM

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3155 Kearney Street, Ste. 210, Fremont, CA 94538
 Tel: 510-396-9140 • Fax: 510-790-2806 • e-mail: info@indiapost.com

E-SUBSCRIPTIONS & EDITORIAL: Vidya Sethuraman: Tel: 510-491-4867 • e-mail: vidya@indiapost.com
ADVERTISEMENT: Naresh Sodhi: Tel: 510-938-8667 • e-mail: naresh@indiapost.com or nareshsodhi@gmail.com

Graphics Inquiry: E-mail: ghanshyam@indiapost.com

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901, E. South St. Unit 256,
 Anaheim CA 92805
 Riyaz Khan: **562- 881-5342**
 e-mail: riyaz@indiapost.com
 Shashi Trivedi: **562-441-5511**
 e-mail: shashi19@yahoo.com

CHICAGO

2543 W Devon Ave Chicago IL 60659
 Tel: **773-973-7394**
 e-mail: sramesh@aol.com

NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

Tel: **510-938-8667** • e-mail: nareshsodhi@gmail.com

For editorial, contact: editor@indiapost.com

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Pak is global epicenter of terrorism, harboring UN-listed terrorist entities: India in UN Security Council

UNITED NATIONS: India has denounced Pakistan as "a global epicenter of terrorism" and called it an irony that Islamabad claims to be at the forefront of fighting terror.

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"Hence it is a supreme irony when Pakistan pats itself on the back as being at the forefront of the fight against terrorism," he said.

"India," he added, "has been a victim of acts of terror perpetrated by this country through terror groups such as Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Harkat ul Mujahidin (HuM), among dozens of others."

Responding to Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar raising Kashmir, Harish said, "In fact, it is Pakistan that is in illegal occupation of parts of Jammu and Kashmir."

He pointed out that the people of Jammu and Kashmir region again in last year's election made their adherence to

India clear.

"The people of Jammu and Kashmir have only last year taken part in a successful election and have voted in large numbers to choose their government," he said.

"The choice of the people of Jammu and



Parvathaneni Harish

Kashmir was loud and clear," he said. "Democracy in Jammu and Kashmir is vibrant and strong unlike in Pakistan," he said.

He added, "Pakistan's campaigns of misinformation and disinformation, of lies and falsehoods, do not change facts on the ground."

"As is Pakistan's practice of bringing up Kashmir during any meeting at the UN

claimed that the people of Pakistan had been denied their right to self-determination and the Security Council has a responsibility to ensure that its resolutions are implemented. But the Security Council resolution he was alluding to, No. 47 adopted on April 21, 1948, requires the Pakistani government to withdraw "tribesmen" and Pakistani nationals who entered Jammu and Kashmir and "to prevent any intrusion into the State of such elements and any furnishing of material aid to those fighting in the State".

Dar said that Pakistan "has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism" and listed several terrorist groups -- Daesh, Al-Qaeda, TTP, ETIM, IMU, and emerging right-wing extremist groups -- that "must be opposed with equal determination". Left out of the list was the JeM, which attacked India's Parliament in 2001; the HuM, which hijacked an Indian airplane, and the Lashkar-e-Taiba, which carried out a terror campaign against Mumbai in 2008, killing about 170 people. *IANS*

"They have a lot more money": Trump questions USD 21 million fund for voter turnout in India

WASHINGTON DC: Following the US Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) decision to cancel USD 21 million fund marked for 'Voter Turnout in India', President Donald Trump said that India, with its growing economy and high taxation rates, did not need such financial support.

While he acknowledged his respect for India and its Prime Minister, Trump criticized the idea of funding voter turnout initiatives in the country.

While signing executive orders at Mar-a-Lago, this week, Trump said, "Why are we giving USD 21 million to India? They have a lot more money. They are one of the highest taxing countries in the world in terms of us; we can hardly get in there because their tariffs are so high. I have a lot of respect for India and their Prime Minister, but giving USD 21 million for voter turnout?"

On February 16, DOGE posted a list of cancelled US taxpayer-funded initiatives with a mention of USD 21 million earmarked for "voter turnout in India."

The DOGE, led by Elon Musk announced cancelling a USD 22 million fund intended for "voter turnout in India".

In a post on X, DOGE listed the number of spendings by the US taxpayer that have been cancelled, including "USD 21M for voter turnout in India."

"US taxpayer dollars were going to be



Donald Trump

spent on the following items, all of which have been cancelled," the Musk-led department announced.

Bhartiya Janta Party's Amit Malviya took to his X to react to the announcement. "\$21M for voter turnout? This definitely is

external interference in India's electoral process. Who gains from this? Not the ruling party for sure!" his post read.

Other funding cancelled by the US department included USD 10 million for "Mozambique voluntary medical male circumcision."

"USD 486M to the 'Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening,' including USD 22M for an 'inclusive and participatory political process' in Moldova and USD 21M for voter turnout in India," DOGE said.

A USD 29 million intended for "strengthening the political landscape in Bangladesh" and a USD 39 million for "fiscal federalism" and "biodiversity conservation" in Nepal was also cancelled.

Similarly, USD 1.5 million for "voter confidence" in Liberia, USD 14 million for "social cohesion" in Mali, USD 2.5 million for "inclusive democracies in Southern Africa," and USD 47 million for "improving learning outcomes in Asia" were also cancelled by DOGE. *ANI*

'Jammu and Kashmir will always be integral part of India'

NEW YORK: India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, reaffirmed that Jammu and Kashmir is and will always remain an integral part of India and strongly condemned Pakistan's misinformation campaigns.

He also emphasised the democratic choice made by the people of Jammu and Kashmir in the legislative assembly elections after Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar raised the Kashmir issue at the UNSC.

While delivering India's statement at the Open Debate in the United Nations Security Council on Practicing Multilateralism, Reforming and Improving Global Governance, Harish said, "The deputy PM and Foreign Minister of Pakistan have referred to an integral and inalienable part of India, the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir in his remarks. I would like to reaffirm that the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir has been, is, and will always be, an integral and inalienable part of India." *ANI*

Sam Pitroda's statement on China an insult to Galwan martyrs: Sudhanshu Trivedi

NEW DELHI: Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi termed the statement of the Indian Overseas Congress Chief, Sam Pitroda on China as an insult to the martyrs of Galwan.

In an exclusive interview with IANS, Pitroda said India needs to change its mindset and give up the notion that China is an enemy country.

Trivedi said that India is continuously progressing under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and added: "But, some forces are trying to influence it. The kind of statement that Indian Overseas Congress President Sam Pitroda has given regarding China today has made it clear that the Congress party's agreement with China has been expressed in broad daylight."

The senior BJP leader said, "It is a matter of concern that the kind of statement that Sam Pitroda has made is a very deep attack on India's identity, diplomacy and sovereignty of India. He (Pitroda) has said that there is no dispute of any kind with China, that is, India itself is taking an aggressive posture. The Government of India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, wants good and cordial relations with every country of the world. But, national self-respect, security, and strength are paramount for us."

Trivedi added: "Before Pitroda's comments today, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had also given such statements many times. Rahul Gandhi had said during a foreign tour that China has done a good job in reducing unemployment."

He called Pitroda's statement an insult to the martyrs of Galwan. "Is this not an insult to the martyrs of Galwan? Our soldiers were martyred in Galwan. But, despite this,

if the Congress Overseas Chief speaks such language, then it is condemnable. This is a grave insult to the sacrifice of the Indian Army," the Rajya Sabha MP asked.

Speaking to IANS, Pitroda said that India's approach has been confrontational from the beginning. "Our attitude is that of confrontation from day one, and that attitude creates enemies, and that creates certain support in the country. I think we need to change that pattern to assume



Sam Pitroda

Sudhanshu Trivedi

that China is the enemy from day one. It is not just to China, but to everyone..."

"I don't know what is the threat from China. I think this issue is often blown out of proportion because the US has the habit of defining an enemy," he said.

The Congress leader said, "I think the time has come for all of us to learn, increase communication, collaborate, operate and co-create and not have this command and control mindset. China is around... China is growing.. you know you got to recognize that and respect that ..." IANS

From Sheikh to ISI: Gaurav Gogoi, wife's alleged foreign connections spark further controversy

NEW DELHI: The controversy surrounding Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi's wife Elizabeth's alleged connections to Pakistani intelligence agency ISI is intensifying as Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and BJP leaders continue to raise concerns.

In a series of posts on X, Sarma has escalated his attacks on Gogoi, accusing him of associations that could undermine national security. The accusations revolve around Elizabeth Colburn, a British national, and her extensive background working with entities allegedly linked to Pakistani agencies. Sarma claims that Elizabeth, despite her marriage to Gogoi, retained her UK citizenship for 12 years and worked closely with individuals tied to ISI.

The BJP's narrative includes several key allegations. Elizabeth's non-Indian citizenship: Sarma raised seri-



ous questions about why Elizabeth, after 12 years of marriage to an Indian national, has not yet adopted Indian citizenship.

Ties to Pakistani officials: It is alleged that Elizabeth worked for LEAD Pakistan, an organization allegedly connected to Pakistani government interests, including those of the military and intelligence services. Sarma has pointed to her long stay in Islamabad and close working relationship with Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, a figure reportedly associated with Pakistan's planning commission and linked to the ISI.

Gaurav Gogoi's engagement with Pakistan High Commission: The BJP is also questioning Gogoi's visit to the Pakistan High Commission in 2015, despite India's protests over Pakistan's interference in internal matters. Sarma claims that at the time, Gogoi was a first-term MP with no official foreign policy credentials. IANS

"Russia wants to stop barbarianism... It's senseless war": US President Donald Trump

WASHINGTON DC: Following the talks between the United States and Russia on ending the war in Ukraine, President Donald Trump expressed his belief that Russia wants to put an end to the conflict, citing the toll the war has taken on soldiers, including Ukrainians, Russians, as well as North Koreans.

He called the war "senseless" and emphasised that it should never have occurred, asserting that it would not have happened under his leadership.

On being asked about the talks between US officials and Russian representatives over ending war, Trump said that he is "much more confident" and "the talks were very good."

While signing executive orders at Mar-a-Lago Trump said, "Russia wants to do something. They want to stop the barbarianism that's going on over there. Soldiers are being killed by thousands on a weekly basis. Apart from Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, a lot of Koreans have been killed."

Trump added, "We want to end it. It's a senseless war. It should have never happened; it would have never happened if I were President."

Notably, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov held talks with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and other officials, focusing on a broad range of issues, including the situation in Ukraine, with both sides ex-

pressing a commitment to resolving the conflict and addressing its root causes.

After more than four hours of talks in Saudi Arabia, the US and Russia agreed on four key principles, Rubio said. These include appointing a high-level team to help "negotiate and work through the end of the conflict in Ukraine" in a way that's "acceptable to all the parties engaged," CNN reported.

However, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who was not part of the discussions, stated that Ukraine would not "give in to Russia's ultimatums" and emphasised that he would refuse to sign any agreement made without Ukraine's participation.

In a post on X, the Russian Foreign Ministry wrote, "FM Sergey #Lavrov and Presidential Aide Yuri #Ushakov held talks with Secretary of State @SecRubio, National Security Adviser @michaelgwaltz, and US Special Envoy to the Middle East @SteveWitkoff. The Sides agreed to establish #RussiaUS dialogue." ANI

'Russia wants to do something. They want to stop the barbarianism that's going on over there. Soldiers are being killed by thousands on a weekly basis. Apart from Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, a lot of Koreans have been killed'

India, Qatar aim to double annual trade in five years from existing USD 14 billion



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, hold delegation-level talks, at Hyderabad House in New Delhi. (ANI Photo)

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral talks with Qatar Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani on 18 February, with the two leaders discussing trade, investment and energy and recalling historic trade linkages and deep-rooted people-to-people ties between the two countries.

PM Modi appreciated the Amir of Qatar for bringing a large delegation of top Qatari business for business on this visit.

India and Qatar have also signed an agreement to elevate the bilateral relationship to a strategic partnership.

Addressing a special briefing, Secretary (CPV & OIA) in the Ministry of External Affairs, Arun Kumar Chatterjee, said the two sides have to set a target to double the bilateral trade in the next five years.

He said Qatar Amir is accompanied by a high-level delegation comprising minis-

ters, senior officials and business leaders.

"Amir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani last visited India in March 2015. When PM Modi paid his second visit in February 2024, he had invited His Highness Amir to pay a state visit to India....this morning, His Highness Amir was received by President of India Droupadi Murmu and PM Modi at Rashtrapati Bhavan, where he was accorded a ceremonial welcome. President will meet His Highness Amir in the evening today and also host a banquet reception in honor of Amir and accompanies delegation...PM Modi held bilateral talks with His Highness Amir at Hyderabad House. Both leaders recalled the historic trade linkages, deep-rooted people-to-people ties and robust bilateral relations between both countries," Chatterjee said.

"To elevate the relationship to a strategic partnership, India and Qatar have signed an agreement in this regard today. Trade, investment and energy were among the major topics of discussion between the two leaders today. The trade today between India and Qatar is about USD 14 billion annually. Both sides have agreed to set a target to double this in the next 5 years," he added.

The senior MEA official said that Qatar

is also an important partner for investments in India.

Qatar's sovereign wealth fund, Qatar Investment Authority currently has about USD 1.5 billion FDI in India...both leaders today identified a number of areas in which Qatar Investment Authority can increase investments in India...Prime Minister appreciated His Highness Qatar for bringing a large dedication of top Qatari business for business on this visit. ANI

EAM Jaishankar to visit South Africa for G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar will visit South Africa to participate in the Group of 20 (G20) Foreign Ministers' Meeting from February 20-21, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

As per the Ministry of External Affairs, the EAM will visit Johannesburg at the invitation of South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola.

The EAM's participation in the G20 meet will further strengthen India's engagement with the G20 countries and bolster the voice of the Global South in this important forum, the MEA noted.

The External Affairs Minister is also expected to hold a few bilateral meetings on the margins of the Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Notably, South Africa assumed the G20 Presidency from December 1, 2024,

through to November 2025.

The G20 comprises 19 countries including Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkiye, United Kingdom, and United States, in addition to two blocs; European Union and the African Union.

The G20 members include the world's major economies, representing 85 percent of global Gross Domestic Product, over 75 percent of international trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

The G20 Presidency rotates annually among the members and is selected from a different regional grouping of countries. The 19 member countries are therefore divided into five groups comprising a maximum of four countries each. ANI

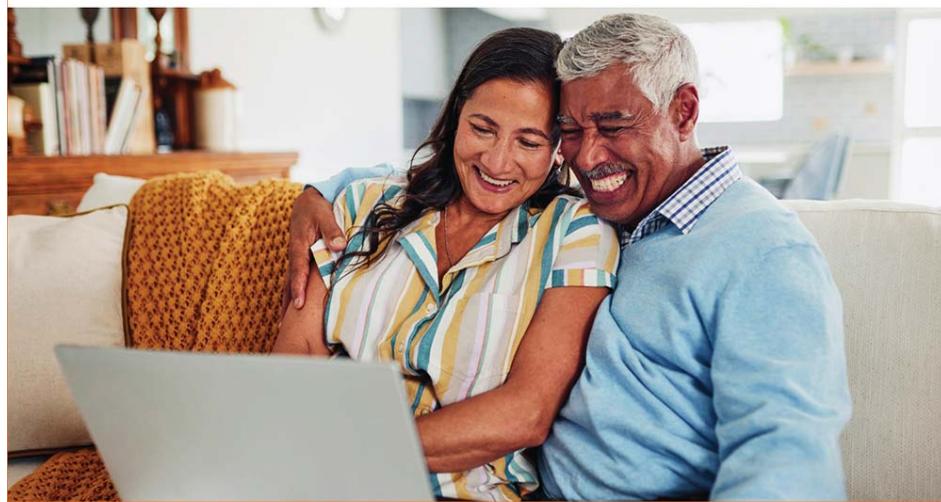
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Nag Jaiswal an illustrious visionary leader for Naperville City Council

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Nag Jaiswal - a frontline community/business leader of eminence - is placing his distinguished record of public service before the constituents in his bid to be the City Councilman for the City of Naperville. Equipped with a game-changing vision, Nag Jaiswal is fiercely committed to ushering sweeping reforms and far-reaching transformational change with his bold roadmap for Naperville by ushering profound fundamental changes to the city and by instituting measures that seeks to make the City of Naperville safer for the families, bring fiscal responsibility, reduced tax burden, governmental transparency, incorporating technology to bring about radical efficiencies by identifying and remove redundancies, opening floodgates of business opportunities and fostering extensive community development to make the City of Naperville a world class city in the Midwest.

Details on page 10

Kash Patel moves a step closer to FBI directorship

WASHINGTON: Kash Patel moved a step closer to becoming the first Indian American to head the FBI with the US senate narrowly voting on a procedural measure to advance his nomination for a full vote of confirmation.

The US Senate, which must confirm the nomination, voted 48-45 along party lines to open debate on the nominee, starting the countdown for 30 hours of discussion before Patel is expected to receive final approval soon.

Patel, who is 44 years old, has been one of the most controversial of those named by President Donald Trump to his cabinet and administration. The others - Director of National Intelligence, Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr.

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COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

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www.indiapost.com

February 21, 2025

US: India showcased as theme country at 27th Annual New Year celebration of Asia Pacific Cultural Center



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Indiaspora statement on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump meetings

WASHINGTON, D.C.: Indiaspora, a leading nonprofit organization is delighted to see the continued strong engagement at the highest levels between the United States and India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit marks one of the earliest and most prominent diplomatic engagements of President Trump's second term. The significance of this timing-Prime Minister Modi being just the fourth world leader to meet with President Trump within three weeks of his inauguration-demonstrates the mutual respect and importance both nations place on their relationship.

The strength of U.S.-India relations is underscored by its broad bipartisan support in both countries. Indiaspora is particularly encouraged to see numerous Indian Americans taking on prominent roles in the new Trump administration, which reflects the diaspora's bipartisan nature and commitment to public service across party lines.

The bond between Prime Minister Modi and President Trump grew strong during President Trump's first term as evidenced by their joint appearances at major public gatherings



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with U.S. President Donald Trump, at The White House in Washington, DC (ANI Photo)

in Houston and Ahmedabad. While challenging topics such as trade, tariffs, and immigration policies will necessitate ongoing discussions, we welcome constructive dialogue on these important issues. Moreover, there is significant potential for collaboration on global challenges.

According to Indiaspora Founder and Chairman MR

Rangaswami, "Indiaspora welcomes the commitment by Prime Minister Modi and President Trump to prioritize the US-India relationship, which is reinforced by the strong personal rapport between these leaders and the enduring partnership between the two great democracies. We are confident that the global Indian diaspora will con-

tinue to serve as a vital bridge between these nations, fostering deeper collaboration that enhances prosperity, innovation, security, and well-being for both American and Indian citizens."

Indiaspora Executive Director, Sanjeev Joshipura, adds, "The strong bipartisan consensus supporting Indo-U.S. relations creates a unique opportunity for both nations to demonstrate global leadership and advance their national interests. It is important for both leaders to continue their commitment to fostering dialogue to ensure that both nations can attain their economic, political and security goals.

While India and the United States navigate complex bilateral challenges-as is natural in any significant partnership- the relationship is broad and mature enough to take into stride differing opinions on certain topics."

(About Indiaspora: Indiaspora (www.indiaspora.org) is a nonprofit community of powerful global Indian leaders from diverse backgrounds and professions who are committed to inspiring the diaspora to be a force for positive impact by providing a platform to collaborate, engage, and catalyze social change.)

Annual meet of Sanatans Sewa Foundation

India Post News Service

NEW DELHI: The Shree Sanatan Sewa Foundation successfully hosted its 3rd summit in Delhi, gathering prominent Hindu leaders, business owners, advocates, and community figures to support its initiatives.

The event began with traditional Hindu rituals such as Diya lighting, chanting slokas, and honoring dignitaries.

Notable attendees included

Sudarshan TV owner Suresh Chavhanke, Dasna Mandir priest Swami Yati Narsinghananda, Karni Sena President Suraj Pal, Founder of Dharmansh Foundation Dr. Omendra Ratnu, founder of Jhatka authority Ravi Ranjan Singh, the Supreme court advocate and founder of Nyay Sewa Dal Awdhesh Sharma, founder of Hindu force Azad Vinod, BJP spokesman Khemchand Shama, Advocate and global coordinator

of Sanatan ecosystem BrajGupt Arya, Retired IPS and former UN official Rahul Sur, producer Kanu Preeya, Pavaneshwer Dutt, Retired army officer Pramod Pandey, and many other influential leaders and media

Hemant Patel presented the Sanatan Ecosystem project, which offers practical solutions for Hindus, such as protecting women from fake profiles, supporting businesses, and fostering

community connections. The ecosystem also includes a matrimonial service (Vivaah) and promotes ethical food consumption. Its goal is to safeguard resources within the community and tackle external challenges.

Leaders encouraged all Hindus to register for the project. They also provided valuable feedback to improve it. The main call is to unite Hindus in this fashion.

Global Nonprofit DSNDP volunteers from California participate in cleanliness drive

On Feb 08th, 2025, California State residents joined hands as dedicated volunteers of the global non-profit organization Dr. Shri. Nanasahab Dharmadhikari Pratishthan (DSNDP), undertaking an Adopt-A-Road Cleanup Drive in collaboration with the Public Works Department Contra Costa County at the Livorna Road, Alamo, California 94507.

This cleanliness drive by DSNDP drew 11 volunteers at Contra Costa County who collected 5 big size bags of trash on Livorna road resulting in collection of around 100 pounds of waste.

In alignment with the motto "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (The world is one family), DSNDP aims to foster a brighter future by advocating for cleanliness drives in collaboration with the US government by undertaking nationwide cleanliness drives since July 2022. These activities are executed under the guidance of the founders of the organization Dr. Shri Appasaheb Dharmadhikari and Dr. Shri Sachindada Dharmadhikari.

Earlier in California, the organization also carried out other cleanliness activities such as Adopt-a-Ramp, Adopt-a-Highway, Adopt-a-Beach etc. across 10 cities involving a total of 342 volunteers who



DSNDP continues to collaborate with 18 states and 74 cities across the United States for nationwide cleanliness drives including 24 different programs such as Adopt-Highway/Park/Beach/ Street/ River etc. During these cleanliness drives, DSNDP has successfully engaged 2537 volunteers, actively collecting 40590 pounds of trash, resulting in significant cost savings for the government. The or-

The organization is also involved in tree plantation across 15 states and 33 cities within the US. DSNDP is also involved in health initiatives such as the Women's Cancer Awareness Conference successfully hosted in February 2023 and blood/plasma donation drives in Canada and the

United States in recent years. DSNDP also recently organized a Mega Cleanliness Drive and Tree Conservation Event across 21 locations simultaneously to celebrate Earth Day 2024.

For more information, please visit <https://www.dsndp.com>.



worked for around 679 volunteer hours, collected 438 bags of waste resulting in approx. 6570 pounds of trash.

Within the North America continent,

organization has received accolades from various state and county governments in the form of 63 certificates and 84 signboards within the nation.

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HOROSCOPE & TAROT READINGS

Nag Jaiswal an illustrious visionary leader for Naperville City Council

India Post News Service

CHICAGO: Nag Jaiswal - a frontline community/business leader of eminence - is placing his distinguished record of public service before the constituents in his bid to be the City Councilman for the City of Naperville. Equipped with a game-changing vision, Nag Jaiswal is fiercely committed to ushering sweeping reforms



Nag Jaiswal

and far-reaching transformational change with his bold roadmap for Naperville by ushering profound fundamental changes to the city and by instituting measures that seeks to make the City of Naperville safer for the families, bring fiscal responsibility, reduced tax burden, governmental transparency, incorporating technology to bring about radical efficiencies by identifying and remove redundancies, opening floodgates of business opportunities and fostering extensive community development to make the City of Naperville a world class city in the Midwest.

As a City Council member, Nag Jaiswal will commit every awakening hour in building a vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous future for Naperville. With a record of accomplishment of innovation, bridge-building, and fiscal responsibility, he will work tirelessly to preserve the best of Naperville while paving the way for exciting new opportunities.

Commitment to Community and Service

A long-time resident of Naperville since 2003, Nag Jaiswal has spent more than

two decades serving and uplifting the community. His involvement with organizations such as the Rotary Club, Naperville Human Rights and Fair Housing Commission, the Illinois Indian American Advisory Council, ISKCON Naperville, Akshayapatra Foundation and Arya Samaj Chicago reflects his dedication to creating an inclusive and thriving community. Together with his wife, Sheela, Nag also founded the Salome Foundation, a non-profit focused on advancing education initiatives for the community.

Proven Business Expertise

With over 30 years of experience as a digital transformation expert, Nag has advised Fortune 200 companies on strategic initiatives. As a Senior Program Architect at Salesforce, he specializes in helping businesses embrace innovation and navigate change efficiently. This extensive experience has equipped Nag with the financial acumen and leadership skills needed to audit city budgets and ensure taxpayer dollars are used effectively.

A Vision for Sustainability and Growth

Nag Jaiswal envisions a Naperville that leads the Midwest in sustainable development. He is committed to promoting renewable energy initiatives and encouraging energy-efficient construction across the township. By balancing moderate, budget-conscious growth with the preservation of Naperville's unique character, Nag aims to maintain affordability for families and strengthen the local economy.

Enhancing Public Safety

Public safety is a top priority for Nag. He advocates for increasing police presence and expanding community policing programs to ensure every Naperville resident feels safe and secure. By fostering collaboration between local law enforcement and community members, Nag hopes to build trust and enhance neighborhood safety.

Transparency and Fiscal Responsibility

As a Councilman, Nag will ensure that all financial decisions are made with full transparency and community input. His leadership will prioritize open communication with residents, allowing for greater public engagement in budget approvals, tax levies, and community funding decisions.

Why Nag Jaiswal is the Best Choice for Naperville City Council

Nag Jaiswal's combination of business acumen, community involvement, and strategic vision makes him the ideal candidate for Naperville City Council. He is committed to fostering a prosperous, safe, and sustainable future for all residents.

As a City Council member, Nag Jaiswal will commit every awakening hour in building a vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous future for Naperville. With a record of accomplishment of innovation, bridge-building, and fiscal responsibility, he will work tirelessly to preserve the best of Naperville while paving the way for exciting new opportunities

With Nag on the City Council, Naperville can look forward to greater accountability, thoughtful growth, and enhanced community well-being.

Paul Leong, current Naperville City Council Member endorsed Nag Jaiswal for his integrity, leadership and business acuity.

men. Dr. Gopal Lalimalani, three-time Mayor of Oakbrook endorsed Nag Jaiswal for his dynamism and commitment to community.

Ms. Julie Bercowicz, Will County Board Member endorsed Nag Jaiswal for his commitment to community service, willingness to work across the board and his broad industry experience.

Sunil Shah Chairman and Founding President of Federation of Indian Associations (FIA)-Chicago IL largest organization in Midwest has strongly supported Nag Jaiswal as an ideal candidate for Naperville City Council. Among other leading community/business leaders supporting the

candidacy of Nag Jaiswal include Dr. Bharat Barai, Dr. Sreenivas Reddy, Ajeet Singh, Keerthi Kumar Ravoori, Vinesh Virani, Gary Vician, Tom Miers, Mike Wiesnewski, Randy Haap, Shobha Rani Doraiswamy, Satish Dodepogu, Karthick Giri and Jim Maarter.

Maha Kumbh 2025: Grandeur of world's largest spiritual gathering highlighted in Australia

CANBERRA: As millions continue to attend the confluence of faith, culture, and spirituality in the ongoing Maha Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj, the High Commission of India in Australia's capital Canberra organized an event last week, to underscore the significance of the world's biggest religious congregation.

'Sacred Waters: Spirits and Scale of Mahakumbh 2025' organized by the Indian High Commission in partnership with the Hindu Council of Australia at the Innovations Lecture Theatre in Canberra featured profound discussion on faith, tradition, and the grandeur of the world's largest spiritual gathering.

High Commissioner of India in Australia Gopal Baglay, Hemanshu Pota from the University of New South Wales and Dalbir Ahlawat of Macquarie University were the key speakers on the occasion.

Hundreds of people from Australia, particularly people of Indian origin, have at-

tended the once-in-a-generation spiritual festival as Prayagraj continues to draw people from across the globe, including scholars, travellers, and spiritual devotees.

The Indian-Australian community is the second-largest and fastest-growing diaspora that forms a vital living bridge between both nations. The cultural diplomacy program focuses on enhancing public opinion and cross-cultural understanding of Australia and India through people-to-people ties, arts, and culture.

India-Australia relationship has seen immense progress over the last decade under the government headed by Prime Minister Modi.

Recognizing the strength of growing people-to-people linkages which continue to enrich the bilateral ties, PM Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese have welcomed the significant contribution of Australians of Indian heritage and agreed to further strengthen the 'living bridge'. IANS

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Kash Patel moves a step closer to FBI directorship

WASHINGTON: Kash Patel moved a step closer to becoming the first Indian American to head the FBI with the US senate narrowly voting on a procedural mea-



Kash Patel

sure to advance his nomination for a full vote of confirmation.

The US Senate, which must confirm the nomination, voted 48-45 along party lines to open debate on the nominee, starting the countdown for 30 hours of discussion before Patel is expected to receive final approval soon.

Patel, who is 44 years old, has been one of the most controversial of those named by President Donald Trump to his cabinet and administration. The others - Director of National Intelligence, Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth were confirmed in party-line voting that

is also expected to put Patel over the finish line as well.

Republican senators who had seemed opposed to some of these controversial nominees had all fallen in line with the president and confirmed every one of his nominees except Matt Getz, who was nominated to head the justice department

sexual relations with minors.

Patel is a former public defender who has seen a meteoric rise in the power structure of Washington DC in recent years, rising up to be the chief of staff at the department of defense and deputy director of national intelligence in President Trump's first term. Trump has now been

The US Senate, which must confirm the nomination, voted 48-45 along party lines to open debate on the nominee, starting the countdown for 30 hours of discussion before Patel is expected to receive final approval soon

Nita Ambani calls youth, diaspora as "strength" of India

BOSTON: Nita Ambani, Founder and Chairperson of the Reliance Foundation delivered the keynote address at the Harvard India Conference on Indian Business, Policy & Culture, where she said that the strength of India lies in its large youth population and the diaspora. She called the adoption of technologies such as artificial intelligence, green energy, and genomics as a great opportunity for the country. The Reliance Chairperson also shared stories from her life about the importance of resources.

When asked to give a SWOT (Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat) analysis of India, the Reliance Foundation Chairperson said, "So I think our strength is our youth, 50% of our population is under the age of 30, and our Indian diaspora. I think that's our strength."

Speaking about the weakness, she said, "I think the 200. Or 300 million people whose life we need to change for lying at the bottom and I think that should be our priority and we should be able to sort this out in the next decade."

She noted that the greatest opportunity for the country is the adoption of technology at scale. "Whether it is artificial intelligence, green energy, genomics, I think

that's what India will do".

"I speak as a mother here. I think we need peace. We need peace in the world. Only when there is peace will countries grow and prosper, and so that holds true for even India. So I think I think wars do no good. And I would think that is a threat", Nita Ambani said while highlighting about the threat aspect.

Sharing an incident from her life when after getting married she got a gold chain for herself but eventually had to return it so that the Reliance employees could be paid, Nita Ambani said, "I bought this gold chain and brought it home. And show it to Mukesh. Mush looked at me and said, Nita, I don't think we can afford it. Reliance is going through really tough times. And we need to pay all our employees first. So It would be nice if you can return this gold chain...I did

that without questioning Mukesh. And I told him, I'm sure good times will come, and you will turn around the situation, and he did."

Nita Ambani said that this incident taught her the lesson that "Adversity should make you a better person and not a bitter person" and she called it a great learning for herself. ANI



Nita Ambani

as attorney general.

He was forced to withdraw his nomination when it became clear several Republican senators remained unconvinced of his fitness for the job in the light of a barrage of negative news reports about his

nominated to head the FBI, an agency that investigated Trump for alleged mishandling of classified documents after leaving office in 2021 and for trying to overturn the 2020 election defeat to President Joe Biden. IANS

What are your rights?

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

President Donald Trump's mass deportation project is ramping up, with federal deportation efforts now including large-scale raids across sanctuary cities, including New York City. The crackdown targeted undocumented immigrants with criminal records. More than 200,000 people believed to be undocumented have been arrested over the past 30 days, according to data from Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The majority countries of origin were South and Central America, but ICE data shows a significant number of arrests of Indians, Chinese, and Russians. Speakers at the EMS briefing discussed how immigrants can protect themselves when ICE agents show up at homes, workplaces, and even schools.

According to statistics, the number of illegal immigrants arrested in major cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York has increased significantly in recent months. Even in areas that call themselves "sanctuary cities," federal immigration law enforcement officers are unable to completely prevent raids. Immigrant rights organizations point out that this policy not only affects new immigrants crossing the border, but also puts some immigrant families who have integrated into the local community and have

stable jobs at risk of separation.

Viridiana Carrizales, Founder, ImmSchools said there are 5.5 million children born in the United States to at least one undocumented parent. U.S. law stipulates that regardless of the child's identity or the identity of his or her parents, they all have equal access to pre-K12 education, and schools are not allowed to ask about the identity of children and parents when admitting students. When ICE and other law enforcement officers are at school, they are not allowed to ask about the identities of children and parents without permission.

Amanda Alvarado-Ford, Deputy Directing Attorney, Immigration Institute of the Bay Area reminded undocumented immigrants that they have basic legal protections regardless of their status. When questioned by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or the Department of Homeland Security, any individual has the right to remain silent and not answer questions about their immigration status or residency status. Law enforcement officers must have a valid search warrant to enter a private residence. For undocumented immigrants who have lived in the United States for more than two years, it is recommended to retain important documents including water and electricity bills, bank records, rental contracts, etc., for use in legal defense when necessary.

Mandala hosts 10th Anniversary celebration

India Post News Service

Mandala South Asian Performing Arts celebrates 10 years of connecting audiences and students with the vibrancy, flavors, and colors of the performing arts traditions of South Asia with "Where Tradition Meets Tomorrow," an immersive evening for the five senses, on Thursday, April 10 at 6 p.m.

The evening will honor tradition and innovation in South Asian performing arts that strive to unite culture, community, and creativity. Performances will take place throughout the venue, with appetizers and drinks available as guests make their way through the event space. The evening will showcase dance that combines jazz, hip-hop, and Bharatanatyam, as well as live folk and classical music. Performers will include past collaborators-including Ashwaty Chennat, Shalaka Kulkarni, and Kinnari Vora and artists new to Mandala, including this spring's artist-in-residence, multi-genre dancer-choreographer Amber Mehta, who grew up and studied dance in the Chicago area. Event co-chairs are Mila Beryozkin and Shalini Sawhney.

"I am proud of the evolution of Mandala and all we have accomplished," said Founder and Artistic Director Pranita Nayar. "Our performances and education programs continue to celebrate classical South Asian dance and music while incorporating more contemporary elements as we welcome the next generation. I'm grateful to our audiences, patrons, and community for helping to make our growth and success possible. We look forward to our next 10 years of uniting culture, community, and creativity."

Mandala's 10th anniversary year also includes a recital choreographed by Mehta on May 31 at Visceral Dance



Center, 3121 North Rockwell Street in Chicago; the 7th annual Mandala Makers Festival this summer; and community performances in the fall, including an event commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Immigration

Mandala South Asian Performing Arts, founded by Artistic Director Pranita Nayar, has earned major support from the Joyce Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. From classical to contemporary, Mandala connects audiences and students with the vibrancy of the

performing arts traditions of South Asia. Mandala offers powerful engagement with specialized artists and educators who represent diverse ethnic, geographical, linguistic, cultural, and gender identities. Mandala South Asian Performing Arts is supported by the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation, Chicago Community Trust, Illinois Arts Council Agency, and The Field Foundation of Illinois. Visit mandalaarts.org for more information.

US: India showcased as theme country at 27th Annual New Year celebration of Asia Pacific Cultural Center

WASHINGTON: India was showcased as the theme Country for the first time at Asia Pacific Cultural Center 27th New Year Celebrations at Tacoma Dome, the Consulate General of India in Seattle noted.

This was for the first time in its nearly two decades plus of operations in Washington State that APCC showcased INDIA as the Theme Country.

In an official statement by the Indian consulate it was said, "The 27th Annual New Year celebration of the Asia Pacific Cultural Center (APCC) held at the prestigious Tacoma Dome, showcased for the first time ever, India as the theme country, displaying its rich cultural heritage and vibrant art forms."

The celebration began with a traditional Indian prayer invocation and was attended by approximately fifty elected leaders from across the State of Washington, including US Congress Representatives Marilyn Strickland and Emily Randall, Washington State Lieutenant Governor Denny Heck, State House Speaker Laurie Jinkins, as well as numerous state legislators and senators. Consul General of India in Seattle felicitated each of the elected officials with Indian tri-color stoles. Video messages from Washington Governor Bob Ferguson, and US Senator Maria Cantwell and US Congresswoman Pramila Jaypal were also read out at the

inaugural ceremony, the Indian Consulate observed.

Since India was the theme country, celebrations featured a curated selection of traditional Indian dance performances from several different states of India, including

Durkan, a Seattle based photographer during his recent visit to India.

As per the Indian Consulate, founded in 1996, APCC has been representing nearly 47 different countries and



Bharata Natyam, Kuchipudi, Bhangra, Garba, Odissi, and Silambam, the Tamil Martial Art dance.

A photo exhibition with the theme "India through Tim's Eyes", was also presented, which featured leading Indian iconic tourist sites that were photographed by Tim

cultures of Asia and Pacific, and organizing a wide range of programs and activities to promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding of the history, art, culture, and heritage of the Asia Pacific community in Washington State. ANI

Know the Health Benefits of Ramphal

MADHUMATI TYAGI AND SUNIL KUMAR D.

Ramphal, also known as *Annona reticulata* (bullock's heart) is a tropical fruit native to South America and is cultivated in various regions of Bharat. It belongs to the Annonaceae family, as it is close relative, the custard apple. It grows on evergreen trees in warm, tropical climates, requiring well-drained soil and plenty of sunlight to thrive. Ramphal is typically available during the summer months in tropical regions. The Ramphal fruit is typically large, with slightly pink, spiky outer skin that resembles a heart or a bullock's heart. It is sweet, and has a custard-like taste with hints of banana,

Nutritional Value of Ramphal

Here is the nutritional value of Ramphal per 100 grams:

Nutrient	Amount
Calories	20
Protein	1.5 grams
Fat	0.2 grams
Carbohydrates	3.9 grams
Fiber	1.6 grams
Vitamin C	25 mg
Vitamin A	2500 IU
Calcium	100 mg
Iron	1.5 mg
Potassium	275 mg



pineapple, and mango, making it a delightful treat for fruit fans. The creamy flesh of the Ramphal is often eaten fresh, scooped out with a spoon. It can also be used in smoothies, and desserts, or incorporated into fruit salads for a tropical twist.

Ramphal is rich in vitamins, particularly vitamin C and B-complex vitamins, as well as minerals like potassium and magnesium. Consuming Ramphal may improve digestion, strengthen immunity, and enhance cardiovascu-

lar health due to its fiber and antioxidant content. Ramphal exhibits diverse phytochemistry and pharmacological properties. In addition, this fruit offers potential health benefits attributed to its bioactive compounds.

Ramphal is a cherished fruit in regions where it grows abundantly, prized for its delicious flavor and potential health-promoting properties.

What are the health benefits of Ramphal?

Its unique flavor and fragrance make it a popular choice in various culinary applications. Apart from its delicious taste, Ramphal benefits offer numerous health benefits due to its rich nutritional profile:

- **Rich in antioxidants:** Ramphal is rich in antioxidants and packed with vitamin C and beta-carotene, which help neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as cancer and heart disease.
- **Boosts immunity:** The high vitamin C, A, and B content in Ramphal supports a healthy immune system by stimulating the production of white blood cells, which are essential for fighting off infections, illnesses, decreases and inflammation in the body. Ramphal can be beneficial for those who constantly struggling with cold and cough in winter due to the change in the season.
- **Supports digestive health:** Ramphal contains dietary fiber, which aids in digestion by promoting regular bowel movements, preventing constipation, and supporting overall gut health.
- **Promotes heart health:** Ramphal is low in saturated fat and cholesterol while being rich in potassium, which helps regulate blood pressure levels, reducing the risk of hypertension and cardiovascular diseases. The presence of Vitamin B6 in Ramphal helps to manage fat deposited near the heart, and prevent heart-related issues. It is also great for people with fatty liver. So, include more and more fruits in your diet.

• **Improves vision:** Ramphal is a good source of vitamin A, essential for maintaining healthy eyesight. Vitamin A helps protect the eyes from age-related macular degeneration and night blindness.

• **Regulates blood sugar levels:** The fiber content in Ramphal helps slow down the absorption of sugar in the bloodstream, preventing spikes in blood sugar levels and reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes. It has minerals that makes it simply right for pre-diabetes and diabetes.

• **Anti-inflammatory properties:** Its anti-inflammatory properties help alleviate symptoms of inflammatory conditions like arthritis and asthma. It can support in fighting damage caused due to the free radicals in the body and help to deal with joint pain issues.

• **Enhances skin and hair health:** The antioxidants and vitamin C present in Ramphal contribute to skin health by protecting against damage from UV radiation, promoting collagen production, and reducing signs of aging such as wrinkles and sagging skin. Ramphal is also good for lowering

adult acne. The presence of vitamin C in the fruit helps in fighting off the free radicals that are responsible for causing numerous skin problems.

Incorporating Ramphal into your diet can reap these health benefits and support overall well-being. Whether consumed fresh, juiced or incorporated into various dishes, this exotic fruit offers a nutritious addition to your diet.

He brought to me his heart

GEETHANJALI

He brought to me his heart
That is waiting to welcome
Someone special and distinct
To reside in there for ever

The moment he saw me
Our four eyes became one
The world is filled with beauty
Millions of colors in its bounty

Affection naturally develops
At one or other end, slowly
That is what we call human trend.
And reaches heights than any other thing

He showed me his affection
It was so natural to see that
This was the triumph of true love
A love that is given unconditionally

He brought to me his heart
As he begin to mend me
He made believe in love
That is beautiful beyond words

Affection transforms into an eternal love
When you find yourself under an owe
That makes you feel gratitude towards other
The one whom you loved like no one other

It is nothing but just a feeling of sacrifice
That develops love wherever it lies
The submission from me to you
The feeling that is all for you

Your lovely soul as pure as spring's beauty
And sun-shine sparkles in your eyes
Lighting up all of my life along with it
Bless me with your affection to love

He brought to me his heart
As my heart skips a beat
I know that this is true love and
My heart feels so complete

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131 Pakistanis deported from 12 countries for legal offences

KARACHI: 131 Pakistani nationals have been expelled from 12 different countries due to various legal violations including drug-related offences, illegal entry, and failure to comply with employment regulations, The News International reported recently.

Authorities in multiple nations carried out these deportations, citing breaches of local laws, with some individuals facing immediate removal upon arrival.

According to immigration sources, Saudi Arabia led the deportations, sending back 74 Pakistani citizens for alleged involvement in drug trafficking and violating employment agreements by leaving jobs without prior notice. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) also deported several Pakistani nationals, charging them with illegal entry, theft, and drug-related offences.

In one case, a person was denied entry upon arrival and immediately sent back to Pakistan, while another individual was deported from the UAE following allegations of attempting to take their own life.

Apart from these two major deporting nations, other Pakistani nationals were expelled from Oman, Cambodia, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Iraq, and Mexico. Furthermore, in a separate incident, two individuals suspected of human smuggling were deported from Mauritania and Senegal, as per reports by The News International. ANI

Immigration

POST

On February 13, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed India's willingness to take back its nationals if they live illegally in the United States

"112 illegal Indian immigrants deported from US in flight, their immigration underway": Amritsar DC

AMRITSAR: Amritsar Deputy Commissioner Sakshi Sawhney has said 112 people were in the plane carrying the third batch of Indian nationals who allegedly illegally migrated to the US that landed in Amritsar on last Sunday.

Speaking to reporters, Sawhney stated that the people have been provided with whatever things they need like food and diapers. She said that the arrangements have been made for them to return to their homes.

She said, "112 people have come in this flight. Their immigration is going on right now. Whatever they needed, food, diapers, formula, we have provided everything. We have arranged for everything. Arrangements have been made for them to go home. So, immigration is being conducted and it will take quite some time."

When asked about the number of women and children who have arrived in the flight, Sakshi Sawhney responded, "We will share the data. Let us finish the immigration finish."

The aircraft carrying the third batch of Indian nationals who allegedly illegally migrated to the US landed at the Amritsar Airport 16 February. The third batch ar-



CISF personnel escort Indian citizens deported from the US at Sri Guru Ram Das Jee International Airport after they arrive on a US C-17 Globemaster aircraft, in Amritsar. (ANI Photo/Raminder Pal Singh)

rived just after a day the second batch of Indian nationals who allegedly illegally migrated to the US landed in Amritsar.

This is the third such flight of deportees which has landed in Amritsar Airport after US President Donald Trump's inauguration. On February 5, the first batch of to the US arrived in Punjab's Amritsar.

Earlier, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann assured that the deportees would be treated properly and that all arrangements had been made. The Chief Minister said the deportees would stay in Amritsar for a few hours before being taken to their respective states.

"Our kids are the ones who are coming here anyway, so from here no one can go hungry, we will make arrangements. We have also made staying arrangements for them. They will stay here for a few hours and then go to their respective states as the

flights have been booked by the Ministry of External Affairs already," Mann said in a press conference in Amritsar.

On February 13, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed India's willingness to take back its nationals if they live illegally in the United States and laid emphasis on the

who are verified and are truly the citizens of India - if they live in the US illegally, India is ready to take them back," PM Modi said, answering a query at the joint press conference with President Trump after their bilateral talks.

He said most of the people staying illegally are from ordinary

This is the third such flight of deportees which has landed in Amritsar Airport after US President Donald Trump's inauguration. On February 5, the first batch of to the US arrived in Punjab's Amritsar

need to finish the "ecosystem" of human trafficking. PM Modi also expressed confidence that Trump will fully cooperate with India in finishing this ecosystem.

"Those who stay in other countries illegally do not have any legal right to be there. As far as India and the US are concerned, we have always said that those

families and are misguided by human traffickers.

"But it doesn't stop just there for us. These are people from ordinary families. They are shown big dreams and most of them are such who are misled and brought here. So, we should attack this entire system of human trafficking. ANI

PRADEEP ROY-SINGH

B.A. LL.B. M.B.A. J.D.

Attorney-at-Law

Former Assistant State's Attorney

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UK immigration in 2025 may see visa overhauls: Yash Dubal, UK visa and immigration expert

MUMBAI: Through the year 2025, the UK immigration policy may see further changes as the Government continues to grapple with high net migration and hence, we may see some visa categories scrapped altogether, or overhauled, particularly categories which have attracted fewer applicants, such as the fast-track Global Talent visa, observed the UK Immigration Outlook 2025 Note released by A Y & J Solicitors, a London-based visa and immigration advisory.

The Note has further stated that the strongest work visa categories will remain the Skilled Worker visa (which incorporates the Health and Care visa)

and the numbers are likely to continue to come down, reducing the pressure on the government to make major changes, such as limiting visa numbers in certain sectors, but for employers struggling to fill skilled roles, overseas recruitment will remain attractive, but more expensive.

Yash Dubal, Director, A Y & J Solicitors, London, UK said, "It is expected that UK businesses will have to continue relying on migrant workers whether the assumed army of domestic skilled workers materializes or not.

Throughout 2025 net migration in the UK will continue to decline as a result of the measures already implemented, but for the next few years at least it will remain high because manpower shortages will continue across

a range of sectors. For Indian workers there remains opportunity."

The Note has also advised that the Self-sponsorship will be the viable route for people who genuinely want to set up their own British business, which they can legally do. "When this is done, they can sponsor themselves for a Skilled Worker visa," added Dubal.

According to A Y & J Solicitors, in Britain, 2024 was an

*Yash Dubal, Director, A Y & J Solicitors, London, UK said,
"It is expected that UK businesses will have to continue relying on migrant workers whether the assumed army of domestic skilled workers materializes or not*

eventful year for immigration policy. Measures were introduced to reduce numbers, which directly affected many Indians who were planning to live, work and study in Britain. Healthcare visa applicants and student visa applicants were banned from taking dependents with them.

A Y & J Solicitors also observed that the new Labour government remained committed to bringing the numbers down further. The Note stated that it planned to do so by identifying the skills gaps in the UK workforce being filled by migrant workers and encouraging employers to train domestic workers to fill those roles.

With anti-immigration stance in the country like the US, both skilled and unskilled, the job seekers will find the door to the US closed, or increasingly hard to get through under the Trump administration. Hence, more Indian skilled workers will be looking to the UK.

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

"India, US commit to tackling illegal immigration, human trafficking": Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri

WASHINGTON DC: Following the bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Donald Trump, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri highlighted discussions on illegal immigration, strategic cooperation, and economic engagement between India and the United States.



Vikram Misri

Addressing a press briefing Misri said that both leaders reaffirmed their commitment to streamlining legal mobility avenues for students, professionals, and short-term visitors, while also agreeing to "aggressively" address illegal immigration and human trafficking.

"India invited the US to take advantage of the reforms in the Indian education sector to set up offshore campuses of premier institutions of the US in India. They committed to streamlining avenues for the legal mobility of students and professionals and facilitating short-term tourist and business travel while also committing to aggressively addressing and tackling illegal immigration and human trafficking," Misri said. ANI

Indian student community contributes over USD 8 billion annually to US economy, helps create jobs

WASHINGTON DC: Noting that more than 3,00,000 strong Indian student community contributes over USD 8 billion annually to the US economy and has helped create a number of direct and indirect jobs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump have expressed their commitment to streamlining avenues for legal mobility of students and professionals, and facilitating short-term tourist and business travel.

The two leaders also expressed their commitment to aggressively addressing illegal immigration and human trafficking by taking strong action against bad actors, criminal facilitators, and illegal immigration networks to promote mutual security for both countries.

A joint statement issued after a bilateral meeting between PM Modi and President Trump said the leaders agreed to put in place conducive frameworks to encourage the formation of a global workplace.

"President Trump and Prime Minister Modi noted the importance of advancing the people-to-people ties between the two countries. In this context, they noted that the more than 300,000 strong Indian student community contributes over \$8 billion annually to the U.S. economy and helped create a number of direct and indirect jobs. They recognized that the talent flow and movement of students, researchers and employees, has mutually benefitted both countries," the statement said.

"Recognizing the importance of international academic collaborations in fostering innovation, improving learning outcomes and development of a future-ready workforce, both leaders resolved to strengthen collaborations between the higher education institutions through efforts such as joint/dual degree and twinning programs, establishing joint Centers of Excellence, and setting up of offshore campuses of premier educational institutions of the US in India," it added.

The leaders also committed to strengthening law enforcement cooperation to take decisive action against illegal immigration networks, organized crime syndicates, including narco-terrorists, human and arms traffickers, as well as other elements who threaten public and diplomatic safety and security, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of both nations.

"Both leaders emphasized that the evolution of the world into a global workplace calls for putting in place innovative, mutually advantageous and secure mobility frameworks," the release said

"In this regard, the leaders committed to streamlining avenues for legal mobility of students and professionals, and facilitating short-term tourist and business travel, while also aggressively addressing illegal immigration and human trafficking by taking strong action against bad actors, criminal facilitators, and illegal immigration networks to promote mutual security for both countries," it added. ANI

New Zealand net migration falls in 2024

WELLINGTON: New Zealand had a net migration gain of 27,100 in 2024, down from a net gain of 128,300 in 2023, which was a feature of New Zealand's history to experience ups and downs in net migration, according to the statistics department Stats NZ.

The ups and downs in net migration have been much larger in 2023 and 2024, said Stats NZ international migration statistics spokesperson Sarah Drake.

Annually, net migration rose by just over 100,000 in 2023 and fell by a similar amount in 2024, Drake said, adding there was still a net migration gain overall.

Fewer migrant arrivals of non-New Zealand passport holders contribute to the fall in New Zealand's net migration in 2024, she said, adding the overall net migration gain in 2024 was just below the long-term average net gain of 29,100 before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Changes in migration are typically due to a combination of factors, including relative economic and labor market conditions between New Zealand and the rest of the world, and immigration policy in New Zealand and other countries, Xinhua news agency reported.

Net migration gain of non-New Zealand citizens continues to fall, with a provisional annual net migration gain of 74,200 non-New Zealand citizens in 2024, down from the net gain of 171,600 in 2023, with citizens of India, the Philippines, and China accounted for two-thirds of the fall in annual net migration of non-New Zealand citizens, statistics show. IANS

India, US don't compete as much as they complement each other: Goyal

MUMBAI: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal said India and the United States do not compete as much as they complement each other, and discussions are underway with various stakeholders, both within and outside the government, to strengthen trade ties between the two nations.

India's efforts to double trade with the United States to \$500 billion by 2030 were underscored by the Union Minister in his virtual address at the NDTV Profit Conclave.

"This is a relationship between two friendly nations, trusted partners, and powerful democracies. We do not compete as much as we complement each other," said Goyal.

The Union Minister highlighted that India's position in global trade negotiations had been strengthened due to its focus on protecting domestic industries from non-market economies that lack transparent trading systems. "Our biggest concern has been economies that do not give equal access to India when we are trading with them. To protect domestic industries, higher tariffs have often been resorted to," he stressed. *IANS*

India aims to triple its textile exports to Rs 9 lakh crore by 2030

NEW DELHI: India's textile exports have reached Rs 3 lakh crore and the goal is to triple this to Rs 9 lakh crore by 2030 by strengthening domestic manufacturing and expanding global reach, the government has said.

India is the sixth-largest exporter of textiles globally, contributing 8.21 percent to the country's total exports in 2023-24.

The sector holds a 4.5 percent share in global trade, with the United States and European Union accounting for 47 percent of India's textile and apparel exports, according to the Ministry of Textiles. *IANS*



US tariffs on steel sector unlikely to impact India materially: Crisil

NEW DELHI: The US tariffs on the steel sector are unlikely to impact India because only 2 percent of the country's total finished steel exports in the first nine months of this fiscal were to the US, Crisil Intelligence reported.

The US move to slap a flat 25 percent tariff on steel imports from March 12, compared with multiple types of lesser levies previously, will have a three-fold impact.

"One, it will lower the exports of its trade partners as local production rises, but India is unlikely to be impacted materially because only 2 percent of its total finished steel exports in the first 9 months of this fiscal were to the US," said Sehul Bhatt, Director- Research, Crisil Intelligence.

Two, there will be a diversion of exporter inventory to other importer-nations at aggressive prices, especially in a milieu of increasing global competition.



This could bring down the prices of steel in India, already trending at 4-year lows, further.

"That means the Indian government may have to step in with safeguard duty to support domestic capacities. The timing and quantum of this will be crucial," Bhatt noted.

Three, incremental production by US mills will mean a reduction in the steel scrap avail-

able for exports.

That is because, as much as 70 percent of the steel industry there uses the electric arc furnace process, which typically involves converting scrap to produce steel.

At present, India sources 14-15 percent of its scrap requirements from the US.

Key import sources for the US include Canada, Brazil, Mexico

and South Korea. In 2024, the US witnessed a sharp rise in steel exports from Vietnam, Taiwan and Brazil.

While, on the one hand, the US tariffs may open up a portion of the US market for India's steel exports, on the other hand, the surplus steel produced by Japan and South Korea may be diverted to the Indian market, according to a latest ICRA report. *IANS*

100 pc FDI to help Indian insurance sector reach \$222 billion by 2026

NEW DELHI: The Indian insurance sector has witnessed impressive growth over the last two decades and the government's allowance of 100 percent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the sector would further accelerate growth, attracting significant foreign capital and boosting innovation, according to a new report.

India's insurance sector has witnessed significant growth and development over the past few years.

The domestic insurance market has grown at a CAGR of 17 percent over the last two decades and is expected to reach a size of \$222 billion by 2026, according to a TeamLease Regtech report.

A typical single-entity insurance company with a corporate office in a single state needs to deal with 2,236 unique compliances. The annual compliance

and approvals under 27 acts.

According to Sandeep Agrawal, Co-founder and Director, TeamLease RegTech, the Indian insurance sector, driven by in-



obligations rise to 4,638 once the frequency of compliances is factored in. The company must also obtain 38 licenses, permissions,

creased awareness, favorable regulatory changes, and enhanced private sector participation, has witnessed impressive

growth over the last two decades.

"However, it is crucial to understand the complexities of compliance management that companies face in this space. Insurers operate within an exceptionally complex compliance framework, with a typical general insurer managing over 4,500 regulatory obligations annually, including critical requirements on solvency margins, anti-money laundering, and policyholder protection," he elaborated.

Embracing compliance automation will be transformative for the industry, supporting the shift towards a cashless and paperless economy.

Automation will enable insurers to streamline operations and

meet evolving compliance demands with greater efficiency, said the report.

The report concluded with recommendations for compliance reforms like a strong compliance culture led by company leadership, technology-driven solutions to automate compliance processes, and implementing data security measures to build customer trust.

Further, regulators should consider introducing a single-window licensing framework to simplify approvals for insurers, encouraging RegTech adoption, and creating a centralized digital repository for regulations allowing companies to focus on growth and innovation, said the report. *IANS*

FM Sitharaman meets former UK PM Rishi Sunak

NEW DELHI: Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman met former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak here recently and the two discussed potential new avenues to strengthen market-based finan-

The Prime Minister had particularly highlighted the inclusion of the African Union as a permanent member of the G-20 under India's chairmanship to give the Global South a bigger voice on the world stage.



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman meets Former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, in New Delhi(ANI Photo)

cial ties and drive economic growth.

The Finance Minister stressed the importance of leveraging the Commonwealth to bring issues of mutual interest to the G7 agenda for the benefit of the Global South.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had earlier emphasized India's commitment to advocating the priorities and concerns of the Global South in his address at an Outreach session of the G7 summit in Italy's Apulia region in June.

He said that these countries "are bearing the brunt of global uncertainties and tensions".

PM Modi had also called for ending the monopoly in technology by advanced countries. He stressed the importance of international governance in AI, highlighted during India's hosting of the G-20 summit, aiming for transparent, fair, secure, accessible, and responsible AI technologies globally.

He underscored India's leadership in artificial intelligence (AI), noting India's status as one of the first countries to develop a national AI strategy and launch the AI Mission focused on 'AI for All'.

PM Modi also outlined India's energy principles based on availability, accessibility, affordability, and acceptability, pledging efforts to achieve Net Zero by 2070 and advocating for a collective global effort to promote a sustainable future.

Sitharaman's meeting with Sunak comes close on the heels of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on with the former Prime Minister of the UK.

"Nice to meet former UK PM @RishiSunak in Delhi today. Appreciate his constant support for strengthening India-UK relations," he posted on X. The External Affairs Minister also shared some photographs of their meeting.

IANS

India able to manufacture affordable EVs at scale: Mahindra's Anish Shah on Tesla plans

MUMBAI: As electric car major Tesla ramped up hiring in India after the successful meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Elon Musk in the US last week, Mahindra & Mahindra said the country has the ability to not only manufacture EVs at scale but also at a lower cost.

Unfazed about the potential entry of Tesla into the Indian market this year, M&M Ltd Managing Director and CEO Anish Shah said their "products speak for themselves".

Speaking at the NDTV Profit Conclave in Mumbai, he further stated that their "EVs are entirely manufactured in India".

Shah's remarks came after Tesla signaled its India entry plans by advertising at least 13 job roles in the country on its LinkedIn profile. Most of the Tesla jobs will be based in Mumbai and Delhi.

On the question on how it will compete with the entry of major foreign players, Shah said at the event: "Our teams

have been able to show that we can manufacture at strength and compete globally."

According to him, other Indian manufacturers have also stepped up to the challenge posed by their global counterparts.

"The strength and resilience shown by domestic manufacturers provides an opportunity for India to emerge as a manufacturing hub," he mentioned.

The fundamentals of the Indian market remain "very strong" and "there are a number of positives today that our economy didn't have in the last 30 years".

India is "well-positioned" and "rural India has seen growth coming back already," Shah said, adding that he expects this momentum to continue in the next year as well. Commenting on the jitters in the global market over the US trade tariff policies, Shah said India will be a "net gainer", given the positive bilateral relations with the US. IANS



Business confidence rises in Asia-Pacific, Indian retail sector a bright spot

MUMBAI: Backed by growing demand and declining interest rates, business confidence continues to rise, benefiting the retail sector in various markets in the Asia-Pacific region including in India, according to a new report.

Consumer spending surged during the Q4 festive season last year, benefiting the retail sector in various markets including Auckland, China, Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Bengaluru.

In Bengaluru, the commercial supply was well behind uptake resulting in lower vacancy while Mumbai's office supply has increased six-fold year-on-year, resulting in a strong market, according to Colliers' 'APAC Cap Rates Q4 2024' report.

In Bengaluru, along the main business corridors rental and capital rates for Grade A commercial offices witnessed significant upward movement.

Outer Ring Road (ORR), North Bengaluru, and Whitfield saw a higher volume of Grade A floor plate transactions due to availability and specifications resulting in range-bound cap rates between 8.0 percent-8.5 percent.

The commercial uptake in Mumbai has witnessed a strong YoY improvement in 2024, with demand growth in the last quarter being the highest during the year. However, the increased supply kept the rental increases in check except for certain micro-markets as more options became available.

Ajay Sharma, Managing Director, Valuation Services, Colliers India, said that Bengaluru has witnessed improved transaction volumes in organized retail, with rising capital values in high-street areas attributed to increased consumer activity during the festival season, leading to higher revenue shares.

In Mumbai, industrial transaction volume has been slightly lower on a year-on-year basis.

However, the supply has increased in the market by 15 percent in Mumbai. Based on this, cap rates have been stable in Q4 2024. CPI inflation jumped significantly to 5.22 percent in December 2024, with the preceding 3-month average at 5.63 percent.

"This increase in inflation is attributed to the significant growth in urban inflation from Q3 2024," said Sharma. IANS

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Nominations for Prime Minister's 'Yoga Awards 2025' now open

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of Ayush recently announced nominations for the prestigious Prime Minister's Yoga Awards for the 2025 edition of the International Day of Yoga (IDY2025).

These awards recognize individuals and organizations that have made significant and sustained contributions to the promotion and development of Yoga, both nationally and internationally, the ministry said in a statement.

The awards will be conferred in categories like National Individual, National Organization, International Individual, and International Organization categories, with each winner receiving a trophy, certificate and a cash award of Rs 25 lakh.

According to the ministry, individuals applying must be 40 years or older and should have at least 20 years of dedicated service in Yoga promotion.

Applications and nominations can be submitted via the MyGov platform on or before March 31, 2025.

"The link will also be available on the Ministry of Ayush's website and the websites of its autonomous bodies. *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)

18 India Post

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February 21, 2025

USAID effectively ran India's National Family Health Survey from 1990s: Sanjeev Sanyal

NEW DELHI: Sanjeev Sanyal, member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) has said those concerned about USAID's interference in Indian elections should be equally concerned about USAID's tentacles in India's medical system and social policies.

In a post on X social media platform, Sanyal said that USAID "effectively ran India's National Family Health Survey (NFHS) from the 1990s till it was stopped two years ago".

"This is the most important medical dataset in India and drives a lot of health policy. Not only were we allowing a foreign agency to harvest our medical data but, by allowing them to design surveys and direct analysis, we were letting them influence our national health responses," he emphasized.



Sanjeev Sanyal

Equally worryingly, much of the NFHS questionnaire was deliberately skewed to support certain social narratives, according to the ace economist.

"The questionnaire for men, for instance, is only 29 pages but that for women is 94 pages. A lot

of the additional questions are deliberately worded to elicit a narrative of intra-family violence against Indian women. Must say, very slyly done," he further stated.

According to Sanyal, late Bibek Debroy and he strongly pushed back against this (includ-

ing publicly in newspaper columns).

"Fortunately, Gol took up the matter and the latest NFHS is being done by the Health Ministry on its own," he maintained.

A statement from the United States Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), an agency led by billionaire Elon Musk, recently declared that it had cancelled a series of international funding projects.

Among these was the \$21 million allocated for voter turnout in India.

"Would love to find out who received the \$21 mn spent to improve 'voter turnout in India' and the \$29mn to 'strengthening political landscape in Bangladesh'; not to mention the \$29mn spend to improve 'fiscal federalism' in Nepal. USAID is the biggest scam in human history," Sanyal had earlier posted on X. *IANS*

Eating veggies may reduce risk of liver cancer by 65 pc: Study

NEW DELHI: Eating vegetables can help reduce the risk of liver cancer by 65 percent, according to a study.

The study, led by researchers from the INSERM, the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research, focused on patients diagnosed with cirrhosis -- scarring (fibrosis) of the liver caused by long-term liver damage.

They examined the benefits of eating vegetables and or fruits among these patients. Of the 179 patients analyzed, 20 were diagnosed with hepatocellular carcinoma (liver cancer).

The team found that a total of 42.5 percent of patients with cirrhosis had insufficient fruit and/or vegetable consumption.

"A 65 percent reduction in the

incidence (new cases) of liver cancer (hepatocellular carcinoma) was observed in patients diagnosed with cirrhosis consuming more than 240 gram per day of vegetables," the researchers said.

The researchers, however, found no evidence of an association between fruit consumption and hepatocellular carcinoma.

The team said that the association between fruit and vegetable consumption and the risk of HCC

is poorly documented in the population of cirrhotic patients. However, "such knowledge is crucial for adapting HCC prevention messages," they noted, in the paper published in the journal JHEP Reports.

Liver cancer is the sixth most frequent cancer worldwide, mainly represented by HCC, accounting for about 85-90 percent.

HCC occurs when a tumor grows on the liver. HCC most commonly occurs in those with chronic liver disease especially those with cirrhosis or fibrosis, which occur in the setting of chronic liver injury and inflammation.

Main causes of disease of underlying chronic liver disease are alcohol and viral hepatitis, while it also includes overweight and obesity, consumption of foods contaminated with aflatoxins (that is, toxins produced by molds).

The researchers called for larger studies "to assess the benefits of fruit regarding the risk of HCC", and to provide evidence for promoting fruit and vegetable consumption in patients with liver cirrhosis. *IANS*



Maternal paracetamol use may raise ADHD risk in kids by age 10: Study

NEW DELHI: Children, especially females, born to women who took acetaminophen (paracetamol) during pregnancy may be at a higher risk of developing childhood attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) by the time they age 10, claimed a study.

The study, published in the journal *Nature Mental Health*, showed that children whose mothers had biomarkers of acetaminophen present in their plasma had a 3.15 times higher likelihood of an ADHD diagnosis.

The findings showed that the link was stronger among females than males. Girls of APAP-exposed mothers showed a 6.16 times higher likelihood of ADHD. However, the association was found to be weaker and non-significant in males.

Paracetamol is widely used during pregnancy, accounting for an estimated 70 percent of pregnant individuals in the US, Europe, and Asia.

Even though paracetamol has been classified as a low-risk medication by regulatory agencies such as the US Food

and Drug Administration and the European Medicines Agency, evidence is mounting to suggest that it can potentially increase the risk of adverse neurodevelopmental



outcomes, including ADHD and autism spectrum disorder.

For the new study, researchers from

the University of Washington, US, analyzed plasma biomarkers of acetaminophen (APAP) exposure in a cohort of 307 African American mother-child pairs.

Detection of APAP in second-trimester maternal blood samples correlated with increased odds of ADHD diagnosis in chil-

dren by age 8-10, they said in the paper. In the study, APAP metabolites were detected in 20.2 percent of maternal plasma samples.

Placental gene expression analysis of a subset of 174 participants indicated sex-specific transcriptional changes. In females, APAP exposure was associated with up regulation of immune-related pathways, including increased expression of immunoglobulin heavy constant gamma 1 (IGHG1).

Increased IGHG1 expression was statistically linked to ADHD diagnoses, with mediation analysis suggesting that APAP's effect on ADHD was partly mediated through this gene's placental expression, the researchers said.

The findings align with prior epidemiological studies and experimental animal research linking prenatal APAP exposure to neurodevelopmental disruptions.

The current study eliminated the bias concerns raised in previous studies where APAP use was self-reported by using objective biomarker measurements, they said, while calling for further studies. IANS



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Indian healthcare system comes of age with institutes like NCI-AIIMS: JP Nadda

NEW DELHI: Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the narrative is changing regarding the Indian healthcare system where bone marrow transplant is possible in institutes like the National Cancer Institute (NCI) of AIIMS, Jhajjar campus, Union Health Minister JP Nadda has said.



JP Nadda

Nadda said the institute has matured into a world-class healthcare provider in a short span of 6 year and over time, it has evolved into a referral center offering multidisciplinary care and providing better and patient-centric care"

Nadda said the institute has matured into a world-class healthcare provider in a short span of 6 year and over time, it has evolved into a referral center offering multidisciplinary care and providing better and patient-centric care".

He appreciated the dedication of doctors, health workers and administration of the institute to make the progress happen.

Speaking at the 'AIIMS Oncology Conclave 2025', the minister also admired the high-quality precision and high-quality services of the nuclear medicine targeted treatment ward at NCI, and underlined that "these facilities are the hardware while the faculty members and doctors are the software of the developing robust healthcare system."

Nadda further stated that cancer is a daunting diagnosis that brings fear - not just of the illness, but of the future, of livelihood, of losing loved ones, and the inevitable economic and emotional strain.

He also visited and appreciated the Vishram Sadan at the NCI, developed by the Infosys Foundation, provides essential accommodation for patients' attendants in a cost-effective way, enhancing support for families during challenging times. It also provides psychological and educational support to the needy, setting a benchmark for others.

As an "Incubator," the Centre for Medical Innovations and Entrepreneurship (CMIE) is responsible to handhold and support indigenous innovations in the healthcare sector, which is tremendous.

By enabling Indian startups to leverage the mentorship and guidance of AIIMS faculty and scientists, and by giving them access to advanced laboratory equipment and resources at AIIMS at nominal payment, CMIE is fostering a culture of innovation, said the minister.

He underlined that the government has introduced screening for individuals aged 30 years and above under NHM at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs and over 26 crore people have been screened for oral cancer, 14 crore for breast cancer, and 9 crore for cervical cancer at Ayushman Arogya Mandirs.

The minister also emphasized "to make cancer treatment available to the poor and the vulnerable, under AB PM-JAY, cancer-related treatment is provided for Medical, Surgical, Radiation and Palliative Oncology across 219 packages. Since the inception of AB PM-JAY, approximately 68.43 lakh hospital admissions amounting to Rs. 13160.75 crore have been authorized for cancer-related packages under the scheme."

Citing a recent Lancet study, he underlined that

"timely cancer treatment initiation has improved significantly because of the Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Yojna. Patients enrolled under AB-PMJAY saw 90 percent rise in access to cancer treatment within 30 days." *IANS*

Researchers identify new type of blood test to identify children at risk of diabetes

LONDON: King's College London researchers have discovered a novel link between lipids and disorders affecting children's metabolism. This finding may provide an early warning system for ailments, including liver disease.

Scientists have developed a novel blood test that uses lipids to identify children who are more susceptible to obesity-related problems, such as type 2 diabetes, liver, and heart disease. The study was published in *Nature Medicine*.

Lipids have traditionally been thought to be fatty acids in the body, either good or bad types of cholesterol or triglycerides, fats found in the bloodstream that are the most common in the human body.

Recent studies from the same group of scientists have suggested that the picture is more complex.

The researchers propose that blood plasma testing machines already in use in hospitals could assist medical professionals in identifying early disease indicators in children more quickly and facilitate their access to appropriate treatment. *ANI*

1 in 6 US parents support teenagers getting laser hair removal, chemical skin peels: Study

NEW DELHI: Every sixth parent in the US is in support of their teenage children indulging in non-surgical cosmetic procedures such as laser hair removal, chemical skin peels, teeth whitening and dermal fillers, according to nationwide study published recently.

The study led by the University of Michigan Health CS Mott Children's Hospital, based on a national poll showed that more than 16 percent parents believe that teenagers should be allowed to receive these types of aesthetic treatments for any reason as long as they have approval from their guardians.

But, half of parents only support teenagers getting non-surgical cosmetic procedures if there's a valid reason. While 50 percent said the reason should not be "being bullied about appearance", less than 40 percent say improving mental health is a good reason.

"Parents were conflicted about the circumstances under which non-surgical cosmetic procedures are appropriate for teenagers," said Mott Poll Co-Director and Mott pediatrician Susan Woolford.

"Interestingly, similar proportions of parents rated the validity of teenagers wanting to look good for a special occasion on par with wanting the procedures due to mental health or bullying," Woolford added.

The nationally representative poll is based on

responses from 989 parents of children ages 13-17 surveyed in August 2024. The increased popularity of these procedures may be associated with social media content that exposed teenagers to idealize images of faces and bodies, Woolford said.

"Teenagers are susceptible to feeling insecure about their appearance when compared to digitally altered pictures depicting an appearance that is probably unattainable naturally," she said. "This problem is exacerbated by the pressure to post pictures of themselves to garner validation."

However, it's important for parents to find ways to help teenagers understand the distortions presented in the media while also exploring their reasons for wanting to change their appearance, she said.

"If a teenager asks for a non-surgical cosmetic procedure, parents should consider the emotional and mental health implications," she said.

Further, the poll showed that parent opinions of the age at which youth should be able to obtain such services also varied. More than half selected 18 years of age or older, 27 percent said ages 16-17 was old enough and 17 percent said 15 or younger was also fine. *IANS*

"Parents were conflicted about the circumstances under which non-surgical cosmetic procedures are appropriate for teenagers," said Mott Poll Co-Director and Mott pediatrician Susan Woolford

How men's fashion has transformed over the years, designers open up about breaking old stereotypes

ZOYAAZIZ

JAIPUR: For years, men's fashion was considered simple, serious, and restricted to shades of black, blue, and grey. Also there was also a strong belief that colors like pink or bold shades were too "feminine" for men.

However, this stereotype has been changing lately. Today, men are more open to experimenting with colors, patterns, and modern silhouettes, proving that fashion is no longer just about looking 'strong and masculine.'

This shift was clearly seen at the FDCI India Men's Weekend, which took place in Jaipur--a two-day event where a total of twenty-six designers showcased a variety of bold, stylish, and experimental menswear designs.

Designers believe that men's fashion has evolved significantly, with many now embracing vibrant colors and rich embroidery, which were once considered exclusive to women's fashion. The "pink" stereotype is slowly fading, making room for a more diverse approach to men's fashion.

Speaking to ANI, ace designer JJ Valaya, who presented his collection at the event, shared his thoughts on this change and spoke about how men today confidently embrace prints and colors that are "dramatic."

"The real evolution has hap-



pened mainly in men's wear, predominantly because women have always managed to look their best. If you look at the men from thirty years ago, they used to live their lives in suits. Today, I can't think of a single man who gets married in a suit. They are more comfortable wearing fairly extravagant clothes for their own wedding. For other occasions, they are happy wearing prints and colors that are dramatic. So, there has been a tangible shift in what's going on," he said.

Valaya's collection featured luxurious fabrics, rich embroidery, and intricate detailing, which happens to be his signature style. The models walked the ramp in regal sherwanis, embroidered bandhgallas, and statement shawls inspired by traditional craftsmanship.

Designers Shantnu and Nikhil also spoke about how men's fashion has changed over the years and believe that men today are more expressive through their clothing.

"India was known to be a country where loose clothing for men was the norm. Men were always considered very serious, and you couldn't really communicate much with them. We used to look at our elders with respect but also a little bit of awe. That has dramatically changed now. Men, through their clothing, are communicating beautifully," Nikhil told ANI.



'Bad Girl' wins NETPAC Award at Rotterdam International Film Festival

CHENNAI: Director Varsha Bharath's upcoming Tamil film 'Bad Girl', the teaser of which stirred up a hornet's nest with one section of the film fraternity calling the film "bold and refreshing" and another section taking offence to the manner in which a Brahmin girl had been portrayed in it, has now won the NETPAC Award at the Rotterdam International Film Festival (IFFR) 2025.

The NETPAC award is presented on an annual basis to a feature film from the Asia and Pacific region. The film is chosen by a jury from the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema.



NETPAC's mission, the festival organizers claimed, was to highlight new talents. The film selected for this award must be from one of 71 eligible countries in Asia or the Pacific Nations and Islands to be considered.

It may be recalled that the teaser of the film, which was released a few days ago, triggered a controversy.

Director Pa Ranjith tweeted on his X timeline, praising the film. He wrote, "Happened to watch #BadGirl, and it's truly a bold and refreshing film! Director #VetriMaaran deserves immense credit for backing such a daring story. The film powerfully portrays women's struggles and society's expectations through a unique new wave cinema style. Congratulations #varsha. Anjali Sivaraman delivers an amazing performance--don't miss this one!"

However, soon after Pa Ranjith put out this tweet, director Mohan G Kshatriyan responded to it. Quoting Pa Ranjith's tweet, he wrote, "Portraying a Brahmin girl('s) personal life is always a bold and refreshing film for this clan. What more can be expected from Vetrimaran, Anurag Kashyap & Co... Bashing Brahmin father and mother is old and not trendy. Try with your own caste girls and showcase it to your own family first."

This soon snowballed into a major controversy, with one section criticizing the teaser and the film and another section supporting it.

The film, which has been directed by Varsha Bharath, features Anjali Sivaraman, Shanthi Priya, Saranya Ravichandran, Hridhu Haroon, TeeJay Arunasalam and Sashank Bommireddipalli among others. IANS

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Tier 2 and 3 cities emerge growth drivers in India's warehousing sector

MUMBAI: India's total warehousing stock reached 533.1 million square feet last year, with emerging tier 2 and 3 cities now contributing approximately 100 million sq ft, or about 18.7 percent of the total stock, according to a report released last week.

This shift represents a fundamental change in the country's logistics map towards hub-and-spoke model, improving last-mile delivery capabilities as envisioned during the implementation of goods and service tax (GST), said the report by leading real estate firm JLL.

The Indian warehousing market has experienced remarkable growth in major cities since implementation of GST. Growth is now expanding to emerging tier II-III cities as hub and spoke model is playing out. The emerging cities saw noteworthy 100 million sq ft of stock in 2024, a four-fold increase since 2017, the report stated.

The growth in these emerging cities is driven by several factors. The e-commerce boom, particularly the widespread 'click and buy' trend, is transforming India's warehousing. This has led to increased demand for fulfillment centers closer to end consumers. Companies are also setting up smaller warehouses in these cities to improve delivery times and reduce logistics costs. *IANIS*

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Flex space leasing captures 20 pc share, Delhi-NCR leads: JLL

MUMBAI: The share of the flex space segment has risen to a substantial 19.8 percent in the annual office leasing numbers in India to cross 15 million square feet (sq ft) in 2024, its best share so far, according to a JLL report released recently.

It thus became the second-biggest occupier segment behind Tech in terms of its contribution to the leasing growth story that underpinned the 2024 office market performance. *IANIS*

Top 15 tier 2 cities in India see housing sales up 4 pc, sales value up 20 pc

NEW DELHI: Housing sales in India's top 15 tier 2 cities rose by 4 percent to 1,78,771 units with sales value rising by 20 percent to Rs 1,52,552 crore in 2024, a recent report showed.

The housing sales stood at 1,71,903 units while sales value

21 percent in 2024, while Bhubaneswar recorded the highest growth in sales value at 47 percent while Nashik recorded 2 percent decline in sales value.

"The Budget announcements will give a boost to housing demand in tier 2 cities and create

Jasuja, Founder and CEO, PropEquity.

The continued focus on infrastructure development like metro rail, highways and expressways will augment the growth in all segments of the real estate sector, he mentioned.

units in 2024 as compared to 18,420 units in 2023, up 2.5 percent, the report showed.

Housing sales rose by 5 percent in Jaipur and 1 percent in Lucknow while it fell by 1 percent in Mohali. Sales value grew by 39 percent in Jaipur, 5 percent in



stood at Rs 1,27,505 crore in 2023, according to data by NSE-listed real estate data analytics firm PropEquity.

Housing sales rose the most in Coimbatore at 36 percent and fell the most in Visakhapatnam at

opportunities for employment. These include proposals for development of airports, promotion of GCCs, tourism, relaxation on second homes, and more importantly tax exemption on income up to Rs 12 lakh," said Samir

Housing sales was led by Surat with 15 percent rise, followed by Gandhi Nagar 8 percent, Goa 5 percent, Ahmedabad 4 percent, Nagpur 3 percent.

Sales in the three cities of northern India stood at 18,889

Lucknow and 18 percent in Mohali.

Housing sales rose 23 percent in Bhubaneswar and 10 percent in Bhopal while sales value grew by 38 percent in Bhopal and 47 percent in Bhubaneswar, the findings showed. *IANIS*

GCC leasing surges to 31 pc of total market, Bengaluru leads

MUMBAI: Global Capability Centers (GCCs) have leased 22.5 million square feet (mn sq ft) in 2024, accounting for 31 percent of total leasing volumes, according to the latest office market assessment by real estate consultancy Knight Frank India.

Of this, 50 large deals (over 100,000 sq ft each) totaled 12.1 mn sq ft, while 56 mid-sized deals (50,000 - 100,000 sq ft) contributed 4.4 mn sq ft. Additionally, 223 smaller deals (under 50,000 sq ft) accounted for 5.5

mn sq ft of leased space, the report states.

Among cities, Bengaluru recorded the highest total GCC leasing at 9.33 mn sq ft, 66 percent of which (6.18 mn sq ft) came from large deals -- marking a 191 percent surge in absorption. Hyderabad followed, with GCC transactions totaling 5.06 mn sq ft, of which 67 percent (3.41 mn sq ft) were in the large office space category.

Chennai with 89 and NCR with 53 deals also saw good uptake



by GCCs in 2024.

Bengaluru emerged as the dominant market, capturing 42

percent of total GCC leasing volumes with 100 lease transactions -- the highest among all cities.

Across the top eight cities, GCCs executed 329 leasing deals in 2024. Bengaluru led with 100 transactions, followed by Chennai with 89 deals. Both cities saw the highest number of leases in the sub-50,000 sq ft category, Chennai recorded 73 deals in this segment, the highest among all cities, followed by Bengaluru with 66 deals.

In the mid-sized office segment, Hyderabad led with 15 deals, while Bengaluru followed closely with 14 deals. *IANIS*

Mega Dharavi redevelopment project completes over 50,000 door-to-door surveys

MUMBAI: The Dharavi Redevelopment Project (DRP) which aims to transform Asia's biggest slum into a modern urban hub, has completed a record of more than 50,000 door-to-door surveys.

The world's largest, \$3 billion redevelopment project in Mumbai's Dharavi by the Adani Group has been gaining massive local support.

The latest numbers in the surveys are touted as the highest in the history of Mumbai Slum Rehabilitation Authority (SRA), which is a big boost for the survey teams and Dharavi residents, who are eager for the redevelopment to move forward.

According to the latest survey figures, numbering has been completed for 85,000 tenements, while over 50,000 tenements have undergone door-to-door surveys.

Around 1.5 lakh tenements will be rehabilitated, ensuring better housing, infrastructure, and economic opportunities while preserving the dignity of Dharavi's people.

According to a spokesperson of



Navbharat Mega Developers Pvt Ltd, the Adani Group-backed agency doing the redevelopment, after multiple failed attempts in the past decades, Dharavi's redevelopment has finally taken off.

"Once completed, this project will set a global benchmark for human-centric slum redevelopment. This milestone

shows that we are committed to moving forward with benchmark facilities," the spokesperson added.

In December last year, Dharavi Redevelopment Project Private Ltd (DRPPL) rebranded itself as Navbharat Mega Developers Private Ltd (NMDPL) - matching the company's promise of building a modern,

inclusive and vibrant community.

Unlike other slum rehabilitation projects, residents will not be placed in high-rise slums but in well-planned townships, with appropriate facilities like wide roads, green spaces, and proper water and sewage systems etc. These townships will have multi-modal transport hubs.

According to the spokesperson, the townships will include schools, healthcare facilities, playgrounds, community centers and shopping complexes.

"This redevelopment, as well as infrastructure, will not only improve the lives of relocated Dharavikars but also enhance infrastructure and living conditions of the neighborhood and Mumbaikars at large," the spokesperson added.

NMDPL is a special purpose vehicle (SPV) formed as a joint venture between the Maharashtra government and the Adani Group. The name Navbharat, which means "New India," reflects the massive potential this project holds in shaping a better tomorrow. *IANS*

Flexible workspace sector in India reaches all-time high gross leasing volume

NEW DELHI: India's flexible workspace sector registered an all-time high gross leasing volume (GLV) of 12.4 million square feet (MSF) in 2024, a recent report showed.

This marks a 57.5 percent year-on-year growth, reflecting the surging demand for agile, new age and cost-effective office solutions across key cities, according to Cushman & Wakefield's office data.

Flexible workspace sector includes business centers, coworking centers and managed offices.

Flexible workspace sector's gross leasing volume now accounts for 14 percent of India's total office leasing (89 MSF), underscoring its growing significance in the commercial real estate landscape.

Among India's top flexible workspace markets, Bengaluru led with 3.4 MSF of leasing volume, nearly doubling its previous year's tally.

Mumbai, meanwhile, recorded a

3 times growth in GLV, reaching 1.9 MSF, a testament to rising demand in India's financial capital.

Delhi NCR at 2.3 MSF GLV, Hyderabad at 1.6 MSF GLV, and Pune at 1.6 MSF GLV, also emerged as strong flexible

workspace hubs, said the report.

With new companies (GCCs) entering the country and existing companies prioritizing operational flexibility, cost efficiency and end-to-end customization, demand for agile, dynamic, managed of-

fice solutions continues to surge, said Ramita Arora, Managing Director Bengaluru and Head - Flex, India, Cushman & Wakefield.

According to the data, evolving business priorities, the need for flexibility, the shift toward hybrid work models and strong enterprise demand for managed office solutions fuelled historic highs in flex seats leased.

About 224,000 seats were leased in 2024, by end occupiers, from flexible workspace operators, a 44 percent increase over 2023 (156,000 seats).

In terms of cities, Bengaluru again dominated with a 29 percent share (64,000 seats) in total seats leased in the year and maintained its status as India's leading flexible workspace market.

Bengaluru was followed by Pune (39,000 seats), Delhi NCR (38,000 seats), and Mumbai (28,000 seats), with shares of 18 percent, 17 percent and 12 percent, respectively in total seats leased. *IANS*



B'desh Foreign Affairs Advisor-EAM Jaishankar discussed possibility of holding Yunus-PM Modi meeting: reports

DHAKA: Touhid Hossain, the Foreign Affairs Advisor to the interim government in Bangladesh led by Muhammad Yunus, emphasized on the importance of starting the discussions for renewal of the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty during his meeting with India's External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar held in Muscat recently, the Bangladeshi media reported.

"Diplomatic sources said that the meeting between the Bangladesh Foreign Affairs Advisor and the Indian Foreign Minister in Muscat lasted less than half an hour. During the discussion, the two emphasized the importance of working to overcome the challenges that have arisen in the current context of bilateral relations. During their discussion, the topic of organizing a meeting between the Chief Advisor Professor Muhammad Yunus and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit to be held in Bangkok, Thailand, in April also came up," reported Bangladesh's leading daily Prothom Alo.

Quoting Bangladesh Foreign Ministry's

statement, the local media in Dhaka mentioned that during the meeting, that was held on the sidelines of the 8th Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) in Oman's Muscat recently, Hossain also highlighted the importance of holding the meeting of SAARC Standing Committee and urged the Indian government to consider the matter.

EAM Jaishankar and Hossain had last met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in September, marking the first high-level engagement between India and Bangladesh's interim government after former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August 2024

Both the countries also recognized the challenges in bilateral relations and discussed the necessity to work together to address those," the reports detailed.

With a three-day Director General-level conference of the border guards of the two countries starting in New Delhi, both

Hossain and Jaishankar expressed hope that border-related issues will be resolved through discussions at the meeting.

"Met Foreign Affairs Advisor Md. Touhid Hossain of the Interim Government of Bangladesh. Conversation was focused on our bilateral relationship, as also on BIMSTEC," EAM Jaishankar posted on X after his meeting with Hossain last week-

end.

EAM Jaishankar and Hossain had last met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in September, marking the first high-level engagement between India and Bangladesh's interim government after former Prime Minister

Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August 2024.

Even though India continues to bat for the normalization of relations between the two neighboring countries, the current regime in Dhaka has faced massive criticism for making groundless accusations and also targeting minorities, especially the Hindu community in Bangladesh, since the mass uprising of students and the dramatic fall of Hasina's Awami League government, last year.

In December, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Dhaka, conveying New Delhi's concerns, especially those related to the safety and welfare of minorities in Bangladesh, to the top leadership of the interim government.

The 6th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectorial Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit is scheduled in Bangkok, Thailand, from April 2-4, later this year.

Bangladesh, which will take over as the next chair of BIMSTEC at the summit, is hoping for a Yunus-PM Modi meeting taking place during the Bangkok event. *IANS*

China accuses Trump administration of "serious regression" over position on Taiwan

BEIJING: The update made by the US Department of State in its online fact sheet on America's relations with Taiwan has drawn flak from China, with the latter accusing the Trump administration of serious regression for its position on Taiwan, CNN reported.

As per CNN, China has accused the Trump administration of "serious regression" in its position on Taiwan, after the State Department removed a line from its website stating that the US does not support Taiwan independence.

According to the CNN, the State Department dropped the phrase "we do not support Taiwan independence" as a part of the "routine" update to its online fact sheet on US relations with Taiwan last week.

The change was welcomed by Taipei but triggered one of the strongest rebukes from Beijing since Donald Trump returned to the White House.

Citing Chinese Foreign Ministry, CNN reported that China urged the US to "immediately correct its mistakes" over the

removal of the line, or risk "further serious damage" to China-US relations.

"The US State Department's revision of the list of facts regarding US-Taiwan relations represents a serious regression in its stance on Taiwan...(and) sends a seri-

'This is further evidence of the US stubbornly adhering to the erroneous policy of using Taiwan to contain China. We urge the US to immediately'

ously erroneous message to the separatist forces advocating for Taiwan independence," ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said at a regular news conference, CNN reported.

"This is further evidence of the US stubbornly adhering to the erroneous policy of using Taiwan to contain China. We urge the US to immediately correct its mistakes," Guo added further.

In a statement to CNN, the State Department described the wording change as part of a standard update. "As is routine, the fact sheet was updated to inform the general public about our unofficial relationship with Taiwan," a State Department spokesperson said and also added that America committed to its "one China policy" - a line that is still stated in the updated fact sheet, as per CNN. *ANI*

"America will go bankrupt..." Elon Musk criticizes high trade deficit, expenditure of tax money

WASHINGTON, DC: Tesla CEO and DOGE Head, Elon Musk, criticized the current state of US spending, saying that an average citizen in the country "should be mad as hell" over the expenditure of the tax money.

In an interview with Fox News telecast Musk said that US President Donald Trump inherited a USD 2 trillion trade deficit. He further warned that "America will go bankrupt" if it fails to bring the deficit under control.

Criticizing the USAID spending, he added, "I think the average taxpaying American should be mad as hell because their tax money is being poorly spent."

"Well, the - the overall goal is to try to get a trillion dollars out of the deficit. And if we if the deficit is not brought under control, America will go bankrupt. This is a very important thing for people to understand. A country is no different from an individual, in that if an individual overspends, an individual can go bankrupt, and so can a country. And the out, the mas-

sive waste, fraud, and abuse that has been going on, which is leading to a USD 2-trillion-a-year deficit, that's what the president was handed on Jan 20th, a USD 2 trillion deficit. It's insane," he said in the interview.

"I think the average taxpaying American should be mad as hell because their tax money is being poorly spent"

Donald Trump agreed, saying, "Yes, we inherited it." He said that inflation is back, but he has nothing to do with it, as the Democrats ran the country for the last 4 years.

"No, think of it, inflation is back. And they said, "...I had nothing to do with it. These people have run the country. They spent money like nobody has ever spent. They were given USD 9 trillion to throw out the window - USD 9 trillion, and they spent it on the Green New Scam, I call it. It's the greatest scam in the history of the country. One of them. We have a lot of them, I guess. But one of them," Trump said.

Stating that there are "hundreds of billions of dollars worth of fraud" in the system, Trump said Musk is doing an "amazing job" with the DOGE. *ANI*

Yunus govt turning Bangladesh into terrorism hub: Sheikh Hasina

NEW DELHI: The ousted Prime Minister of Bangladesh accused the Mohammed Yunus-led interim government of turning the nation into a hub of terrorism and lawlessness. She also vowed to return home assuring help to families suffering and delivering them justice.

She said that Yunus himself has said that he has no experience in running a nation, then he should refrain from doing so, accusing him of remaining silent as dozens of police officers were killed last year during student-led riots against her quota reforms and allowing lawlessness to take over.

"Yunus has no experience of running a government. He dissolved all inquiry committees and unleashed the terrorists to butcher people. They are destroying Bangladesh. We will oust this government of terrorists. Inshallah," said Hasina.

While addressing the Awami League supporters online from India recently, she said, "I will return. The killers will face justice in Bangladesh. Their reckoning will happen on Bangladeshi soil. Perhaps

that's why Allah has kept me alive."

After laying low since the coup and subsequent ouster from Bangladesh, Hasina has started to address her party workers and reach out to her supporters through speeches and messages virtually.



Sheikh Hasina

has started to submit dossiers to the Indian Government for her extradition to Bangladesh. On the other hand, the students' outfits riled up and even destroyed the memorial residence of the founding father of Bangladesh, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, at Dhanmondi 32 in Dhaka.

Last week while addressing the media on the sidelines of the World Governments Summit in Dubai, Yunus vowed that he would not allow key figures from the ousted Sheikh Hasina regime to escape punishment, noting that the people of Bangladesh would not forgive his administration if they fail to bring them to justice. "We'll bring her (Hasina) to justice. It has to happen, otherwise people will not forgive us," Yunus said.

"We have already initiated the legal process, and we hope it will proceed smoothly so that we can bring her to justice. It is essential that this happens, otherwise, people will not forgive us," Yunus was quoted as saying by the leading Bangla daily, Prothom Alo. IANS

Sripalee Mela celebrates deep-rooted India-Sri Lanka civilizational ties

COLOMBO: The 2025 'Sripalee Mela', celebrating the people-to-people contact and cultural ties between India and Sri Lanka, concluded in Horana, a town in the Kalutara district of Western Province of Sri Lanka, early this week.

India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka Santosh Jha, Sri Lankan Minister of Public Security and Parliamentary Affairs Sunil Watagala and former Member of Parliament Patali Champika Ranawaka graced the closing ceremony of the festival as special guests. In his speech, High Commissioner Jha highlighted the historic ties between India and Sri Lanka.

"During his remarks, the High Commissioner highlighted that Sripalee College is a testament of

India-Sri Lanka people to people connect. It stands as a symbol of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore's vision, nurturing creativity and strengthening India and Sri Lanka cultural bonds," stated a post on X by the High Commission of India in Sri Lanka.

Sripalee College has a longstanding linkage

with India. The foundation stone of the College was laid by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore in 1934 on the invitation of Wilmot A. Perera, the founder of the college.

Tagore visited Sri Lanka three times - in 1922, 1928, and 1934 - and all of his visits left a lasting impact on Lankan culture. The legacy of Rabindranath Tagore left a deep imprint on Sri Lankan culture, art, music, literature and education.

Sharing a strong civilizational and historical connect, the cultural bond stands as one of the strongest pillars in India-Sri Lanka relations.

In December 2024, Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayaka visited India on his first foreign visit after assuming office.

During his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it was reaffirmed the India-Sri Lanka bilateral partnership is underpinned by deep-rooted cultural and civilizational ties, geographical proximity and the people-to-people relations. Both leaders acknowledged the need to further promote cultural and tourism links between the two countries. IANS

"During his remarks, the High Commissioner highlighted that Sripalee College is a testament of India-Sri Lanka people to people connect"

"He's a leader, he gets it done": Donald Trump praises Elon Musk

WASHINGTON DC: US President Donald Trump lauded Tesla CEO Elon Musk as the smartest person to work for the US and praised his technological prowess, drawing special attention to Starlink and gave Musk a go-ahead for bringing back two American astronauts, who have been in the International Space Station.

He made the remarks during an exclusive interview to Fox News, where both the US President Donald Trump and Tesla CEO Elon Musk answered some of the most pressing concerns.

Talking about how media had attacked the duo time and again, US President Trump said, "They tried it. Then they stopped. Actually, Elon called me. He said, you know, they're trying to drive us apart... They said, 'We have breaking news. Donald Trump has ceded control of the presidency to Elon Musk. President Musk will be attending a cabinet meeting tonight at 8 o'clock'... It's just so obvious. They're so bad at it. I used to think they were good

at it. They're actually bad at it, because if they were good at it, I'd never be president, because I think nobody in history has ever gotten more bad publicity than me. But you know what I have learned, Elon? The people are smart. They get it. They get it. They really see what's happening."

Speaking about his relationship with Elon Musk, Donald Trump said, "I respect him. I've always respected him. I never knew that he was right on certain things. And I'm usually pretty good at this stuff. He did Starlink. He did things that were so

advanced that nobody knew what the hell they were".

Trump shared the example of how people of disaster-hit North Carolina requested for access to Starlink, which the US President was previously unaware of.

"I called him (Musk) and I said, listen, they really need it. And he got like thousands of units of this communication and it saved a lot of lives. He got it immediately, and I said, that's pretty amazing", Donald Trump said. ANI



Shimla

THE HILL-STATION WITH RICH COLONIAL HISTORY

Shimla is the capital of Himachal Pradesh and a popular hill-station among Indian families and honeymooners. Situated at the height of 2200m, it was the summer capital of British India. The hill station still retains its old-world charm with beautiful colonial architecture, pedestrian-friendly Mall Road and the ridge lined up with multiple shops, cafes and restaurants.

Shimla is well connected with many cities and is just 4 hours from the nearby city of Chandigarh. The city has an airport as well; however, there aren't many daily flights from here. The railway station connects Shimla with the plains and is famous for the Kalka-Shimla train route; a UNESCO listed World Heritage site.

Shimla is often covered along with nearby towns of Kufri, a hill-station almost always covered by snow and Chail, famous for a huge palace and the highest cricket ground in the world. Tourists also visit the famous

Jakhu Temple and engage in sightseeing at various viewpoints during their trip to Shimla.

The weather is pleasant for most of the months with tourists flocking especially during the summer months. The winters are cold with some days of snow from mid-December till February end.

Must Know Before You Travel to Shimla

Vehicles are not allowed on the Mall Road, however there's a car parking facility at a walkable distance.

From the lower mall road to the upper mall road, there's a lift facility at INR 10 per head. The lift operates from 8:00 AM - 9:00 PM.

It is preferable to hire an experienced driver to drive in steep hilly regions of Shimla.

Photography is strictly not allowed in most temples; however, feel free to enquire before clicking pictures.

Some of the attractions like Kali Bari Temple, Green Valley are over hilltops hence they require tourists to go on foot. It's best to be precautionary if you have

physical ailments.

Attractions like Jakhu Temple have a ropeway/cable car to reach the top, which can be availed with a ticket. It's mostly free for children below the age of 3.

PLACES TO VISIT IN SHIMLA

Jakhoo Temple: Set amidst the lush green background of the Shivalik hill ranges, the highest point in Shimla, the Jakhu Temple is an ancient site dedicated to the Hindu god - Hanuman. Jakhu Temple has the world's largest Hanuman statue, which is visible from most parts of Shimla.

Mall Road: Known to be one of the busiest and more commercial areas of Shimla till date, this stretch is a mini-world in itself. The Shimla Mall Road truly celebrates the spirit of the hill town. Apart from houses and hotels, the hills are mostly covered by tourist rush.

www.holidify.com

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com



Philosophy

ROBERT ADAMS

The power that knows the way will take care of you. The one who makes the sun shine, the grass grow, the apples grow perfectly on apple trees, the food that sustains us, nourishes us. Everything has been lovingly provided for us. Have faith, trust the power that knows the way.

This is the first step, to have total faith and total trust in the infinite, the one. You may call this God, if you want to. Makes no difference what you call it. It is within you. It is without you. It is everywhere. All you have to do is to surrender to it. Surrender all of your doubts, your frustrations, your fears, everything that has besieged you for so long. Give it all up. It doesn't belong to you. Be free of it.

When you're able to do this, you can go further, and understand that there never was a body to begin with. The

you're already free and liberated. Therefore when you give yourself the information that you have to do something to become liberated, there is immediately conflict.

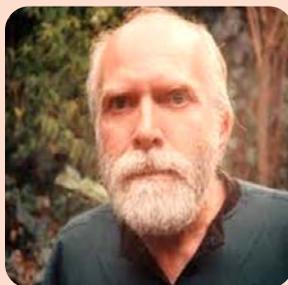
Your programmed belief in being a body-mind causes this conflict. This is the only problem you have. It is your conflict. And this conflict comes from programming when you were a child, from samskaras, ... This is where the conflict comes from.

For it tells you, 'I'm just a human being, I'm just a frail body. I have to suffer sometimes, sometimes I have to be happy.' This is all a lie. There never was a you that has to suffer. There never was a you that has to be happy.

There is no one in you who needs to be happy. There is no one in you who needs to be miserable. They are both impostors. So every time you try to exchange negative conditioning to positive conditioning, you're causing con-

Trust in the Power that knows the Way

There is no one in you who needs to be happy, or miserable



Robert Adams

world, as it appears, does not exist. The universe, as it appears does not exist. Yet you are, and you will always be. What are you and what will you always be?

There is no answer for that, for the mind can never comprehend the unknown, the transcendental, the Self. The mind can never know these things. The mind only knows itself as a body, as a doer. Therefore you have to transcend the mind, transcend the thoughts, transcend the world, transcend the universe, and enter the silence, where there is total bliss, and peace and harmony.

Do not be in conflict with your thoughts and the self. When there is no conflict there are no thoughts. Thoughts only appear because there's conflict. By conflict I mean, you're worrying about getting rid of your thoughts, you're doing sadhana, meditation, pranayamas, japa. All of these things cause conflict.

For aren't you saying, 'I'm doing these things to become liberated. I'm doing these things to become free.' The reason there's conflict is because

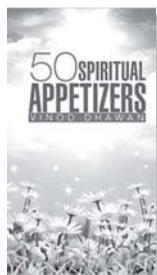
conflict. This is the reason psychology and psychiatry does not work. For they're trying to make you normal. Who wants to be normal? How boring.

The truth is do not wish to be anything. There is nothing you wish to be. There is nothing you have to become. There is no future, for you to become anything. Right this moment you are the one, and there never was another. Right this moment you are totally free, without thinking a thought, without trying to make anything happen.

Excerpted from Satsangs in 1992. The 97th birth anniversary of Robert Adams was observed on January 21

50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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Jac O'Keeffe

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Can Pakistan sustain its bold policy reforms?

SARA NAZIR

Pakistan's journey towards progress has always been a story of resilience, determination, and ambition. In a region fraught with economic and political challenges, the country has often been seen as struggling to keep up. However, the Pakistan Reforms Report 2025 presents a different picture - one of transformation, efficiency, and forward-looking policies that signal a commitment to real change. Compiled by Mishal Pakistan, a governance and economic research institution, the report highlights over 120 reforms implemented within just 11 months, painting a hopeful yet pragmatic outlook for the country's future.

Governance overhaul

One of the boldest steps outlined in the report is the reduction of the federal

Economic revival

For a country that has battled economic instability for decades, the figures presented in the report are surprisingly reassuring. Inflation, which peaked at an alarming 38% in May 2023, has been brought down to just 4.1% by December 2024. Such a drastic decline is no coincidence - it reflects deliberate fiscal discipline, smart monetary policies, and a focused effort to restore economic confidence.

Similarly, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have climbed from a precarious \$4.4 billion to a robust \$11.73 billion, providing much-needed financial security. This growth is crucial not only for investor confidence but also for shielding the economy from external shocks. A shrinking trade deficit, down from \$27.47 billion to \$17.54 billion,

One of the boldest steps outlined in the report is the reduction of the federal workforce by 150,000 positions. On the surface, such a move might seem harsh, raising concerns about unemployment. However, this decision is aimed at streamlining government operations, cutting unnecessary expenditures

further supports the idea that Pakistan is moving toward a more sustainable economic model.

Beyond the numbers, these improvements translate into

workforce by 150,000 positions. On the surface, such a move might seem harsh, raising concerns about unemployment. However, this decision is aimed at streamlining government operations, cutting unnecessary expenditures, and fostering efficiency. For years, an overstuffed and sluggish bureaucracy has been a major hurdle in governance, draining national resources without adding proportional value. By trimming the fat, the government is taking a decisive step toward creating a more agile and responsive administration.

Another critical reform is ensuring that at least 33% of government board members are women. This move is more than just a symbolic gesture; it marks a tangible shift toward inclusivity in decision-making. Women have historically been underrepresented in governance structures, and this policy sends a strong message that their voices are not just welcome but necessary for Pakistan's progress. If sustained, this could lead to broader changes in corporate and institutional leadership, fostering a more balanced and diverse governance ecosystem.

something more meaningful: relief for ordinary citizens. Lower inflation means reduced costs of essential goods, increased purchasing power, and an improved standard of living. A more stable economic environment fosters job creation, business growth, and long-term prosperity.

Investment and industry

For years, Pakistan's investment climate has been plagued by red tape, regulatory confusion, and policy inconsistency. The report, however, suggests that the tide is turning. The signing of 34 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Saudi Arabia, totaling \$2.8 billion, reflects growing international confidence in Pakistan's economic potential. These agreements, spanning energy, infrastructure, and technology sectors, could provide a much-needed boost to industrial growth.

(The author is a visiting faculty at the Department of Politics and International Relations, International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI). She holds an MS in Strategic Studies from Air University Islamabad)

South Asia Monitor

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Beyond the 2024 elections: Sustaining democracy and development in Jammu & Kashmir

ALLEN DAVID SIMON

Jammu & Kashmir held elections after a decade in September-October 2024 and for the first time following the 5th August 2019 abrogation of Article 370 (special status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir) and reorganization of the state into a union territory, which had made it subject to greater New Delhi control.

The October 2024 Jammu & Kashmir elections marked a shift in the Indian government's approach towards militant separatists from marginalization to electoral inclusion. While uncertainties remain over the inclusion of political extremists into the electoral fold, the results of

forms the frontline in the hostilities between India and China-Pakistan that have become the dominant feature of South Asian geopolitics.

What the elections signified

The October 2024 results gave the INDI Alliance, comprising the National Conference (NC), Indian National Congress (INC) and Communist Party of India (Marxist), a majority of 49 seats in the 90-member legislative assembly. The comeback of the biggest player in the Kashmir valley, NC from 15 in 2014 to 42 (23.43% votes) in 2024, coupled with the massive fall of Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) from 28 seats to just six

and to relinquish administrative powers to an autonomous regional government is not without cause. The Chinese aggression along the Line of Actual Control in the Ladakh region and the ever-present Pakistani threat across the Line of Control makes Indian insecurities a justified one. Having fought both Pakistan and China for control over the region, Indian policy has always leaned towards securing a firmer grip over the region.

Regional-religious divide

The outcome shows a clear disjuncture between the two areas and the two communities constituting Jammu & Kashmir. The Muslim majority Kashmir valley gave a clear verdict in favor of the INDI alliance, whereas the Hindu majority Jammu region gave overwhelming support to the BJP. This may further fracture the two communities in the region, which has already suffered through the 1990 genocide and exodus of the Kashmiri Pandits. While the Hindu vote stood firm with the BJP, its failure to win goodwill in the Kashmir valley reflects how Article 370 remains a key poll issue for Kashmiri Muslims. Reports over the BJP's less than discrete engagement with secessionist politicians, allegedly to fragment the Muslim vote in the Kashmir valley between the established NC, PDP and smaller secessionist parties, had left the established parties disgruntled. The Union government was accused of using the lieutenant governor (the union territory's constitutional head) to act as the long arm of New Delhi.

(The author is a postgraduate student pursuing M.A. in Political Science at St. Xavier's College (Autonomous), Kolkata & M.P.A. from Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.) South Asia Monitor

For detailed story visit
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A historically unstable yet strategically important region, Jammu & Kashmir is a land contested between India, Pakistan and China, even though it is largely administered by India. These elections, though local, shape the geopolitical status of South Asia

the election decisively showcase a disjuncture in the political affiliation of Hindu and Muslims inhabiting the region. The geopolitically contested region has historically been politically volatile with a need for transforming the relations and re-established people's trust in the Indian government.

A historically unstable yet strategically important region, Jammu & Kashmir is a land contested between India, Pakistan and China, even though it is largely administered by India. These elections, though local, shape the geopolitical status of South Asia. Moreover, Jammu & Kashmir's recent discoveries of lithium have given it a seminal role in the global semiconductor wars and the Sino-Indian rivalry. Located between three nuclear powers, Jammu & Kashmir

seats (8.87% votes) has ended the bipolar competition between the Valley parties. In parallel, the fall of the INC to only six seats has ended its relevance in the Jammu region. This coincides with the emergence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with 29 seats (25.64% votes), with all seats from the Jammu region where the BJP has been able to consolidate, making the BJP the principal opposition in the union territory legislature.

The less-than-eager BJP-led Union government held elections in response to the Supreme Court verdict in December 2023 ruling that the Indian government must ensure that election is held for the legislature in Jammu and Kashmir within a year. The Modi government's apprehension in granting statehood for Jammu and Kashmir



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INDIA'S AVOIDABLE TRAGEDIES

India's most auspicious religious festival, Kumbh Mela, held every 12 years, has taken toll of 18 more lives including women and children at New Delhi Railway Station on February 15. Information available in public domain points to at least five red flags, which should have alerted the Railways to action. The question is was any official or body actually monitoring for signals in real-time to preempt such a tragedy? The answer is a big "NO".

Every railway station, like any public space, has a crowd-holding capacity. Shouldn't a surge in passengers have been prevented inside the station both by the Railway administration and the local Police. The surge of railway bookings and unreserved-seat sales should have been enough of a red flag for the railway admin to immediately increase personnel at key areas around the station.

According to reports from various sources more than 1500 tickets were sold every hour and approximately 8000 tickets were sold between 6 to 8 pm daily during the days of the Kumbh Mela. On the tragic day, more than 10,000 tickets were sold. As a result of surge in ticket sales, the number of passengers swelled on the platforms towards Ajmeri Gate, where several eastbound trains, including those to Prayagraj, were scheduled.

The thousands of passengers crowding the station platforms, foot-over bridges, and stairways, the clustering of trains at designated platforms, formed the recipe for the stampede. With little to no space to move, even a single announcement of a platform change or, of trains with similar-sounding names would be enough to trigger a disaster. Passengers might decide to switch trains, or travelers finding themselves on the wrong platform, would rush to new announcements. As the station, its platforms, and over bridges became overcrowded, confusion over train announcements of trains having 'Prayagraj' in their names triggered the stampede.

At time of the stampede, around 60 Railway Protection Force (RPF) and 20 Delhi Police personnel were stationed across the 16 platforms of New Delhi Railway Station, the report said. During festivals, such as Holi, Deepawali, Chhath, and Durga Puja, a major socio-religious event like the Maha Kumbh also sees a surge in passenger and pilgrim movement on railway routes passing through Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Delhi.

According to a news report in January, Indian Railways had announced it would operate around 13,000 trains, including 10,000 regular and 3,000 special trains, over the 50 days during the Kumbh Mela in Prayagraj. And why not? It's the largest peaceful gathering of people in the world. With around a week remaining until the end of the Maha Kumbh, over 50 crore devotees is estimated to have attended the largest religious gathering in the world. The railways introduced special trains and implemented specific entry and exit routes at various stations to manage crowds. However, despite these measures, the stampede in New Delhi occurred. It reveals the handling of such large crowds probably needs more efforts than were in place. And appears that Indian officials haven't learnt nor trained to manage such crowds.

In addition to the tragic Saturday more than 30-people were estimated killed and hundreds injured, at the Kumbh Mela site due to stampedes earlier.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

KRITI SANON BEGINS SHOOT OF ANAND L RAI'S DIRECTORIAL 'TERE ISHK MEIN'

Kriti Sanon has begun shooting for her upcoming film, 'Tere Ishk Mein'. It is directed by Anand L Rai and stars Dhanush and Kriti in the lead roles.

'Tere Ishk Mein', a spiritual sequel to Dhanush-Sonam Kapoor's superhit film Raanjhanaa, is one of the highly anticipated movies in Bollywood this year. Kriti plays the role of Mukti in the upcoming film, a character loved by many after the makers released her first look from this upcoming romantic drama.

Taking to her Instagram handle, Kriti shared a photo in which she was seen holding a clapboard with 'Tere Ishq Mein' written on it. While sharing the pictures, the 'Mimi' actress wrote,

"Day 1, let's go. Such a good feeling being back on set. Doing what I love the most!"

Almost a month ago, the 'Tere Ishk Mein' makers announced Kriti's casting by sharing an intriguing promo. The video shows Kriti's character Mukti, pouring kerosene on herself as she prepares to set herself on fire. Later, she could be seen sitting in a corner and lighting a cigarette. *ANI*



HRITHIK ROSHAN AND AMEESHA PATEL'S REUNION IGNITES FANS' WISHES

Actors Hrithik Roshan and Ameesha Patel's recent reunion sparked a wave of excitement among fans on social media

The duo, who shared screen space in the iconic "Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai," has left fans eagerly hoping for a sequel. As photos and videos from their reunion went viral, many are now demanding "Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai 2." Ameesha also took to her Instagram handle and shared a heartwarming photo of herself posing with Hrithik, adding their popular song "Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai" to the post.

In the image, both flaunted radiant smiles as they posed together. For the caption, the 'Gadar' actress wrote, "About last night - lovely evening with SONIA's ROHIT - for me, you'll always be my Duggu BROSAN first and then @hrithikroshan the superstar later." Notably, fans were quick to react, with many demanding 'Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai 2.' *IANS*



TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Aaj Ki Raat : **Stree 2**
- 2 Tu Hain Toh Main Hoon: **Sky Force**
- 3 Ishq Hai: **Mismatched - Season 3**
- 4 Jo Tum Mere Ho : **Jo Tum Mere Ho**
- 5 Sajni: **Laapataa Ladies**
- 6 Millionaire: **GLORY**
- 7 Khoobsurat: **Stree 2**
- 8 Ishq: **Ishq**
- 9 Mere Mehboob Mere Sanam:
Bad Newz
- 10 Taras: **Munjya**

Kajol masterfully juggles work and knitting in a fun new video

Actress Kajol recently showcased her multitasking skills.

Taking to her Instagram handle, the 'Dilwale' actress posted an amusing and heartwarming video where she is seen knitting while simultaneously getting her hair styled by her hairdresser. Kajol captioned the video, "I always land up with cool people doing cool things... multitasking is fun when ur laughing and working and knitting all together! Amen! #knitting #multitasking #coolpeople."

The video captures the actress sitting while getting her hair styled and knitting at the same time. The way she knits without even looking suggests that Kajol is a pro at it. This is not the first time that the 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' actress has shared her knitting skills on social media. *IANS*



Nia Sharma on DIFFICULTIES OF FINDING FRIENDS

Television actress Nia Sharma recently opened up about the challenges of building meaningful friendships in the fast-paced entertainment industry.

While known for her self-sufficiency and independence, the 'Naagin' actress shared how the demanding nature of her career often makes it difficult to find time for companionship, especially when juggling hectic schedules and constant work commitments. Nia emphasizes that having company in any form can be both distressing and rejuvenating.

Speaking about finding the perfect companion while hitting the gym, the actress shared, "I've always believed in being self-sufficient and independent. Be it making bigger life decisions or keeping up with the daily routine - I'm heavily reliant on myself. Not taking away from team work or having the company of friends. But, in today's day and age, everyone is so busy and actors are only whirling from one set to another - it's almost difficult to find companion and friends in the times when you're free or want to destress." IANS



Bhumi Pednekar on learning from PM Modi's 'Exam Warriors'

Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar, who is awaiting the release of her upcoming movie 'Mere Husband Ki Biwi', has shared her greatest learning. The actress said that she considers PM Narendra Modi's golden words about sleep which he mentioned in his book 'Exam Warriors'.

A video, shared by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting of India on their official Instagram shows the actress talking about how she uses sleep to get the maximum output from her work.

She said, "As I grew up, I realized one thing which our dear Prime Minister has also said in his book, 'Exam Warriors' that sleep is a weapon, sharpen it. When I was young, I used to think that I had to wake up late and I didn't feel like sleeping". IANS

Kiara Advani ENJOYS the perfect SUNDAY

Actress Kiara Advani recently gave us a glimpse of her Sunday through a fun social media post.

The 'Kabir Singh' actress took to the stories section of her Instagram and dropped a picture filled with some mouth-watering delicacies, including dosa, idli, and lemon rice, among other things. Her post was captioned, "@manishmalhotra05 perfect Sunday."

Work-wise, Kiara Advani is presently busy with her highly-anticipated film, "Toxic". The diva has shot simultaneously in English and Kannada for the Yash-starrer.

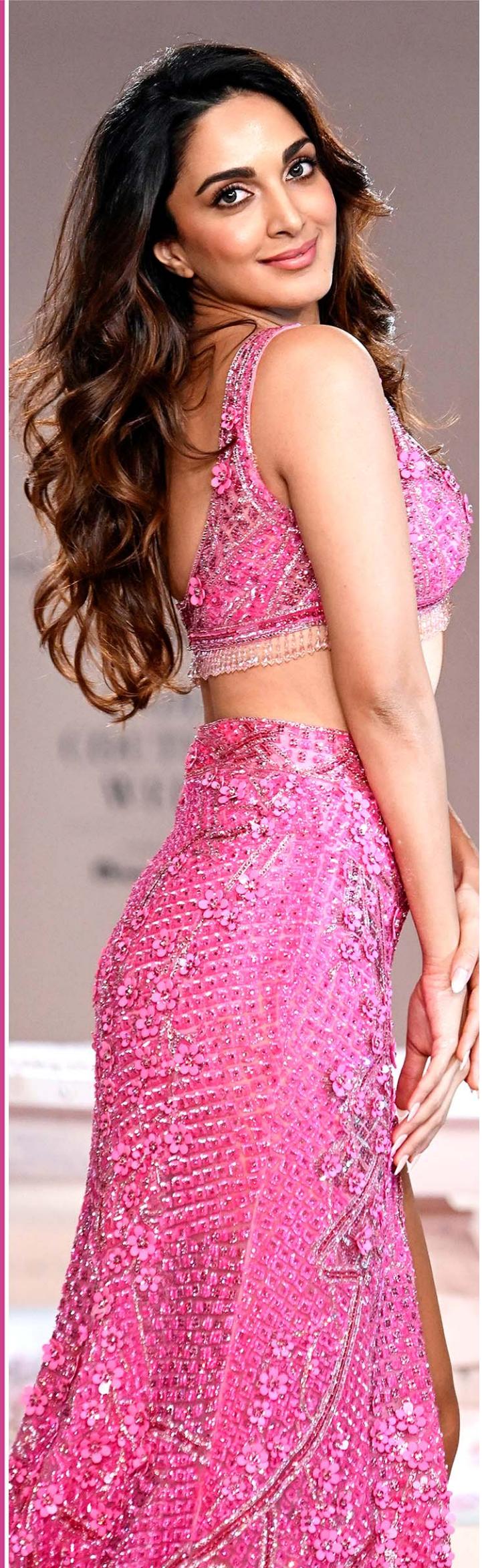
A source close to the production shared, "Kiara Advani is currently shooting for 'Toxic' in both English and Kannada language simultaneously, making it her first bilingual project. The process is challenging, but Kiara has been dedicated to getting the nuances of both languages right. Kiara's dedication is truly commendable, and she's been effortlessly switching between the two languages, bringing her A-game to the front."

Previously, Kiara Advani completed the Bangalore schedule of the film which reportedly incorporated some critical scenes that explore crucial aspects of the storyline.

A source close to the production house revealed, "After completing the pivotal schedule in Goa, Kiara Advani and Yash have now arrived in Bangalore to begin a long and crucial leg of shooting for Toxic. This schedule will delve into the film's intense narrative, and both Yash and Kiara are thrilled to bring this unique story to life."

The project will be helmed by National Award-winning filmmaker Geetu Mohandas. Along with Kiara Advani and Yash as the lead, "Toxic" will also see Lady Superstar Nayanthara, and Darrell D'Silva in important roles, along with others.

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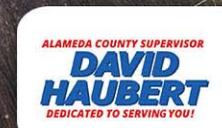
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