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Falguni Rana:
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► Details on page 22

US imposes visa
restrictions on
travel agencies

► Details on page 30



Somy Ali
donates \$1000 to
PM Cares fund

► Details on page 36

TERROR HUBS

50 percent of mosques in Pakistan serve as
terror fronts: PoJK activist Sajjad Raja



Army personnel keep vigil as they patrol the area along Line of Control, in Poonch on Tuesday. (ANI Photo)

LONDON: Professor Sajjad Raja, Chairman of the National Equality Party for Jammu Kashmir Gilgit Baltistan and Ladakh (NEP JKGBL), revealed the harsh realities of life in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and highlighted Pakistan's ongoing support for terrorism.

While speaking to ANI on Operation Sindoor, Professor Sajjad Raja stated that while the operation has made terrorist groups and the Pakistan Army more careful, it hasn't instilled fear.

"The army itself doesn't die. It sends out puppets to die, so they are not scared but will certainly be more cautious now that they've been exposed," he said.

On the existence of terror camps, Professor added, "Yes, there are many terror camps still operating in PoJK and across Pakistan. In fact, around 50% of mosques in Pakistan have become fronts for terrorism." He pointed out how these camps have evolved to avoid detection, becoming more discreet but still training people for attacks.

Cont'd on page 10



'Whole of
Pakistan within
our range'

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US tariffs may
hamper medical
tourism industry

► Details on page 18



'M4M' movie
World Premiere
makes history

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HIGHLIGHTS

Bollywood:


Somy Ali donates \$1000



Former actress Somy Ali has extended her support to the victims of the recent violence in Kashmir by donating \$1,000 to the PM Cares Fund

Lifestyle:

Nancy Tyagi wows Cannes



The influencer, who made her debut at the festival last year, wore a stunning, self-designed gown that garnered praise from the Internet

Cover Story:

TERROR HUBS



Speaking to ANI on Operation Sindoor, Prof Sajjad Raja said the operation has made terrorists and Pakistan Army careful but hasn't instilled fear

Techbiz:

Tariff impact on medical tourism



As medical expenses continue to climb in the US, a growing number of patients are looking overseas for more cost-effective treatment options

Community:

Cannes 2025



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Parvati Valley: 'Hippie Paradise'



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E-SUBSCRIPTIONS & EDITORIAL: Vidya Sethuraman: Tel: 510-491-4867 • e-mail: vidya@indiapost.com

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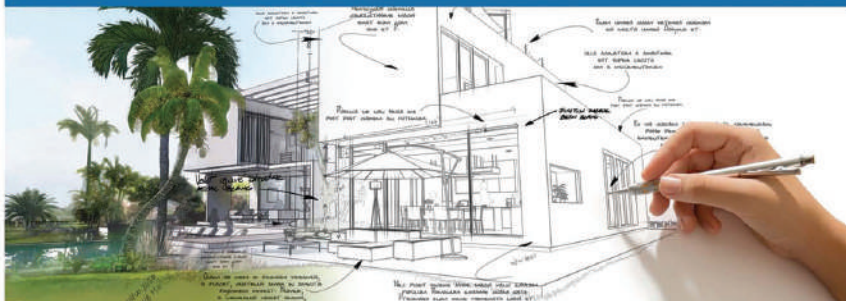
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TERROR HUBS

50 percent of mosques in Pakistan serve as terror fronts: PoJK activist Sajjad Raja

LONDON: Professor Sajjad Raja, Chairman of the National Equality Party for Jammu Kashmir Gilgit Baltistan and Ladakh (NEP JKGBL), revealed the harsh realities of life in Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK) and highlighted Pakistan's ongoing support for terrorism.

While speaking to ANI on Operation Sindoor, Professor Sajjad Raja stated that

On the existence of terror camps, Professor added, "Yes, there are many terror camps still operating in PoJK and across Pakistan. In fact, around 50% of mosques in Pakistan have become fronts for terrorism." He pointed out how these camps have evolved to avoid detection, becoming more discreet but still training people for attacks

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have evolved to avoid detection, becoming more discreet but still training people for attacks.

Explaining Pakistan's obsession with terrorism over development, Professor Raja said the country functions as a "garrison state" where the military dominates policy, economy, and society. "The Pakistan Army runs 54 commercial companies and thrives on the narrative that India is an existential threat," he stated.

He added that the army manipulates public perception, creating conflict with India whenever its internal credibility wanes, as seen after the recent fallout with Imran Khan.

Commenting on the Pahalgam terror attack and India's response with Operation Sindoor, Professor Raja acknowledged that the action sent a strong signal globally but warned that China's backing of Pakistan remains a significant obstacle. "As long as China protects Pakistan, the threat remains. The international community must unite against state-spon-

sored terrorism," he said. Describing the abysmal living conditions in PoJK, he said, "For nearly 7 million people, there is not even a single hospital with proper facilities. There are no



Professor Sajjad Raja

proper roads, schools, or universities. Everything, from healthcare to education, is run on donations by the people themselves." ANI

Whole of Pakistan within our range...they will have to find deep hole: Top Army Air Defense officer on Pak Army's plans to relocate headquarters

NEW DELHI: Lt Gen Sumer Ivan D'Cunha, Director General of Army Air Defense, highlighted the country's military capabilities and stated that India possesses the arsenal capability of striking targets across the full depth of Pakistan in the backdrop of Operation Sindoor.

In an interview with ANI, Lt Gen D'Cunha said, "The whole of Pakistan is within range." He stated that even if they relocate

"The whole of Pakistan is within range." He stated that even if they relocate the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters (GHQ) from Rawalpindi to regions like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), they will have to "find a deep hole."

the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters (GHQ) from Rawalpindi to regions like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), they will have to "find a deep hole."

India's offensive strikes during Operation Sindoor targeted key Pakistani airbases with precision, utilizing loitering munitions to destroy high-value targets.

Lt Gen D'Cunha said, "I just like to say

that India has an adequate arsenal of weapons to take on Pakistan right across its depth. So, from its broadest to its narrowest, wherever it is, the whole of Pakistan is within range. We are absolutely capable, from our borders or even in depth, where we can take on the entire Pakistan. And the GHQ can move from Rawalpindi to KPK or wherever they want to move, but they are all within range, so they will

have to really find a deep hole." Modern indigenous technology, including long-range drones and guided munitions, played a crucial role in the operation's success.

Lt Gen D'Cunha further underscored that the armed forces' primary duty is protecting the nation's sovereignty and its people.

"Our job is to protect our sovereignty, our people... So, I think that the very fact that we have been able to protect our motherland from this onslaught, which was aimed at causing a lot of problems in population centers and in our cantonments, the very fact that we have given this reassurance to our people, not only to our civil population... a lot of our own jawans, officers, wives were staying in cantonments. And they were also equally concerned about these drone attacks. And the very fact that we ensured that this did not manifest in any casualties, I am sure it not only made the soldier feel proud, it made the families feel proud. And finally, the population of India feels proud. I think that's the takeaway."

India's Operation Sindoor showcased its preparedness in modern warfare, particularly in neutralizing drones and other advanced technologies.

The operation highlighted India's integrated command structures, enabling

seamless coordination between different military branches.

Operation Sindoor reflected India's "Shishupala Doctrine," which involves ex-



Lt Gen D'Cunha

ercising patience until a predefined threshold of provocation is crossed, followed by decisive action.

The operation shifted from reactive defense to proactive security doctrine, showcasing India's willingness to take bold action against terrorism. ANI

EAM Jaishankar meets Dutch PM Dick Schoof, thanks Netherlands for strong stand against terrorism

THE HAGUE: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar recently met with the Netherlands Prime Minister Dick Schoof in The Hague, thanking him for the European nation's unequivocal condemnation of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir which had resulted in the death of 26 innocent civilians.

The two leaders also discussed strengthening bilateral cooperation across various sectors.

Following the meeting, Jaishankar posted on X, "Delighted to call on PM Dick Schoof today in The Hague. Conveyed the warm greetings of PM Narendra Modi and thanked him for the Netherlands' firm and resolute stance against terrorism. Appreciate his commitment to taking the India-Netherlands partnership to newer heights. Assured that our teams will work hard to achieve these goals."

The visit comes as part of Jaishankar's six-day official tour to the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany from May 19 to 24. The meeting with Schoof marks one of the key high-level engagements during the



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar meets Netherlands Prime Minister Dick Schoof, in The Hague. (ANI Photo)

Netherlands leg of the trip.

PM Schoof, in his own post on X, stated, "Good to receive the Indian Minister of Foreign Affairs S. Jaishankar at the Catshuis.

First of all, I expressed my support for India's fight against terrorism after the terrible attack last month in Pahalgam. It is good for all parties that the violence be-

tween India and Pakistan has not escalated further."

"In addition, we discussed the Strategic Partnership. This concerns long-term co-operation between the Netherlands and India in areas such as trade, innovative technology, agriculture and security. In a changing world, it is important for both the Netherlands and India that we can continue to count on each other. I look forward to welcoming Prime Minister Modi to our country soon to discuss this further," he added.

Earlier, Jaishankar met with the Indian diaspora in The Hague and praised their contributions in strengthening ties between the two nations. He also met Defense Minister Ruben Brekelmans, with whom he discussed shared security concerns and the potential for a bilateral defense partnership.

Jaishankar also held wide-ranging talks with Dutch Foreign Minister Caspar Veldkamp in The Hague, focusing on expanding bilateral cooperation and working together more closely with the European Union. IANS

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Himachal apple farmers demand complete ban on Turkish imports citing support to Pakistan

SHIMLA: Apple farmers in Himachal Pradesh have demanded a complete ban on the import of Turkish apples into India, citing Turkey's political stance during heightened tensions between India and Pakistan.

A joint delegation of fruit growers and farmers, led by Himachal Pradesh Sanyukt Kisan Manch Convener Harish Chauhan, submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister and President through the Governor of Himachal Pradesh.

Speaking to ANI, Chauhan expressed deep anger over Turkey's support to Pakistan, particularly during Operation Sindoor. "Turkey is an ally of our enemy nation. It supported Pakistan during a critical time when India was fighting against Pakistan. At the same time, back in February 2023, when a devastating earthquake hit Turkey, the Government of India helped them on humanitarian grounds. In return, Turkey stabbed us in the back by aiding Pakistan," he said.

Chauhan said Turkey currently tops the list of countries exporting apples to India, a trend he claims is hurting local growers. "The farmers of Himachal, especially those in the apple belt, are the worst af-

fectured. That is why we are demanding a complete ban and boycott of all Turkish apple imports into India," he said.

The delegation pointed out that India

economic backbone while benefiting our own farmers," Chauhan added.

He said the Governor assured the delegation that their memorandum would be



spends between Rs800 to Rs1,000 crore annually on apple imports, with a significant chunk going to Turkey. "We must strike at the economic roots of enemy-supporting nations like Turkey. If we stop importing Turkish apples, it will break their

forwarded to the Prime Minister and President. Chauhan also thanked farmer groups and traders across Madhya Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttarakhand, who have pledged to boycott Turkish apples.

"Through the media, I want to thank the people of India, traders, and farmer groups who have taken a vow not to eat or buy Turkish apples. 140 crore Indians have decided not to consume these apples, and that sends a powerful message," he said.

The delegation also urged the central government not to reduce import duties on apples, highlighting past lobbying efforts by Turkey and the United States for zero duty. "If the government reduces import duty on apples, it will be nothing short of a death warrant for farmers in Himachal, Jammu & Kashmir, and Uttarakhand," Chauhan said.

He called for the minimum import price (MIP) to be raised to at least Rs100 per kg and for higher import duties on apples from all countries, including Iran, to protect domestic growers. "This is our demand, and we hope the Indian government takes swift action in the interest of our farmers," he said.

The farmers' strong demand to ban Turkish apple imports highlights their determination to protect local livelihoods and send a clear message against foreign support to adversaries. ANI

If US can extradite Rana, why can't Pakistan hand over Masood Azhar and Hafiz Saeed: India's Ambassador to Israel

TEL AVIV: Highlighting that Pakistan has for decades pursued cross-border terrorism into India with impunity, India's Ambassador to Israel J P Singh has said that it is high time that Islamabad hands over chiefs of Pakistan-based global Islamist terror organizations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) to India.

In an interview with Israel's i24NEWS, Singh highlighted that these Pakistani out-

Pahalgam attack in Jammu and Kashmir, last month.

"The root cause is these two groups - Jaish-e-Muhammad and its leader Masood Azhar and Lashkar-e-Taiba and its leader Hafiz Saeed. They (Pakistan) need to do a very simple thing - when the preamble includes goodwill and friendship, they just need to hand over these terrorists to us," Singh said during the interview.

"When the US can extradite Tahawwur

serted that Operation Sindoor, launched by the Indian Armed Forces on May 7 in response to the Pahalgam terror attack, is paused and not over, adding that the fight against terrorism will continue.

"The IWT or the Indus Waters Treaty has been put in abeyance. But, the other IWT - that is, India's war against terrorism, will continue," said Singh.

In response to a question on the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) by India following the Pahalgam terror attack, Singh said that the treaty was signed in the spirit of goodwill and friendship.

"Over the past so many years, what we have seen - we were allowing water to flow and what was Pakistan doing? They were allowing terror to come from Pakistan to the Indian side. There was a lot of frustration among the people that this cannot go on like this. After this attack, our Prime Minister said that blood and water cannot flow together. That was the reason we decided to put IWT in abeyance," said Ambassador Singh.

Speaking about Operation Sindoor, Singh stated that the Indian forces de-

stroyed several terror launching pads and killed over 100 terrorists.

He emphasized that it was only after the Indian retaliation that Pakistan panicked and reached out to India, and conse-



India's Ambassador to Israel J P Singh

quently, both sides entered into a ceasefire on May 10.

"We have set a new normal and the new normal is that we will follow an offensive strategy. Wherever terrorists are, we have to kill those terrorists and we have to destroy their terrorist infrastructure... As of now, the ceasefire is intact," he said. IANS

"The root cause is these two groups - Jaish-e-Muhammad and its leader Masood Azhar and Lashkar-e-Taiba and its leader Hafiz Saeed. They (Pakistan) need to do a very simple thing - when the preamble includes goodwill and friendship, they just need to hand over these terrorists to us,"

fits have been involved in innumerable terror attacks on India, including the 2001 Parliament attack, the 2008 Mumbai attacks, the Uri base camp and Pathankot air base attacks in 2016, 2019 Pulwama attack, and now the heinous April 22

Rana (26/11 Mumbai terror attacks accused), why can't Pakistan hand over Hafiz Saeed and Lakhvi (India's most wanted and UN-designated terrorist)?" he questioned.

The seasoned Indian diplomat also as-

How Pakistan's attempts to drive wedge in India-Afghanistan relations hit a wall during Operation Sindoor

KABUL/NEW DELHI: India and Afghanistan continue to redefine the historic friendship between the two countries even as Delhi's Khari Baoli, Asia's largest dry fruit and spice market, bears the brunt of current geopolitical situation and lack of imports from Kabul.

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar's last week call with Amir Khan Muttaqi, the Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, has sent a clear message that the Taliban regime, despite having not been granted official recognition by the Indian government, continues to see New Delhi as its most trusted and reliable partner in the region.

The "good conversation" between EAM Jaishankar and Muttaqi, during which Kabul not only condemned the April 22 Pahalgam terrorist attack but also out rightly dismissed attempts being made to create distrust with New Delhi, would have given sleepless nights to Pakistan's political and military leadership across the Durand Line.

"Welcomed his (Muttaqi) firm rejection of recent attempts to create distrust be-

tween India and Afghanistan through false and baseless reports. Underlined our traditional friendship with the Afghan people and continuing support for their develop-



Amir Khan Muttaqi

ment needs. Discussed ways and means of taking cooperation forward," EAM Jaishankar posted on X after the call.

Hafiz Zia Ahmad, the Director of Public Communication at the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan-Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IEA-MoFA) asserted that the discussion

between the two ministers focused on enhancing bilateral relations, promoting trade, and upgrading diplomatic engagement.



EAM, S. Jaishankar

"The Indian Foreign Minister considered the relations between Afghanistan and India to be historical and therefore he stressed the importance of these relations as a milestone for the two countries and for their positive development," Ahmad told IANS in an exclusive chat while detailing

that the issues of facilitating visas for traders, patients and release of Afghan prisoners in India were also discussed during the phone call.

Only last week, Afghanistan had termed Pakistan's allegations of India launching missile strikes on the Afghan territory during Operation Sindoor as absolutely "baseless" and "unfounded".

In an interview with Afghan media outlet Hurriyat Radio on May 10, Afghanistan's Defense Ministry spokesperson Enaitullah Khawarzmi had out rightly rejected Pakistan's allegations that India had carried out a missile strike on Afghan soil, labeling such claims as false and unfounded.

The reaction from Kabul came a few hours after the Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri had rejected Pakistan's "totally frivolous allegations", terming them as nothing but "ludicrous claims".

Kabul had earlier also expressed deep concerns about the escalating tensions, following the heinous Pahalgam terrorist attack which had resulted in the death of 26 innocent civilians.

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India awarded WHO certificate for eliminating trachoma at 78th World Health Assembly

GENEVA: At the 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva, World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus awarded India the Certificate of Elimination of Trachoma as a Public Health Problem.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) stated that this recognition highlights India's sustained efforts in disease elimination, its focus on preventive healthcare, and its continued commitment to the vision of Health For All.

Geneva. The Indian delegation, led by Punya Salila Srivastava... is actively participating in the Assembly, reflecting India's continued commitment to strengthening global health systems and advancing international collaboration," the ministry said.

India's presence at the World Health Assembly underscores its larger role in global health governance. The delegation's active involvement aligns with India's consistent efforts in supporting

the day.

May 20 is expected to see the adoption of the agreement and discussion on the Proposed Program Budget for 2026-2027. Additional highlights include a Ministerial Roundtable on data and sustainable financing on May 21, and the presentation of public health prizes and awards on May 23.

The Philippines' Teodoro Javier Herbosa has been elected President of the 78th World Health Assembly. One of the



The milestone was announced during India's participation in the 78th World Health Assembly, which officially began on May 19 in Geneva. According to a post shared by the MoHFW on X, the Indian delegation is being led by Punya Salila Srivastava, Secretary at the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

The milestone was announced during India's participation in the 78th World Health Assembly, which officially began on May 19 in Geneva. According to a post shared by the MoHFW on X, the Indian delegation is being led by Punya Salila Srivastava, Secretary at the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

"Today marks the commencement of the 78th World Health Assembly in

multilateral health initiatives and highlights the nation's leadership in public health challenges, including neglected tropical diseases such as trachoma.

The 78th World Health Assembly is scheduled to run from May 19 to 27 under the theme "One World for Health."

According to WHO, May 19 marked the official opening, with deliberations on the Pandemic Agreement scheduled later in

Assembly's major challenges this year is reconciling a large funding shortfall ahead of the next two-year program budget.

With the United States' intended withdrawal from WHO further impacting finances, a proposed 20 percent hike in mandatory member contributions is on the table but remains uncertain. Broader staffing and governance reforms are also expected to be discussed. ANI

India to provide 600 artificial limbs in Guatemala Humanitarian Initiative

REENA BHARDWAJ

GUATEMALA CITY: India is set to launch a major humanitarian initiative in Guatemala, providing approximately 600 artificial limbs to those in need, officials announced today.

The Indian Embassy in Guatemala City confirmed that all administrative procedures have been completed for an artificial limb fitment camp to be held within the premises of Guatemala's Ministry of Defense.

The 50-day camp, scheduled to begin in October 2025, will be conducted by a specialized team from Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti (BMVSS), the organization behind the globally acclaimed Jaipur Foot prosthetic.

"This humanitarian initiative will not only

provide life-enhancing support to its beneficiaries but will also serve as a testament to the deepening bonds of friendship and cooperation between India and Guatemala," said India's Ambassador to Guatemala Manoj Kumar Mohapatra.

The project comes under India's "India for Humanity" program and will be the 33rd such camp organized globally. The initiative coincides with celebrations marking the 53rd anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Prem Bhandari, Chairman of Jaipur Foot USA, recently visited Guatemala at Ambassador Mohapatra's invitation to commemorate this diplomatic milestone

and formalize arrangements for the camp.

"We believe in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. All are our brothers and sisters in the world and we will provide free artificial limbs to them. Even our Prime Minister Narendra Modi believes in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam policy," Bhandari told ANI.

During the visit, Bhandari handed over the official confirmation letter to Guatemalan officials including Claudine Ogaldes, Executive Secretary of CONRED (Guatemala's National Coordination for Disaster Reduction), and William Oswaldo, Inspector General of the Army by Prem Bhandari on behalf of the Indian Embassy in Guatemala ANI

Over 23,000 Pakistanis jailed across the world over several crimes

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs told the country's National Assembly that over 23,000 Pakistanis are behind bars in several countries across the world on the account of far and wide ranging crimes, Dawn reported recently.

According to Dawn, as many as 23,456 Pakistanis are currently behind bars overseas, with the largest number of inmates, 12,156, being held in Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has informed Pakistan's National Assembly.

The statement was made during the lower house's question hour. Dawn reported that in a written reply, the ministry added that the United Arab Emirates holds the second highest number of Pakistani inmates, totaling 5,292.

It was reported that of the 400 Pakistanis imprisoned in China, most of them were convicted over the cases of drug smuggling, rape, robbery, murder, and counterfeit currency cases.

Dawn reported that 450 Pakistanis imprisoned in Bahrain were convicted of drug trafficking, possession of drugs and fraud. Afghanistan had convicted 88 Pakistanis of overstay and security-related offences.

In other countries of West Asia, the track record of Pakistanis continued to remain poor as in Qatar, 338 Pakistanis were sentenced for theft, murder, narcotics, money laundering, rape, and financial frauds, while Oman convicted 309 in drug trafficking, murder, robbery, and sexual assault cases.

Dawn said that Malaysia convicted 255 Pakistanis for similar offences besides illegal entry.

The matters continued to remain worse across several European countries.

Of the European nations, Austria shared that Pakistanis were held for cases of illegal entry, human and drug trafficking and murder, besides sexual harassment, were convicted, however the number was not provided.

Dawn said that while Norway did not share details of charges against three Pakistanis detained, Finland had convicted two Pakistanis but did not share details of the offences.

France and Germany had convicted 168 and 94 Pakistanis respectively. ANI

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Time

June 8th 2025, Sunday, 9:30 AM

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Square Yards' total expenses surge 32 pc to Rs 1,613 crore in FY25

MUMBAI: Real estate marketplace Square Yards' total expenses rose by over 32.21 percent to Rs 1,613 crore in FY25, from Rs 1,220 crore in FY24, according to its financials.

The increase was mainly driven by higher employee costs, commission payouts, and finance costs, according to the company's provisional financial statement.

Employee benefit expenses remained the largest cost head, accounting for nearly 38 percent of the total spend.

These costs increased by 15 percent, rising from Rs 535 crore in FY24 to Rs 618 crore in FY25.

The company also spent significantly more on commissions, which jumped from Rs 330 crore to Rs 556 crore.

Finance costs rose from Rs 154 crore to Rs 201 crore, while other operational expenses moved up slightly from Rs 141 crore to Rs 159 crore.

Despite the rise in costs, the Gurugram-based firm managed strong growth on the revenue front.

Operating revenue grew 41 percent to Rs 1,410 crore in FY25 from Rs 1,001 crore in the previous year.

The company crossed the Rs 1,400 crore revenue mark for the first time, driven largely by its core businesses -- mortgages and real estate services -- that contributed 90 percent of its income.

The remaining 10 percent came from digital and interior products. Square Yards also reported a gross profit of Rs 316 crore in FY25, up 52 percent from Rs 208 crore in FY24, with a gross margin of 22 percent.

The firm reported a positive EBITDA of Rs 46 crore during the year and claimed to have remained operating cash flow positive.

The company's gross transaction value (GTV) also saw impressive growth, rising more than 44 percent to Rs 59,093 crore in FY25 from Rs 40,828 crore in FY24. *IANS*

Real Estate POST

16 India Post

www.indiapost.com

May 23, 2025

Urban renewal in Israel increases as share of housing construction

TELAVIV: Urban renewal accounts for 28 percent of the total 204,000 of all housing units approved by planning institutions in Israel, and 30% of all construction starts in the market. Every third apartment sold in 2024 - within the framework of a Pinui Binui (remove and then build) complex.

This is according to data compiled in the Government Urban Renewal Authority's 2024 Report which the Authority declared marks the "Revolution in the Real Estate Market." *ANI/TPS*

Center sanctions 3.76 lakh more houses under PMAY-G for Assam

NEW DELHI: In a big push for rural development in Assam, the Union government recently announced the sanctioning of 3.76 lakh more houses for the state under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin (PMAY-G).

The announcement was made by Union Minister for Agriculture, Farmers Welfare and Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, during a virtual 'Grihapraves' ceremony held in Guwahati to mark the completion of 55,000 houses under the same scheme.

Speaking at the event, Chouhan said the government is committed to improving rural infrastructure and ensuring better living conditions for poor and underprivileged families.

He also appreciated Assam's achievement of completing 20 lakh houses under PMAY-G, describing it as a remarkable mile-



stone.

The event was attended by several beneficiaries who have moved into their newly built homes.

They were felicitated for successfully completing their houses under the central hous-

ing scheme.

In a step aimed at empowering rural women, the Union Minister also launched the 'Lakhimi Mistri' initiative.

This program will train women in masonry skills, opening up employment opportunities for

them in the construction sector.

As a symbolic start to the initiative, safety kits were distributed to five women who will receive training under the new scheme.

Chouhan also virtually inaugurated 21 'Knowledge Centres' across Assam. These centers have been set up under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and are aimed at supporting farmers by giving them better access to information and agricultural resources.

During the event, Chouhan praised the Assam government for effectively implementing rural development schemes.

He especially congratulated Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for his leadership in making these efforts successful.

Chief Minister Sarma, who was present at the ceremony, thanked the Union government for its continued support.

He said that the state is fully committed to empowering farmers, women, and rural communities through inclusive and sustainable development. *IANS*

India offers unique cost structure for office fit-outs in Asia Pacific: Report

MUMBAI: India presents a unique cost structure for office fit-outs compared to the broader Asia-Pacific region, a recent report said.

Builders' works account for 32 percent of fit-out costs in India, significantly lower than the 41 percent average in the Asia-Pacific region - reflecting India's competitive labor market, according to a JLL report.

Mechanical and electrical services, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC), electrical, fire and UPS systems, account for 29 percent of overall costs in India,

surpassing the APAC average of 21 percent.

This higher percentage suggests that landlord provisions in India may be less comprehensive, requiring tenants to invest



more in these essential systems.

"India's fit-out cost structure presents a unique profile within the APAC region. While we see significant savings in labor-inten-

sive areas, there's a clear trend towards higher investment in technology and mechanical and electrical services. This reflects both the challenges and opportunities in creating modern, sustainable workspaces in India," said Jipujose James, Managing Director, PDS, India, JLL.

Companies planning fit-out projects in India are advised to carefully consider these factors, along with potential currency fluctuations and import duties, to accurately budget and create attractive, modern office spaces that meet their specific needs and objectives, he added. *IANS*

India Post News Service

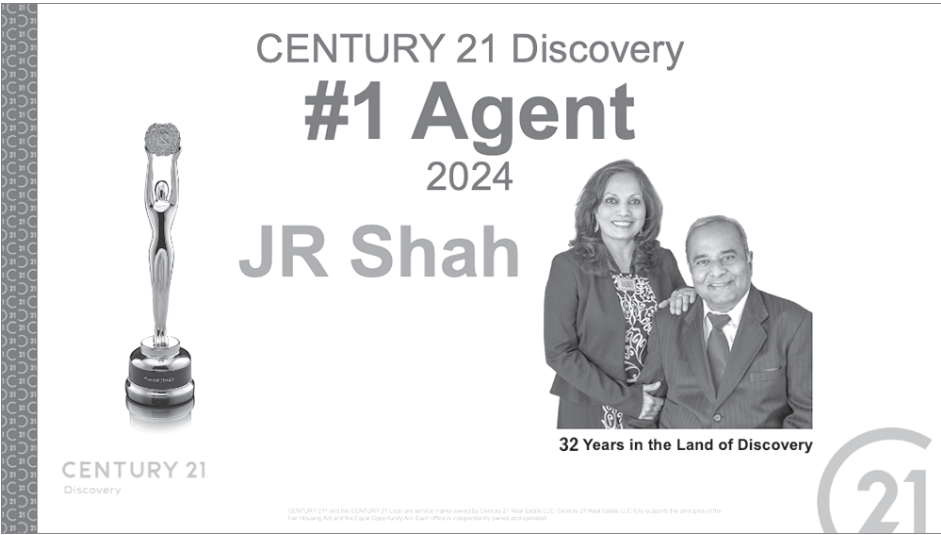
FULLERTON, CA: Century 21 Discovery proudly announces that Broker and Realtor® JR Shah has been recognized as the #1 agent in the office and has achieved Centurion status for 2024—an honor awarded to the top 1 percent of Century 21 agents nationwide.

"JR's extensive knowledge and experience enabled him to deliver exceptional service across the full spectrum of real estate, including commercial and investment properties," said Joe Lins, Broker, Owner, and President of Century 21 Discovery.

A 32 plus-year real estate veteran, JR Shah has consistently ranked among the top 1 percent of Century 21 agents across the country. He specializes in both residential and commercial real estate throughout California and the Phoenix, Arizona area.

JR holds a Master's degree in Accounting and an MBA in Finance. He is a Certified Negotiation Expert (CNE), a 1031 Tax-Deferred Exchange Specialist,

JR Shah conferred the 2024 Century 21 Award for Excellence



and a designated Commercial Specialist. He is fluent in English, Gujarati, and Hindi. His CFO and educational background

help him sell small to large businesses in all areas, including M&A (Merger and Acquisition).

In addition to his professional achievements, JR is an active member of Pratham, a network dedicated to promoting primary education for underprivileged children, and TiE, a global non-profit that fosters entrepreneurship through mentorship and networking.

He also maintains membership in several professional organizations, including the Pacific West Association of Realtors, the California Association of Realtors, and the National Association of Realtors.

Besides real estate, JR enjoys tennis, golf, and traveling with his wife, Rashmi.

For more information about JR Shah's real estate services, call (714) 335-9048.

Water fountain for home Vastu: Tips for placement, benefits and types

HARINI BALASUBRAMANIAN

Water fountains have always been an important decorative element in homes, parks, offices and other commercial spaces. The sound of flowing water adds tranquility and freshness to any space. It is said that the water element brings positive energy into the surroundings. According to Vastu Shastra, water fountains should be placed in the north, east or northeast directions, which attracts positivity and good luck.

If you too are planning to add a water fountain to your home or office, follow these Vastu Shastra and Feng Shui tips, to bring in prosperity, luck and fortune.

Vastu significance and benefits of water fountain

According to Vastu, flowing water features such as fountains can be kept in the house as they denote the flow of money, wealth, happiness and positive energies. They are believed to bring good luck and peace, uplifting the overall ambience with their soothing sound and appealing decor. Placing the water fountain in the Vastu-recommended direction is considered to attract positive cosmic energies to the house.

Moreover, the Vastu rules also apply for the selection of the right material and color for the water fountain as these have a direct impact on various aspects of our life.

In Feng Shui, the flowing water of the fountain is believed to reactivate stagnant chi, restore balance to the area and pro-

duce beneficial yang energy.

In case one is unable to keep an actual water fountain, they can keep a painting of flowing water, river or waterfall on the north wall of their living room. The north direction is associated with the god of wealth, Kubera. This space also represents career and opportunities.

Vastu benefits of water fountain artwork

If placing real water fountain is not pos-



sible, waterfall paintings or artwork can be placed in the house to attract wealth, prosperity and peace.

Choose large paintings or artwork with colors such as blue and green and tinge of white and silver for maximum benefits.

Avoid paintings that show a turbulent

flow of water.

Select frames made of wood or metal.

Direction of water fountain as per Vastu North: This is the direction of wealth, ruled by god of wealth Kubera, and is considered suitable for the placement of water features like fountain as per Vastu. This placement is said to attract wealth and prosperity.

East: East, the direction ruled by the king of devatas, is another favorable place

to keep a water fountain, as it will bring monetary benefits.

Northeast: One can keep a water fountain in northeast if the above placement is not possible. This placement will attract good fortune and ensure financial strength.

Northwest: Placement of water fountains in the northwest corner can have a positive impact on one's financial stability and career growth. The northwest is associated with the air element and placing a water fountain can help create a harmonious environment.

When placing a water fountain in the house, one should ensure the proper alignment and flow of water for maximum benefits as water signifies prosperity and flow in Vastu.

Directions to avoid

South: The south sector is associated with the fire element and associated with fame and recognition. According to Feng-shui, one should avoid placing a water fountain in the south corner, as it is not considered auspicious location since water douses fire.

Southeast: The southeast direction, ruled by the fire element, is not considered a suitable direction for the placement of water fountains. Placement of water fountains in this direction can result in financial loss and disharmony.

Southwest: The southwest direction is associated with stability and support and should be kept undisturbed. Typically, one can keep heavy furniture in the southwest area but avoid keeping water fountains.

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For detailed story visit
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Govt unlikely to renew IndiGo pact with Turkish Airlines

NEW DELHI: The government is unlikely to extend the commercial airline IndiGo's leasing agreement with Turkish Airlines due to strained diplomatic relations following Turkey's open support for Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor launched by India to avenge the killings of 26 tourists.

"The current pact, which enables IndiGo to operate wide-body aircraft on the Delhi-Istanbul route, expires on May 31. The government review is underway and the deal is unlikely to be renewed given the broader diplomatic context," according to an NDTV Profit report, citing people in the know.

IndiGo currently operates over 500-seater Airbus A330s on lease from Turkish Airlines for its Istanbul flights. The partnership also includes a codeshare deal that allows IndiGo to sell connections to over 40 destinations in Europe and North America via Istanbul. *IANS*

■ **India's pharma sector ranked 3rd in world, leads in affordable drugs**

NEW DELHI: India's pharmaceutical industry, which has emerged as the largest supplier of affordable generic medicines, is poised to grow at 7.8 percent year-on-year in April 2025 driven by strong demand and new products, according to experts at India Ratings.

The country's pharma sector is now ranked 3rd in volume and 14th in value globally and contributes as much as 20 percent of the world's supply of medicines. The turnover of the Indian pharma industry touched Rs 4,17,345 crore in 2023-24 growing steadily at over 10 percent annually for the past five years.

"For the common man, this means more medicines at lower prices, better healthcare and jobs in factories and labs across the country. From small towns to big cities, India's pharma growth is creating opportunities and saving lives," a government official said. *IANS*

India restricts entry of ready-made garments, processed food from Bangladesh

NEW DELHI: In a significant trade policy shift, India has restricted import of ready-made garments (RMG), processed food and other items from Bangladesh to India via land ports, effective immediately.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, issued a notification imposing land port restrictions on the import of certain goods such as Readymade garments, processed food items etc., from Bangladesh to India. *IANS*



US tariffs may hamper medical tourism industry: Report

NEW DELHI: As medical expenses continue to climb in the US, a growing number of patients are looking overseas for more cost-effective treatment options and suggested tariffs may impact the medical tourism industry, according to a new report.

US trade policy has seen notable changes recently, particularly with regard to import tariffs on countries such as China.

Though these policies are usually justified by economic and geopolitical considerations, they also impact other areas, including the medical device industry and, more specifically, medical tourism.

One growing outcome is how these tariffs are affecting medical tourism - the practice of traveling to another country to receive healthcare services, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

The US has imposed steep tariffs on a range of medical products imported from China, including syringes and needles, rubber medical and surgical gloves, and facemasks.



"These items are integral to a wide variety of medical procedures and daily healthcare operations. The imposition of tariffs on such goods has disrupted supply chains, constrained hos-

pital procurement strategies, and driven up the cost of healthcare delivery across the US," said the report.

In response to these rising costs, a growing number of

cilities.

For example, the average cost of a knee replacement surgery in the US can exceed \$50,000, but the same procedure in India or Mexico can be performed for \$8000-\$12,000.

As US healthcare providers face increased operational costs due to tariffs - especially on imported surgical instruments, diagnostic equipment, and protective gear - the price gap between domestic and international care continues to widen, creating a financial incentive for patients to consider treatment overseas.

"While the intended impact of tariffs may not have been to effect healthcare, they do shape patient behavior. The rise in the cost of medical devices ultimately leads to more out-of-pocket expenses for patients," said Alexandra Murdoch, Senior Medical Analyst at GlobalData. *IANS*

IEA ranks India world's largest market for electric 3-wheelers, above China

NEW DELHI: India has been ranked the world's largest market for electric three-wheelers, above China, for the second straight year with a 20 percent surge in sales to 7 lakh vehicles in 2024, according to a report by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The IEA's Global EV Outlook 2025 report points out that the three-wheeler market is highly concentrated, with China and India accounting for more than 90 percent of electric and conventional 3W sales.

"Electrification of 3Ws in China has stagnated at less than 15 percent over the past three years. In 2023, India overtook China to become the world's largest market for electric 3Ws, and it maintained this position in 2024, with sales growing close to 20 percent year-on-year to reach nearly 7,00,000 vehicles," the report states.

The report states that this rising trend is likely to continue with the

government's support under the new PM E-DRIVE scheme, which supported the roll-out of more than 3,00,000 electric 3Ws for commercial use in 2024.



According to the report, China, India, and Southeast Asia remain the world's largest 2/3W markets, accounting for around 80 percent of 2024 global sales, with 2/3Ws serving as the primary mode of private passenger transport in these regions.

"India's increasingly dynamic electric 2W market hosted a total of 220 OEMs in 2024, up from 180 in 2023, although the four market leaders accounted for a combined 80 percent of the 1.3 million electric 2Ws sold in the country in 2024 (6 percent of the overall 2W market)," the report said.

While the upfront purchase price of electric 2Ws remains higher on average than that of conventional 2Ws, increasing competition is prompting OEMs to offer more affordable electric models. *IANS*

Good discussions on expediting first tranche of India-US trade pact: Piyush Goyal

NEW DELHI: Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said he had fruitful talks with US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick towards concluding the first tranche of India-US Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA).

India and US are working to sign the first tranche of BTA to bring down tariffs before the agreed timeline of the fall of 2025, as the terms of reference for the pact have already been finalized.

"Good discussions with Secretary @Howard Lutnick towards expediting the first tranche of India-US Bilateral Trade Agreement," Goyal posted on X social media platform.

Earlier, Goyal had said that "very good negotiations" with the US were underway.

India presents a compelling case to the United States for a bilateral trade deal, given the outlook on growth and demography.

"Looking at the growth, India offers in the next 25-30 years with a large, aspirational, young population who will add to the demand for goods and services, we



Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal meets United States Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick (ANI Photo)

believe India will be a compelling case to enter into a good agreement with the US,"

Goyal had told reporters.

If both the countries come to an agree-

ment on reducing tariffs, it would lead to higher trade for US and India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Trump have set an ambitious target of \$500 billion bilateral trade by 2030 in a joint statement during the Indian PM's recent visit to Washington, DC.

Trump claimed last week that India offered to remove all tariffs on American goods, but added that he was in no rush to finalize a trade deal despite the apparent breakthrough.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also said last week that the ongoing trade negotiations are complex.

"Between India and the US, trade talks have been going on. These are complicated negotiations. Nothing is decided till everything is. Any trade deal has to be mutually beneficial; it has to work for both countries. That would be our expectation from the trade deal. Until that is done, any judgment on it would be premature," EAM Jaishankar said while speaking to reporters. IANS

IMF slaps 11 more conditions on Pakistan, flags tensions with India as big risk

NEW DELHI: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has slapped 11 new conditions on Pakistan for the \$ 7 billion life-line that it has extended and also flagged the rising tensions with India as a huge risk for the cash-strapped country.

The new conditions that have been imposed include approval of a new Rs 17.6 lakh crore budget, increasing debt servicing surcharge on electricity bills and lifting restrictions on the import of more than three-year-old used cars, according to a report in Pakistani newspaper Express Tribune.

The Staff Level report, which the IMF released last week, also said that "rising tensions between India and Pakistan, if sustained or deteriorate further, could heighten risks to the fiscal, external and reform goals of the program".

The report further stated that tensions between Pakistan and India have risen significantly over the past two weeks but so far the market reaction has been modest with the stock market retaining most of its recent gains and spreads widening moderately.

The IMF has shown Pakistan's defense budget for the next fiscal year at Rs 2.414

lakh crore, which represents an increase of Rs 25,200 crore or 12 percent. Compared to the IMF's projection, the government has indicated allocating over Rs 2.5 lakh crore, which is an 18 percent increase after the conflict with India.

The IMF has also imposed a new condition of securing parliamentary approval of the fiscal year 2026 budget in line with the IMF staff agreement to meet program

The IMF has shown Pakistan's defense budget for the next fiscal year at Rs 2.414 lakh crore, which represents an increase of Rs 25,200 crore or 12 percent. Compared to the IMF's projection, the government has indicated allocating over Rs 2.5 lakh crore, which is an 18 percent increase after the conflict with India

targets by end-June 2025.

"The report revealed that the IMF has slapped 11 more conditions on Pakistan for the sake of just \$7 billion lending, taking the total conditions to 50," the Express Tribune report states.

The IMF has shown the total size of the federal budget at Rs 17.6 trillion, including Rs 1.07 lakh crore for the development

spending with an overall deficit of Rs 6.6 lakh crore.

A new condition has also been imposed on the provinces where the four federating units will implement the new Agriculture Income Tax laws through a comprehensive plan, including the establishment of an operational platform for processing returns, taxpayer identification and registration, a communication campaign, and a

compliance improvement plan. The deadline for the provinces is June this year.

According to the third new condition, the government will publish a governance action plan based on the recommendations of the Governance Diagnostic Assessment by the IMF. The purpose of the report is to publicly identify reform measures to address critical governance vulnerabilities. IANS

India's manufacturing sector increasingly attractive to global investors: S&P Global

NEW DELHI: India has made notable progress in enhancing its competitiveness and making its manufacturing sector more attractive to global investors, a recent S&P Global report said.

While manufacturing value added accounts for a modest 17.2 percent of the country's real gross domestic product (GDP), the government has implemented targeted policy interventions to build domestic manufacturing capacity and strengthen India's role in global supply chains.

Beyond the near-term impact, therefore, India can benefit from the increasing trade protectionism, which may catalyze supply-chain diversification, according to the report.

India is poised to maximize opportunities as the global trade and cooperation environment evolves. The country has grown visibly in size, scale and international impact over the past three decades and is on track to become the world's third-largest economy by fiscal 2030-31. IANS



Nancy Tyagi Wows Cannes for the second time with SELF-DESIGNED SILVER GOWN

CANNES: Nancy Tyagi, a Delhi-based fashion influencer, has once again made a statement on the red carpet at the Cannes Film Festival.

The influencer, who made her debut at the festival last year, wore a stunning self-designed gown that has garnered praise from the internet. The custom creation featured a plunging neckline, a corseted bodice adorned with glittering sequins, and a multi-layered tulle skirt. The gown's structured design and rose florets added to its grandeur. Videos of Nancy's appearance on the red carpet have been doing the rounds on the internet.

Sufi Motiwala, a fashion influencer, shared a video of Nancy's red carpet appearance on Instagram, captioning it "Nancy Tyagi's second majestic Cannes slay".

Nancy's look was completed with statement-making jewel pieces, nail art, and a sleek center-parted twisted bun.

Her makeup look featured silver smokey eyes, winged eyeliner, and a brown lip shade. Last year, Nancy made headlines after she debuted on the Cannes red carpet in a beautiful pink gown. According to her social media handle, the gown took 30 days, 1000 meters of fabric to be made, and weighed over 20kg. ANI

NANCY'S LOOK WAS COMPLETED WITH STATEMENT-MAKING JEWEL PIECES, NAIL ART, AND A SLEEK CENTER-PARTED TWISTED BUN

Timeless Elegance in Every Thread: Weaving stories of culture through sustainable fashion!

NEW DELHI: When heritage meets sustainability, the result is nothing short of magic--and Geruo Jaipur is the perfect embodiment of that spellbinding fusion. Born in the heart of Rajasthan and infused with the soul of traditional Indian artistry, Geruo Jaipur is not just a fashion label--it's a movement. A movement that celebrates the spirit of handcrafted luxury, champions ethical fashion and, brings the royal allure of Rajasthan to women around the world.

From hand-woven sarees to delicately embroidered kurta sets, each Geruo creation tells a story--of tradition, of art, and of skilled hands that bring these stories to life. Today, as the world of fashion shifts towards conscious choices

and meaningful aesthetics, Geruo Jaipur is making its mark as a brand that marries sustainability with sophistication, and craftsmanship with contemporary flair.

The Geruo Philosophy: Rooted in Heritage, Designed for Today

Geruo, derived from the color 'Gerua'--a vibrant, earthy pink that defines the charm of Jaipur--is more than just a name. It's a tribute to Rajasthan's palette, its poetry, and its pride. This design studio captures the rich, enchanting colors of India's desert state and transforms them into wearable masterpieces that exude grace and authenticity.

But what truly sets Geruo Jaipur apart is its unwavering commitment to sustainability and craftsmanship. In an era of fast fashion, Geruo takes the slower, more meaningful route--creating timeless garments using age-old techniques like hand embroidery, hand weaving, hand printing, and hand painting. Each piece is lovingly handcrafted by local karigars, the unsung heroes behind the brand's elegance and charm.

A Celebration of Craftsmanship and Conscious Fashion

At the heart of Geruo's philosophy lies a deep respect for Indian artisans and their extraordinary skills. Every saree, every kurta set, and every dupatta is a canvas that showcases the immense talent of Geruo's karigars. These are not just clothes--they are heirlooms in the making, echoing generations of tradition and artistry.

By using sustainable fabrics and techniques, Geruo is not only preserving India's textile heritage but also promoting ethical fashion. In doing so, it empowers artisans, supports local economies, and offers women globally the chance to indulge in luxurious fashion without guilt.

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Ms. Bharat Classic Elite 2025

India Post News Service

A Crown of Grace: Celebrating the Triumph of Ms. Bharat Classic Elite 2025 at The Matrix Club On the evening of May 3, 2025, the Matrix Lounge in Naperville, Illinois, was abuzz with anticipation as it hosted the prestigious Ms. Bharat Illinois 2025 and Chicago Fashion Show. Among the many dazzling participants, the spotlight shone brightly on the newly crowned Falguni Rana who the title of Ms. Bharat Classic Elite 2025, and was crowned in a ceremony! Falguni Rana captivated the au-



dience with her elegance, poise, and cultural pride.

The event, organized by MydreamTVUSA, was a vibrant celebration of Indian culture and heritage, bringing together a diverse group of contestants from across the state. The pageant featured various categories, including Ms. Bharat Illinois, Mrs. Bharat Illinois, and several others, each highlighting the unique beauty and talent of Indian-Americans. As Ms. Bharat Classic Elite 2025, the winner!

ITServe's 24th, Boston Chapter launched

India Post News Service

It's truly historic for ITServe Alliance to have our Boston Chapter launched, joining today with our 23 other Chapters, taking the total number of ITServe chapters to 24, spread across the United States," said Anju Vallabhaneni, President of ITServe, the largest association of IT Solutions & Services organizations, representing over 2,500 member companies across the United States.

Details on page 26

COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

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May 23, 2025



Cannes 2025: 'M4M' movie World Premiere makes history for Mohan Vadlapatla & Jo Sharma with red carpet & screening



India Post News Service

The Telugu film industry created a moment of pride at the *2025 Cannes Film Festival* with the grand world premiere of the suspense thriller *'Motive for Murder (M4M)'*, directed by Mohan Vadlapatla. The film was showcased with a *red carpet screening at the prestigious PALAIS-C theatre* on *May 17th at 6:15 PM*, drawing a packed international audience.

Walking the red carpet with grace and confidence, director Mohan Vadlapatla and lead actress Jo Sharma (USA) represented the film and Telugu cinema on the global stage. The screening concluded with resounding applause and positive early reviews from critics and cinephiles across the world, marking a major milestone for Telugu cinema at Cannes.

Jo Sharma, who has been gaining international recognition, stunned at the event with her

fashion-forward choices, wearing specially curated ensembles by top designers from *Dubai and Delhi*. Her presence captured media attention, and she was hailed as a rising global style icon and actress to watch.

Produced under the banner of *Mohan Media Creations* in collaboration with *McWin Group

The premiere was attended by a host of renowned personalities from *Hollywood, Bollywood, Tollywood*, and the global film community, who lauded the film's narrative strength and visual presentation.

This remarkable achievement has drawn admiration and best wishes from across the Telugu

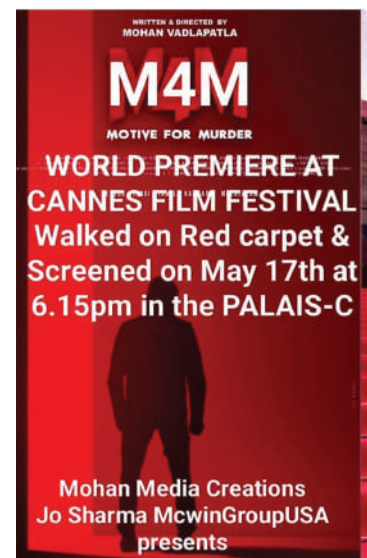
*This remarkable achievement has drawn admiration and best wishes from across the Telugu film industry and beyond. In recent years, no Telugu film has made it to the Cannes premiere screening, making *M4M*'s debut all the more historic*

USA*, *M4M* made headlines not only for its gripping murder-mystery storyline but also for being *the only Telugu-language film screened at Cannes 2025*. The film resonated strongly with both Indian and international audiences, showcasing the growing global appeal of Telugu storytelling.

film industry and beyond. In recent years, no Telugu film has made it to the Cannes premiere screening, making *M4M*'s debut all the more historic. Mohan Vadlapatla's transition from a respected producer to a globally recognized director, along with Jo Sharma's star-making performance, has become a proud

chapter in Telugu cinema's international journey.

As *M4M* gears up for its theatrical release in 5 languages in Telugu, Hindi, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, it is already being



celebrated as a symbol of ambition, artistry, and international recognition for Indian regional cinema.

Renowned social worker Raman Nehra of Phagwara receives Fog Icon Award and Commendation Certificate in USA

SHIV KAURA
India Post News Service

PHAGWARA: General Secretary of Khatri Mahasabha Punjab, Executive Member of BJP NGO Cell Punjab, State President of Human Rights Council India (Anti Corruption Cell), District Kapurthala President of Vishwa Hindu Sangh and former member of Khatri Arora Welfare Board Punjab Government and renowned social worker of Phagwara, Raman Nehra is currently on a tour of Canada and USA.

During his visit, Festival of Globe (Fog) Silicon Valley, Fremont California USA expressed its heartfelt gratitude to Raman Nehra and honored him with Fog Icon Award and Commendation Certificate for his commitment, dedication and excellent work in promoting Indian values and culture, inspiring Indians living abroad towards Indian culture for India's progress and development and spirit of philanthropy (service to humanity).

The certificate was presented by FOG Founder Dr. Romesh Japra, FOG Parade Chairman KP Maheshwari and FOG President Rajesh Verma and his team in the US. It is worth noting that in his retired

life, Raman Nehra is engaged in full-time social service with the support of various social service organizations. At present, Raman Nehra's name is counted among the leading social workers of Phagwara and, during his visit to America he is also satisfying his hunger for social service by educating the Indians there. Sanjeev Sharma, Abhilash, Vikram Pal, Mohan



Famous social worker Raman Nehra of Phagwara being honored with the FOG Icon Award and Certificate of Appreciation in the US by FOG founder Dr. Romesh Japra, FOG Parade Chairman KP Maheshwari, FOG President Rajesh Verma and others

Trikha, Ratika Japra Pal, Sameena Japra Pal, Ashish Khurana, Rajesh Gupta, Madhu Gupta, Jayant Panda, Reena Rao, Rajesh Verma, Dr. Romesh Japra, Raman Nehra, Sandeep Deswal, Ritu Maheshwari, Sandeep Maheshwari, Debashish, Meenakshi Roy and family members were present on the occasion.

Fairmont 8th grader shines at Pentathlon Nationals

India Post News Service

SAN ANTONIO, TX: Fairmont Private Schools student Nikita Pramod delivered an impressive performance at the 2025 Pentathlon National Finals held in San Antonio on May 16-17, earning individual and team accolades that underscore her academic and extracurricular dedication.

Competing in the Invited division, Nikita helped lead her team to a 2nd place national finish, repeating the strong showing her team achieved in 2024. Individually, Nikita brought home Silver medals in Literature and Fine Arts, as well as a Bronze in Science, adding to a growing list of honors from this year's state competition.

"I'm thankful for the incredible support from my coaches and teammates," Nikita said. "Not everyone has that kind of encouragement, and I want to find ways to give back, especially to younger Pentathletes who may not have the same advantages."

Known for her work ethic and focused preparation, Nikita credits long study hours and a team-first mentality for her success. "Every late night and practice round added up," she said.

Her parents, Pramod and Suja, say Nikita's determination and passion truly set her apart. "She's always pushed herself to grow-not just in school, but as an athlete and performer as well."

Outside the academic arena, Nikita is a competitive club volleyball player and actively participates in the performing arts, reflecting her drive to excel across multiple disciplines.



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AAPI Legislative Day highlights healthcare, insurance, immigration issues on Capitol Hill

"Action needed to improve patients access and outcomes"

India Post News Service

WASHINGTON, DC: The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) presented to the United States lawmakers some of the major concerns of the Indian-American community, particularly those affecting the physicians fraternity during the annual Legislative Day on Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C., on May 7-8, 2025.

Dr. Satheesh Kathula, President of AAPI said, "Healthcare continues to be the center of the nation's focus, especially with changes in policies on Immigration, Medicare/Medicaid, and Medical Education. AAPI's annual Legislative Day has become a vital part of AAPI's growing influence and has its united voice heard in the corridors of power."

"AAPI has been seeking to collectively shape the best health care for the people of US, with the physician at the helm, caring for the medically underserved as we have done for several decades when physicians of Indian origin came to the US in larger numbers," said Dr. Deepak Kumar, Chair of AAPI Legislative Affairs Committee.

Dr. Kathula along with other AAPI leaders presented before the lawmakers, key issues that affect the delivery of healthcare in the issues in the US. "Fixing Medicare reimbursement cuts, reforming prior authorization processes, addressing scope of practice concerns, fast-tracking green cards for H-1B visa holders, securing equitable Telemedicine payments, and proposing amendments to the Stark Law" were some of the issues AAPI highlighted in their meetings with the lawmakers.

Attended by several Congressmen and Senators from both the major political parties, the event held at the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC had dozens of AAPI members from across the nation, who during the interactive sessions with the lawmakers shared their concerns with the current healthcare delivery system and for the need to bring about the much-needed changes.

In a show of support for AAPI, Indian American House members, Reps. Ami Bera, D-California, Raja Krishnamoorthi, D-Illinois, Rep. Suhas Subramanyam, D-Virginia, and Sri Thanedar, D-Michigan were among those who addressed the AAPI delegates and listened to their con-

cerns and promised support.

Some of the other lawmakers who addressed Legislative Day included: Rep. Rich McCormick from GA; Rep. Frank Mrvan from Indiana, and Rep. Dave Taylor from OH. AAPI delegates met with Sen. John Boozman from AR, Sen. Bernie

Parikh expressed appreciation to all "AAPI colleagues who attended this event and ensured that our concerns and needs are heard by our lawmakers and ensure that they act on them."

aged by the momentum. AAPI's advocacy on these critical topics will remain ongoing," Dr. Vidya Kora, Co-Chair of AAPI Legislative Affairs Committee.

AAPI's lobbying efforts on some of the issues affecting the broader Indian American community, particularly in the context

Parikh expressed appreciation to all "AAPI colleagues who attended this event and ensured that our concerns and needs are heard by our lawmakers and ensure that they act on them."

"AAPI Legislative Day has been a flagship annual event that rekindles and re-



Moreno (OH), and Sen. Jon Ossoff from GA. All of them expressed their appreciation for AAPI for their advocacy and contributions to the US healthcare and promised to take on the issues affecting the healthcare system and work toward creating an efficient system that serves the needs of the patients and physicians.

AAPI addressed critical issues for physicians before lawmakers. The legislators responded positively, and we are encour-

aged by the momentum. AAPI's advocacy on these critical topics will remain ongoing," Dr. Vidya Kora, Co-Chair of AAPI Legislative Affairs Committee.

"AAPI is once again in the forefront in bringing many burning health care issues facing the community at large and bringing this to the Capitol and to the US Congress," said Dr. Sudhir Parikh, Co-Chair of AAPI Legislative Affairs Committee. Dr.

news our energy in bringing up the issues that we need to bring to the attention of national policy makers and leaders of the US Congress on Capitol Hill," said Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, president-elect of AAPI. "AAPI continues to discover her potential to be a player in shaping the healthcare of each patient with a focus on health maintenance rather than disease intervention."

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com



US Birthright citizenship

VIDYA SETHURAMAN
India Post News Service

Birthright citizenship is enshrined in the 14th Amendment and has been regarded as a right extended to any child born in the US since 1868. Experts predict that 255,000 children each year will be impacted by this new policy, creating an underclass of 2.7 million children by 2045. The president's order, issued on his 1st day in office, would impact children born to undocumented parents, but would also impact kids born to those in the US on temporary visas, such as H-1B workers. Several civil rights organizations have filed lawsuits and amicus briefs challenging Trump's executive order. On May 16, American Community Media (ACoM) held an online media briefing and invited a number of legal and immigration experts to analyze the executive order's far-reaching impact on American constitutionalism, ethnic rights and future demographic structure.

Professor Robert S. Chang, Executive Director, Korematsu Center for Law & Equality at UC Irvine School of Law pointed out that Trump's executive order is not a single incident, but continues the long tradition of excluding nationality against people of color in American history. The

US Immigration Policy Program at the Migration Policy Institute pointed out from a demographic perspective that this policy may have counterproductive effects. Citing the latest report, she pointed out that if birthright citizenship is restricted, there will be an additional 2.7 million children with-

marginalized in American society. This will not only weaken our leading position in global immigrant integration, but will also have a huge impact on the labor market and administrative system.

Martin Kim, Director of Immigration Advocacy at Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC emphasized that the order is based on an extremely fringe legal theory and attempts to amplify the restrictions of the "subject to jurisdiction" language of the 14th Amendment. He said, "The president cannot decide who is a citizen and who is not by signing an order." If such logic is established, it will destroy everyone's trust in the stability of civil rights. Therefore, it is unclear whether there will ultimately be a ruling on the executive order itself. This order is ostensibly targeted at future newborns, but in essence it is an attempt to give the president the power to unilaterally deprive people of their nationality.

Several civil rights organizations have filed lawsuits and amicus briefs challenging Trump's executive order. On May 16, American Community Media (ACoM) held an online media briefing and invited a number of legal and immigration experts to analyze the executive order's far-reaching impact on American constitutionalism

naturalization law first passed in the United States in 1790 was limited to "free whites", and the "Dred Scott case" in 1857 even made it clear that African Americans could never become citizens.

Julia Gelatt, Associate Director of the

out legal status in the United States, and this number may reach 5.4 million by 2075, and many children will become stateless. These children will be unable to apply for government aid, attend college, or work legally, effectively becoming

Lord Hanuman's 16-foot tall statue installed in Guyana's Sparta

GEORGETOWN: A towering 16-foot 'murti' (statue) of Lord Hanuman has been installed in Essequibo Coast of Guyana's Sparta, at the Seeta Ram Radhey Shyam Mandir as a symbol of faith, friendship and firm resolve.

The statue was imported from India, and its installation marks a significant milestone for the temple and the Hindu community in the region.

The statue, becoming the tallest Hanuman Statue of its kind on the Essequibo Coast, was donated by the Sooklal family in memory of their late parents.

"May Lord Bajrangabali bless us in our efforts to forge closer people-to-people ties between India and Guyana. The Murti has been imported from India by the Sooklal family and installed in memory of their parents, and it will continue to guide us in our future endeavors," High Commission of India in Georgetown posted on X last week.

The three-day yajna (religious rituals) began on Friday, and it culminated with the grand unveiling of the murti in front of a large gathering of devotees on Sunday.

The religious event featured nightly discourses, bhajans, and cultural presenta-

tions, bringing the community together in a powerful display of devotion.

This was evident during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Guyana in November last year, when a heartwarming religious event that highlighted the deep cultural ties between India and Guyana was organized to welcome him.

He took part in a Ram Bhajan at the



Promenade Garden in Georgetown, the capital of Guyana, as a symbol of unity and shared cultural heritage.

Promenade Garden has a strong presence of the Indian diaspora in Guyana, where many people trace their roots back to India.

PM Modi also addressed a gathering of the Indian diaspora at the National Centre in Georgetown during his visit. IANS

Arun Yogiraj hails BAPS Mandir in Abu Dhabi as global tribute to Indian culture

ABU DHABI: Arun Yogiraj, the acclaimed sculptor of the divine Shri Ram Lalla idol at the Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir in Ayodhya, recently visited the BAPS Hindu Mandir in Abu Dhabi. His visit was marked by reverence and deep spiritual emotion.

Overwhelmed by the temple's architectural grandeur and sanctity, Yogiraj said, "I am speechless. This is not just a temple, but a divine sculpture -- carved with devotion, envisioned with faith, and brought to life with love. To witness such exquisite artistry and devotion in a foreign land is profoundly moving."

Reflecting on his lifelong commitment to preserving India's sculptural traditions, he added, "Seeing this magnificent mandir in

Abu Dhabi fills me with pride and gratitude. It will inspire generations -- not just as a place of worship, but as a symbol of global harmony and unity."

The BAPS Hindu Mandir stands as a landmark of faith and culture -- the first traditional stone temple in the Middle East, dedicated to values of tolerance, peace, and interfaith harmony.

Crafted by over 2,000 skilled Indian artisans following the ancient Hindu shilp-shastras, the temple was built without the use of steel or concrete. The land was

graciously donated by the UAE government, reflecting the strong and enduring ties between India and the UAE.

Constructed under the spiritual guidance of His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj by the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, the temple features seven intricately carved sanctums that vividly portray timeless Hindu scriptures and legends.

The sprawling campus also includes a cultural center, library, vegetarian food court, auditorium, and an immersive exhibition hall.

The BAPS Hindu Mandir stands as a landmark of faith and culture -- the first traditional stone temple in the Middle East, dedicated to values of tolerance, peace, and interfaith harmony

Inaugurated in February 2024 in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior UAE dignitaries, the BAPS Mandir now stands as a global beacon of peace, spirituality, and Indian heritage.

Arun Yogiraj's heartfelt reflections on the temple underscore its artistic and cultural significance.

The tribute -- coming from one of India's foremost sculptors -- highlights the BAPS Hindu Mandir's growing stature as a global symbol of devotion and craftsmanship. IANS

ITServe's 24th, Boston Chapter launched

India Post News Service

It's truly historic for ITServe Alliance to have our Boston Chapter launched, joining today with our 23 other Chapters, taking the total number of ITServe chapters to 24, spread across the United States," said Anju Vallabhaneni, President of ITServe, the largest association of IT Solutions & Services organizations, representing over 2,500 member companies across the United States.

The historic launch event of the Boston Chapter was held at the Double Tree Hilton in Worcester, MA, on April 18th, 2025, with over 150 ITServe members and sponsors from across the United States joining to celebrate this milestone. The energy was incredible as industry leaders shared their insights, setting the stage for the future of ITServe in Boston and across the United States.

Chandra Sekhar Nallam, in his response after being installed as the President of the ITServe Boston Chapter, said, "I am deeply honored and grateful to the ITServe National Leadership for placing their trust in me and appointing me as the 'Founding President of the ITServe Boston Chapter.' I would also like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Boston Core Team for unanimously electing me as the first President of this prestigious Chapter."

While acknowledging the vision and strategy of the Governing Board, Executive Board, and National Leadership, Chandra Sekhar Nallam thanked Srinivas Gattu, Sharad Patney, Ram Dondapati, Suman Kora, Chandra Yamsani, Venu Mammai, Dibs Mahanta, Prasad Chintalapudi, Prasad Maganti, and Srikanth Dasugari "for their invaluable contributions towards making the Boston Chapter possible."

At the inaugural session, the newly



formed Boston Chapter donated \$5000 towards STEM Education to a local Community College and \$1000 towards the local Police Department in Worcester.

In his Presidential address, Anju Vallabhaneni, President of ITServe Alliance, recalled his close association with Worcester, where he began his success-

ful career in IT and Business 27 years ago. "I was a Programmer here in Worcester, so I have a special connection to this place," he said. He expressed his gratitude and appreciation to all the Sponsors, who continue to support ITServe and its numerous initiatives. "On behalf of the ITServe leadership, I want to thank everyone for coming here today, I am proud to repre-

sent the 2,500-member company organization." Pointing to the role of ITServe, Vallabhaneni said, "ITServe stands up against unfair government policies and helps IT companies grow." Quoting the famous saying, 'if you are not at the table, you will be on the menu,' Vallabhaneni

Siva Moopanan, President-Elect of ITServe, said, "Boston being a tech hub, it is very vital for us, and it will be a valuable Chapter." Pointing to the current economy, Moopanan said, IT sector is the first sector which is affected during the downturn we are seeing in the last two years, and this is the first sector to bounce back as well, and



pointed out that "We don't want to be on the menu. In order for it to happen, we need to be unified. We need to expand, attracting more members, so that we have a lot of say in the immigration policies and expand our benefits from more companies/businesses."

Vallabhaneni explained that ITServe provides exceptional services to members, such as discounts on immigration attorneys, telephone services, tech insurance, payroll services via ADP, FINTEX services, and more. Members also benefit from weekly webinars, networking, chapter meetings, regional meetings, and synergy sessions. ITServe has secured significant discounts from DICE and LinkedIn, and is negotiating with larger companies for great packages. These discounts can save each member \$10,000 annually.

ITServe is developing a job board to make resume matching easier. Uploading a resume will show employers across the country whose requirements match your qualifications, providing a valuable benefit to members. Vallabhaneni also mentioned CSR initiatives that benefit American society and build goodwill.

we are seeing some positive signs in the commercial sector. "And this is the right time to launch the chapter in the right city, as Silicon Valley and Boston are the epicenters of innovation. We look forward to this chapter leading in industry trends and innovation. So, Boston chapter, we are here to help in every way. We wish your chapter to cross, first 100 members, 200 members in the coming months. We will work together to add new members to the New England chapter as well, so that both the chapters will be powerful, and we are here to help."

Proving a broader narrative of the major contributions of ITServe in recent Years, Moopanan pointed out how, ITServe through CSR, ITSS, CPAC, and PAC, is making a lasting impact on the IT industry and the larger American society, through STEM and other philanthropic activities. "We are spending more time, more money on STEM. Several congressmen, legislators, and other leaders are appreciating our efforts."

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Cancer touches us all, says Joe Biden after being diagnosed

WASHINGTON: Former US President Joe Biden released his first statement hours after his office announced that he has been diagnosed with a relatively aggressive form of prostate cancer.

"Cancer touches us all. Like so many of you, Jill and I have learned that we are strongest in the broken places. Thank you for lifting us up with love and support," wrote the 82-year-old in a social media post while sharing a picture with wife.

Biden's office stated on Sunday May 18, that former President was last week seen for a new finding of a prostate nodule after experiencing increasing urinary symptoms.

"On Friday, he was diagnosed with prostate cancer, characterized by a Gleason score of 9 (grade Group 5) with metastasis to the bone. While this represents a more aggressive form of the disease, the cancer appears to be hormone-sensitive, which allows for effective management," the statement went on to say.

"The President and his family are reviewing treatment options with his physicians," it added.

Biden was the oldest US President when he left office earlier this year, making way for President Donald Trump to return to the White House for a second term, defeating Vice-President Kamala Harris. *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)

May 23, 2025

www.indiapost.com

India Post 27

US surgeons perform world's first in-human bladder transplant

NEW YORK: A team of US surgeons performed the world's first in-human bladder transplant; it was announced on Sunday 18 May.

Surgeons from Keck Medicine of University of Southern California and University of California Los Angeles Health completed the surgery at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, in a joint effort by Inderbir Gill, founding executive director of USC Urology, and Nima Nassiri, MD, urologic transplant surgeon and director of the UCLA Vascularized Composite Bladder Allograft Transplant Program.

"This surgery is a historic moment in medicine and stands to impact how we manage carefully selected patients with highly symptomatic 'terminal' bladders that are no longer functioning," said Gill.

"Transplantation is a lifesaving and life-enhancing treatment option for many conditions affecting major organs, and now the bladder can be added to the

list," he added.

The patient had been dialysis-dependent for seven years. He lost the majority of his bladder during surgery to resect cancer over five years ago, leaving the



remainder of his bladder too small and compromised to function appropriately. Both of his kidneys were subsequently removed due to renal cancer.

"This first attempt at bladder transplantation has been over four years in the making," Nassiri said. "For the appropriately selected patient, it is exciting to be able to offer a new

clinical trial and, secure the necessary regulatory approvals.

To address these deficits, Gill and Nassiri performed a combined kidney and bladder transplant, allowing the patient to immediately stop dialysis and produce urine for the first time in seven years. First the kidney, then the bladder, were transplanted. The new kidney was then connected to the new bladder. The entire procedure took approximately eight hours.

"The kidney immediately made a large volume of urine, and the patient's kidney function improved immediately," Nassiri added. "There was no need for any dialysis after surgery, and the urine drained properly into the new bladder."

"Despite the complexity of the case, everything went according to plan and the surgery was successful," said Gill. "The patient is doing well, and we are satisfied with his clinical progress to date." *IANS*

US tariffs may hamper medical tourism industry: Report

NEW DELHI: As medical expenses continue to climb in the US, a growing number of patients are looking overseas for more cost-effective treatment options and suggested tariffs may impact the medical tourism industry, according to a new report.

US trade policy has seen notable changes recently, particularly with regard to import tariffs on countries such as China.

Though these policies are usually justified by economic

and geopolitical considerations, they also impact other areas, including the medical device industry and, more specifically, medical tourism.

One growing outcome is how these tariffs are affecting medical tourism - the practice of traveling to another country to receive healthcare services, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

The US has imposed steep tariffs on a range of medical products imported from China,

including syringes and needles, rubber medical and surgical gloves, and facemasks.

"These items are integral to a wide variety of medical procedures and daily healthcare operations. The imposition of tariffs on such goods has disrupted supply chains, constrained hospital procurement strategies, and driven up the cost of healthcare delivery across the US," said the report.

In response to these rising costs, a growing number of Americans are turning to medical

tourism. Popular destinations include Mexico, India, Thailand, and Costa Rica, which offer competitive pricing and internationally accredited healthcare facilities.

For example, the average cost of a knee replacement surgery in the US can exceed \$50,000, but the same procedure in India or Mexico can be performed for \$8000-\$12,000.

As US healthcare providers face increased operational costs due to tariffs - especially on imported surgical instruments, diag-

nostic equipment, and protective gear - the price gap between domestic and international care continues to widen, creating a financial incentive for patients to consider treatment overseas.

"While the intended impact of tariffs may not have been to effect healthcare, they do shape patient behavior. The rise in the cost of medical devices ultimately leads to more out-of-pocket expenses for patients," said Alexandra Murdoch, Senior Medical Analyst at GlobalData. *IANS*

India's orthopedic, cardiac implant industry to reach \$5 billion by FY28

NEW DELHI: India's orthopedic and cardiac implant sector, including exports, is expected to reach \$4.5 to \$5 billion by FY28, driven by strong domestic demand and gradually growing export presence, according to a report released recently.

The sector (including exports) stood at \$2.4 to \$2.7 billion in FY24, according to CareEdge Ratings.

The Indian implant manufacturers are making rapid strides in the domestic market and are gradually expanding their presence in the export market.

The report cited that with only 7.5 percent customs duty on the import of most coronary and orthopedic implant products, any potential trade deal with the US resulting in tariff reduction is not likely to materially change the market dynamics for domestic manufacturers.

However, material changes in non-tariff barriers, such as the relaxation of price caps, can significantly alter the competitive landscape for domestic manufacturers compared to MNCs, it added.

Sales of homegrown implant manufacturers have grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 28 percent (including a CAGR of 37 percent for exports) during the four years ended FY24, outpacing the sales CAGR of 12 percent for foreign multinational corporations

(MNCs) during the same period.

The sales volume growth of domestic entities was even higher, driven by their competitive pricing and increased participation in government-sponsored insurance schemes.

"India's medical implant sector is on a robust growth trajectory, driven by strong domestic demand and growing exports," said Krunal Modi, Director at CareEdge Ratings.

India's export growth rate for implants has significantly outpaced the implant imports during the last 5-6 years.

Increasing per capita income and affordability, rising healthcare awareness, an ageing population, expansion in healthcare infrastructure, and increasing insurance penetration are expected to drive the domestic demand for implants in the long term, said the report.

Price caps adversely affected the foreign MNCs' high-margin products, forcing them to discontinue some of their premium products from the In-



dian market.

However, it significantly improved affordability, especially for implants manufactured by domestic companies, thereby enabling them to expand their market share. Schemes like Ayushman Bharat further improved the affordability and expanded the market, according to the report. *IANS*

High blood pressure? Dark chocolate, tea may help, says study

NEW DELHI: If you are finding it hard to control hypertension or high blood pressure then eating dark chocolate, grapes, or drinking tea may help you, according to a study.

Researchers from the University of Surrey, UK, found that naturally occurring compounds called flavan-3-ols -- found in cocoa, tea, apples, and grapes -- may improve blood pressure and the health of our blood vessels.

The research, published in the European Journal of Preventive Cardiology, analyzed data from 145 randomized controlled studies, and found that regular consumption of flavan-3-ols can lead to a reduction in blood pressure readings, particularly in people with elevated or high blood pressure.

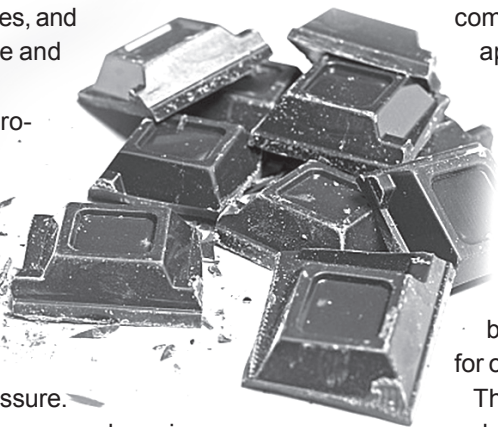
In some cases, the average blood pressure-lowering effects were comparable to those seen with some medications, said the researchers.

"The findings are encouraging for those looking for accessible ways to manage their blood pressure and support their heart health through enjoyable dietary changes," said lead author Professor Christian Heiss, Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine at the University of Surrey.

"Incorporating small amounts of commonly consumed foods like tea, apples, dark chocolate, or cocoa powder into a daily balanced diet could provide beneficial amounts of flavan-3-ols," Heiss added.

Flavan-3-ols were also found to improve the function of the endothelium -- the inner lining of blood vessels -- which is crucial for overall cardiovascular health.

This improvement occurred independently of blood pressure changes, suggesting a broader positive impact on the circulatory system. *IANS*



HM Amit Shah inaugurates nursing college in Gujarat

MEHSANA: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday inaugurated the newly constructed building of K.K. Patel and Madhuben Patel Nursing College at Gozaria, Mehsana district of Gujarat.

The institute is run by the Shrimati Samarth Chunilal and Sheth Dosabhai Madhavji Public Hospital, a long-standing community institution in the region.

Addressing the large gathering at the inaugural ceremony, Home Minister Amit Shah highlighted the revolutionary changes brought about in India's healthcare landscape under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi since 2014.

"Today, 600 million citizens are receiving quality healthcare through the Ayushman Bharat scheme, with each Ayushman card providing up to Rs 5 lakh in medical coverage," he said.

The Home Minister added that the transformation in public healthcare access is one of the Modi government's most impactful achievements.

Shah elaborated on the array of welfare schemes that have contributed to improved health and hygiene among the population, including Poshan Abhiyaan, Swachh Bharat Mission, Fit India Movement, Har Ghar Jal, Mission Indradhanush, and Ayushman Bharat.

"Earlier, India had a healthcare budget of Rs 37,000 crore. Today, under PM Modi's leadership, that figure has been increased to Rs 1.37 lakh crore, solely for public health," he said.

He also emphasized the expanding infrastructure under the National Digital Health Ecosystem, which includes telemedicine services, Ayushman Mandirs (health and wellness centers), and more.

Shah also highlighted the growth in medical institutions, citing the increase in AIIMS from 7 to 23 and in medical colleges from 387 to 780.

"Earlier, India used to produce 51,000 medical graduates annually. Today, the number has surged to 1,18,000 doctors serving across the nation," he noted.

The Home Minister further stated that in the last decade alone, Jan Aushadhi Kendras have distributed affordable medicines worth Rs 25,000 crore to the public.

These initiatives, he said, have brought modern healthcare within reach of rural and underserved communities. In his speech, the Home Minister made a passionate appeal to the community: "It is the responsibility of society to modernize our legacy hospitals and transform them into centers of advanced medical care. With support from schemes like Ayushman Bharat, even charity-run hospitals are now functioning with renewed energy and impact."

The newly built nursing college and the hospital campus are equipped with a wide range of modern departments, including surgery, gynecology, internal medicine, orthopedics, ophthalmology, pediatrics, dentistry, physiotherapy, and a kidney dialysis center. *IANS*

Wearable sensor can monitor obstructive sleep apnea treatment response: Study

SAN FRANCISCO: A wearable pulse oximeter and connected software platform show promise for monitoring obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) and other sleep-related breathing diseases, according to new research released recently.

The device (pulse oximeter), which is cleared for medical use, was designed for comfort and ease of use; a clinical trial found high rates of utilization by patients. It could be used to track patient response to OSA treatment over time.

"Investigators in our clinical research trials report how useful longitudinal data are to observe night-to-night variability and the response to treatment of OSA," said Ketan Mehta, head of product and engineering for Connected Wearables at Apnimed.

"One sleep specialist even reported that it may be better to collect one or two channels of data over 25 nights than 25 channels over one night, which is considered the gold standard with in-lab polysomnography," Mehta added.

Wearable sensors like the Oura ring and Apple Watch that measure biometrics

during sleep are widely used by consumers, but are not cleared for medical use.

At the same time, other medical devices used in sleep studies gather clinically relevant data, but are too cumbersome and costly to use for frequent monitoring.

This tool could potentially expand pa-

tient access to care through pulmonologists to manage routine sleep apnea in their patients, instead of having to refer them out to a sleep specialist, he added. The device provides a bridge between these two extremes, he said.

Worn as a ring, the device offers several key differences from other consumer wearables. Notably, it uses transmittance-based photoplethysmography, which has been shown to be more suitable for the proximal phalanx region, provide better signal-to-noise ratio, and is more effective in low perfusion situations.

It also engages in continuous data collection, rather than spot checks, he added.

The device connects to an app that users can access from their smartphone, giving patients access to a subset of the same data as their health care providers.

"These data empower both parties to be informed, and they're able to have more meaningful conversations. This offers the opportunity for shared decision making between patient and provider using digital medicine," Mehta said. /ANS



"Investigators in our clinical research trials report how useful longitudinal data are to observe night-to-night variability and the response to treatment of OSA"



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Nepal asks citizens to carry valid documents while travelling via India

KATHMANDU: Nepal has warned its citizens travelling to Gulf countries through India against using fake documents, citing increased detentions by immigration authorities.

Nepali Embassy in India urged the Nepali citizens travelling to foreign countries for employment to obtain labor approval (Labor Permit) and No Objection Certificates (NOCs) from Nepal's Department of Foreign Employment or, the embassy in New Delhi.

It further mentioned that without obtaining the NOC, travel will not be permitted.

In an advisory issued, the embassy stated it has come to the attention of the Government of Nepal through concerned authorities in India that the number of people travelling via Indian airports to Gulf countries without obtaining labor approval NOCs from the Department of Foreign Employment has been increasing.

The embassy warned citizens against using forged documents, citing that several Nepali citizens have faced interrogation, detention, and even been barred from flying.

Last year, the Nepal Embassy eased NOC requirements for migrant workers using Indian airports, stating that Nepali citizens holding a valid foreign employment permit issued by the Department of Foreign Employment were not required to obtain a NOC when travelling through Indian airports. *IANS*

Immigration

POST

30 India Post

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May 23, 2025

"Our immigration policy aims not only to inform foreign nationals about the dangers of illegal immigration to the United States but also to hold accountable individuals who violate our laws"

US imposes visa restrictions on Indian travel agencies facilitating "illegal immigration"

WASHINGTON, DC: United States recently announced visa restrictions on owners, executives, and senior officials of travel agencies in India for "knowingly facilitating illegal immigration" to the US.

"The Department of State is taking steps today to impose visa restrictions on owners, executives, and senior officials of travel agencies based and operating in India for knowingly facilitating illegal immigration to the United States," the US State Department said in a statement.

"Mission India's Consular Affairs and Diplomatic Security Service work every day across our Embassy and Consulates to actively identify and target those engaged in facilitating illegal immigration and human smuggling and trafficking operations," the statement added.

Further, the statement noted that the US will continue to take steps to "impose visa restrictions against owners, executives, and senior officials of travel agencies to cut off alien smuggling networks."

The statement emphasized that US immigration policy fo-

cuses on informing foreign nationals about the dangers of illegal immigration and holding accountable those who violate US laws.

"Our immigration policy aims not only to inform foreign na-

Department said.

Notably, more than 20,000 undocumented immigrants were arrested during Donald Trump's first month as President, CNN reported, quoting the Department of Homeland Security.



"The Department of State is taking steps today to impose visa restrictions on owners, executives, and senior officials of travel agencies based and operating in India for knowingly facilitating illegal immigration to the United States"

tionals about the dangers of illegal immigration to the United States but also to hold accountable individuals who violate our laws, including facilitators of illegal immigration," the State

The Trump administration launched an immigration crackdown in the moments after his inauguration and publicized daily arrest totals during his first couple of weeks in of-

fice, as per CNN.

Last month, US Border Czar Tom Homan criticized former US President Joe Biden for deliberately unsecuring the US-Mexico border.

Homan at a press briefing said that Biden inherited a secure border built under former President Donald Trump, but chose to undo it.

"But Joe Biden was the first President in the history of the nation who came into office and unsecured the border on purpose. That is a fact. We handed the Biden administration the most secure border in my lifetime after President Trump's first administration. And he unsecured it on purpose. Now, President Trump and this administration's success is unprecedented. We beat Trump's first administration on border success," he said.

Homan cited studies showing that Trump's policies reduced illegal immigration by 96%, potentially saving countless women from sexual abuse and sex trafficking. *ANI*

1.3 million Afghan nationals deported from Pakistan since November

ISLAMABAD: As part of the ongoing campaign to deport illegal and Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders from Pakistan, the government has repatriated about 1.3 million Afghan nationals since November 2023, Pakistan's Parliamentary Secretary Mukhtar Ahmed Malik said during a meeting.

The parliamentary committee overseeing the repatriation drive was informed that the government targeted illegal Afghan nationals living in the country, allowing them the opportunity to leave voluntarily, add-

ing that a parallel operation was launched to crackdown against those who were still present after the deadline of March 31 expired.

The committee was told that a warning was issued to all illegal Afghan nationals that they would be deported after the deadline ends. Moreover, the government later on decided to also deport those Afghan nationals who were in possession of Afghan Citizen Card (ACC), thus expanding the domain of the expulsion campaign by the government.

Launched in 2017, the ACC

grants temporary legal status to Afghan refugees.

"There are at least three million Afghan refugees residing in Pakistan. Of these, 813,000 hold Afghan Citizen Cards (ACC) while 1.3 million possess Proof of Registration (PoR) cards," said Mukhtar Ahmed Malik.

"Those Afghans who wish to enter Pakistan for medical treatment, education, or business purposes are welcome to do so provided they obtain a Pakistani visa and carry valid documentation with them," he added. *IANS*

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'Spy' YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra had easy access in Pakistan, travelled in luxury

NEW DELHI: YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra, who was arrested on charges of espionage in Haryana's Hisar, had free access to all places in Pakistan.

According to sources, her questioning revealed that she used to roam freely in the neighboring country. Generally, when an Indian goes to Pakistan, he or she is monitored at the police level and can go only to those places mentioned in the visa.

However, Malhotra used to get VIP treatment because of her links with Pakistan High Commission officer Danish and other intelligence officials. She also got security from the Pakistani police.

Malhotra, who is on a five-day police remand after being arrested, used to attend high-profile parties in Pakistan where she met top officials, apart from those in intelligence agencies.

The sources said she confessed to this during interrogation by the Hisar Police.

She has visited Kashmir twice. Apart from Pakistan, she visited Bali in Indonesia with an intelligence agency officer and also went to Nepal.

The sources claimed that on the pretext of making YouTube videos, she was collecting intelligence information about India and giving it to Pakistan.

Malhotra went to the Pakistani High Commission on March 23, where she participated in an Iftar party. She also uploaded the video of this on her channel. At the party, Danish welcomed her in a very friendly manner, and both of them were seen talking to each other in such a way that it seemed that they knew each other very well. Danish also introduced her to his wife. Apart from this, he also made her talk to the officials present there. Malhotra also met some Chinese officials at the party. She kept praising the arrangements made at the Pakistani High Commis-

sion throughout the video. She also invited Danish's wife to come to her home, i.e., Hisar in Haryana.

went to China in June. In China, she moved around in luxury cars and visited jewelry shops in many places. This made the security agencies in India suspicious about her motive and expenditure. After which, her surveillance was started.

The sources said that during interrogation, Malhotra said that she had created a YouTube account in the name of 'Travel with Joe'. She wanted to explore Pakistan. For this, she went to the Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi to get a visa, where she met Danish and exchanged numbers.



Jyoti Malhotra

Jyoti told the police that Danish seemed very friendly in the first meeting, and both started talking on the phone. In 2023, she got a 10-day visa to Pakistan. Danish asked her to meet Ali Ahwaan in Pakistan. Ali Ahwaan made arrangements for her travel and stay.

Ali introduced her to officials of the Pakistani intelligence agency. Ali made her meet Shakir and Rana Shahbaz. Both of them turned out to be officers of the Pakistani intelligence agency. Jyoti took Shakir's mobile number. To avoid suspicion of a Pakistani number in her mobile, she fed it in the name of 'Jat Randhawa'.

After returning, she started working for Pakistani intelligence agencies and sent intelligence information to them through WhatsApp, Snapchat, Telegram and other mediums. However, it has not been revealed what information she gave to Pakistan.

Police and Indian intelligence agencies were tracking Malhotra's activities for a long time. When concrete evidence was found, the police came to her house on May 15 at 10 a.m. and launched searches.

Apart from Jyoti, everyone's mobile phones were confiscated, including those of her father and uncle. Her laptop was also taken. After this, the police took Jyoti to the police station, but she was released after interrogation at 9 p.m.

Her father, Harish Malhotra, said that Jyoti had told him that she was being framed. *IANS*

EAM Jaishankar holds talks with Afghan FM Muttaqi on trade, Chabahar Port, and visa facilitation

NEW DELHI: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held a telephonic conversation with Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi last week, and discussed ways to strengthen cooperation between India and Afghanistan.

Jaishankar also expressed his appreciation for Muttaqi's strong condemnation of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam. He also welcomed the Afghan minister's "firm rejection" of recent attempts to create distrust between India and Afghanistan through false and baseless reports.

Sharing a post on X, Jaishankar wrote, "Good conversation with Acting Afghan Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi this evening. Deeply appreciate his condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack."

The post added, "Welcomed his firm rejection of recent attempts to create distrust between India and Afghanistan through false and baseless reports. Underlined our traditional friendship with the Afghan people and continuing support for their development needs. Discussed ways and means of taking cooperation forward."

Both leaders also emphasized the importance of enhancing economic ties, with particular focus on developing the Chabahar Port, facilitating visas for Afghan traders and patients, and addressing the issue of Afghan prisoners in India.

Sharing a post on X, Consulate General of Afghanistan in Mumbai wrote, "The Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, held a telephonic conversation with Dr. S. Jaishankar, the External Affairs Minister of India. During the discussion, both sides exchanged views on enhancing bilateral relations, promoting trade, and advancing diplomatic engagement."

"FM Muttaqi referred to India as a key regional country and highlighted the historic nature of Afghanistan-India relations, expressing optimism that these ties will grow stronger. He also reiterated Afghanistan's commitment to a balanced foreign policy and the pursuit of constructive relations with all nations. In the conversation, FM Muttaqi requested facilitation in issuing visas for Afghan traders and patients, and called for the release and return of Afghan prisoners currently held in India," the post added. *ANI*

"Good conversation with Acting Afghan Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi this evening. Deeply appreciate his condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack"

Philosophy

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The wriggling tentacles of a cold-blooded utilitarianism, with which the West has grasped all the easily yielding succulent causing pain and indignation throughout the Eastern countries. The West comes to us, not with the imagination and sympathy that create and unite, but with a shock of passion - passion for power and wealth.

This passion is a mere force, which has in it the principle of separation, of conflict. I have been fortunate in coming into close touch with individual men and women of the Western countries, and have felt with them their sorrows and shared their aspirations.

I have known that they seek the same God, who is my God - even those who deny Him. I feel certain that, if the great light of culture be extinct in Europe, our horizon in the East will mourn in darkness. It does not hurt my pride to acknowledge that, in the present age, Western humanity has received its mis-

age; arms and armour have been given to them; but have they yet realized in their hearts the single-minded loyalty to their cause which can resist all temptations of bribery from the devil?

The world to-day is offered to the West. She will destroy it, if she does not use it for a great creation of man. The materials for such a creation are in the hands of science; but the creative genius is in Man's spiritual ideal.

To-day the real East remains unexplored. The blindness of contempt is more hopeless than the blindness of ignorance; for contempt kills the light which ignorance merely leaves unignited. The East is waiting to be understood by the Western races, in order not only to be able to give what is true in her, but also to be confident of her own mission.

In Indian history, the meeting of the Mussulman and the Hindu produced Akbar, the object of whose dream was the unification of hearts and ideals. It had all the glowing enthusiasm of a religion, and it produced an immediate and a vast



Rabindranath Tagore

West is wholly wanting in spiritual power

The most significant fact of modern days is that the West has met the East

sion to be the teacher of the world; that her science, through the mastery of laws of nature, is to liberate human souls from the dark dungeon of matter.

For this very reason I have realized all the more strongly, on the other hand, that the dominant collective idea in the Western countries is not creative. It is ready to enslave or kill individuals, to drug a great people with soul-killing poison, darkening their whole future with the black mist of stupefaction, and emasculating entire races of men to the utmost degree of helplessness.

It is wholly wanting in spiritual power to blend and harmonize; it lacks the sense of the great personality of man. The most significant fact of modern days is this, that the West has met the East. Such a momentous meeting of humanity, in order to be fruitful, must have in its heart some great emotional idea, generous and creative.

There can be no doubt that God's choice has fallen upon the knights-errant of the West for the service of the present

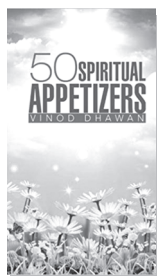
result even in his own lifetime.

But the fact still remains that the Western mind, after centuries of contact with the East, has not evolved the enthusiasm of a chivalrous ideal which can bring this age to its fulfilment. It is everywhere raising thorny hedges of exclusion and offering human sacrifices to national self.

Excerpted from 'Creative Ideal and Other Essays'. The 164th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was observed on May 7

50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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The India-Pakistan Conflict and its impact on Sri Lanka

SUGEESWARA SENADHIRA

Although not a direct party to the India-Pakistan conflict, Sri Lanka and other South Asian neighbors are significantly influenced by its ripple effects. From strategic defense postures to trade policies and foreign alignments, they must constantly adapt to the changing regional dynamics shaped by its two powerful nations in the sub-region. Promoting peace and cooperation in South Asia would not only benefit India and Pakistan but also contribute to greater stability and prosperity for smaller nations like Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka, with its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, becomes a key point of interest in any security recalibrations. India's naval presence and interest in countering any Pakistani influence in the region can impact Sri Lanka's defense partnerships and military autonomy.

Sri Lanka often finds itself navigating a diplomatic tightrope. While it shares strong cultural, economic, and historical ties with India, it also engages with Paki-

Lanka. Though not directly involved, Sri Lanka experiences both strategic and economic consequences due to tensions between its two powerful neighbors.

Peace loving people in the world were anxious about a possible nuclear war when the two South Asian nuclear powers went eyeball to eyeball in armed conflict. The main worry of the close neighbors was their lack of high alert for such an eventuality.

Popular Sunday Times lamented that such an eventuality had not even crossed the minds of those in the National Security Council in Sri Lanka given that the government was struggling to issue even a statement on the events unfolding. Sri Lanka seemed so blissfully unaware of the dangerous buildup in the subcontinent.

President Anura Kumara Dissanayake thought it fit to issue a statement only after the two conflicting neighbors agreed

on cessation of violence after the round of warring following the dastardly killings of innocent tourists in the idyllic Indian-controlled Kashmir hillside by dreaded terrorists.

Sri Lanka, with its strategic location in the Indian Ocean, becomes a key point of interest in any security recalibrations. India's naval presence and interest in countering any Pakistani influence in the region can impact Sri Lanka's defense partnerships and military autonomy

stan through trade, defense training, and political goodwill. The India-Pakistan rivalry sometimes limits Sri Lanka's foreign policy options and restricts deeper ties with one country for fear of antagonizing the other.

The India-Pakistan conflict, rooted in decades of territorial, political, and religious disputes-especially over Kashmir-has not only strained bilateral relations but also reverberated across South Asia.

Sri Lanka's another concern is that the regional instability due to Indo-Pak tensions affects the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which includes Sri Lanka. SAARC's effectiveness has been severely weakened due to the India-Pakistan standoff, limiting opportunities for regional trade integration and economic collaboration.

One of the neighboring countries affected by this ongoing conflict is Sri

Danger for South Asia

After the Pahalgam attack, India upped the ante by firing missiles into the Nur Khan airbase, the garrison town close to the Pakistani military capital of Rawalpindi, while Pakistan sent 300-400 drones testing Indian air defenses.

Reportedly, a Chinese-made air-to-air missile (P-15) fired by a Pakistan pilot hit an Indian Air Force (IAF) Rafale jet, which was recently purchased from France. There was a brief usage of cutting-edge air defense technology in warfare, with sophisticated electronics and AI (Artificial Intelligence) in real time redefining military balances the world over.

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

For detailed story visit www.indiapost.com

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author



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

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India must fortify Chicken's Neck: Is Bangladesh Becoming A Platform For Regional Destabilization?

ANWAR A. KHAN

In the deep folds of South Asian geopolitics lies a fragile corridor, a lifeline for the Indian Union - the Siliguri Corridor, infamously termed the "Chicken's Neck". This slender, vulnerable strip of land-barely 22 km wide-connects mainland India to its seven northeastern states. It is not just geography that converges here, but also the overlapping anxieties of power, sovereignty, and subversion. As regional tensions simmer and political agitation in Bangladesh deepens, the strategic anxieties surrounding this corridor have become more than a cartographer's concern-they have turned into real, volatile tremors across diplomatic tables.

At the core of this tectonic shift is Bangladesh, the land of martyrs and a nation forged in the blood of 1971, now hijacked

geostrategic lifeline of India. The Siliguri Corridor, situated in northern West Bengal, is a precarious bottleneck that holds together the Indian Union's fragile northeast. Surrounded by Bangladesh to the south, Nepal to the west, and Bhutan to the north, the corridor is an exposed artery. It is not just a logistical necessity but a national security imperative for India.

The terrain-dense forests, scattered hills, and bustling trade roads-offers no natural defense. In times of conflict or hostility, a mere 20-kilometer-wide incision could sever India's access to nearly 45 million people in its northeast. No Indian general, strategist, or diplomat can afford to look at this corridor with indifference.

This very geography explains India's historic obsession with keeping Dhaka within its orbit.

ballot but by betrayal, foreign meddling, and elite connivance. The CIA and ISI, bitter bedfellows of regional intrigue, found in Yunus the perfect puppet: a smooth-talking economist with a façade of philanthropy and an eagerness to please Western handlers. His unelected seizure of power, sanctified by rogue elements in the judiciary and media, has shattered the sovereignty of Bangladesh.

This political inversion has not gone unnoticed by New Delhi. For India, Yunus is an unpredictable agent-a man whose ties to Western intelligence and explicit tolerance of Islamist resurgence have unnerved the corridors of power in South Block. New Delhi's once warm ties with Sheikh Hasina, rooted in counterterrorism cooperation, water-sharing diplomacy, and border management, have now been replaced with mistrust and strategic alertness.

At the core of this tectonic shift is Bangladesh, the land of martyrs and a nation forged in the blood of 1971, now hijacked by a clique of foreign-installed stooges. The illegitimate rise of Dr. Muhammad Yunus-the manipulator 'Nobel laureate' turned national usurper-has added kerosene to the already blistering flames of Indo-Bangladesh tension

by a clique of foreign-installed stooges. The illegitimate rise of Dr. Muhammad Yunus-the manipulator 'Nobel laureate' turned national usurper-has added kerosene to the already blistering flames of Indo-Bangladesh tension. Propped up by the CIA, ISI, and a web of dreaded domestic collaborators, Yunus's regime is not just unconstitutional; it is dangerous. It is an affront to the soul of Bangladesh and a direct threat to the balance of regional stability.

A Corridor of Vulnerability: India's Chicken's Neck

To understand the tremors between the two neighbors, one must start with the fragile

For decades, Bangladesh served as both a friendly buffer and a strategic hedge. But no longer.

From Ally to Adversary? The Rise of Yunus and the Fall of Trust

2024 marked a political catastrophe for the people of Bangladesh. The staged fall of Sheikh Hasina-a leader synonymous with stability, secularism, and progress-and the undemocratic rise of Dr. Muhammad Yunus, has turned the country into a foreign protectorate disguised as a democracy.

Dr. Yunus, long a darling of Western media and intelligence circles, came to power not by

Dhaka's Turn Toward Danger

Under Yunus, Bangladesh has seen an alarming shift in its foreign policy posture. His administration has embraced anti-Indian rhetoric, rekindled ties with pro-Islamist elements long dormant, and welcomed overtures from China and Pakistan-two of both Bangladesh and India's key rivals. The Pakistani dire ISI's fingerprints are everywhere, from the reactivation of Islamist madrasa networks to clandestine visits of Pakistani "cultural delegations." The CIA's quiet smiles are felt in the sudden infusion of Western NGO funds, reactivating civil society outfits that now parrot American soft-power goals under the guise of democracy.

(The author, based in Dhaka, was a freedom fighter to establish Bangladesh in 1971, and has served in leadership roles in major private sector enterprises) South Asia Monitor

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TARIFF-TRADE-TERROR

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his speech, following Operation Sindoor, has established that India is now ready to take decisive action and, it won't just be confined to border areas. If need be, India will go deep inside Pakistan and destroy terror dens and sponsors. He openly condemned Pakistan's entire terror infrastructure, referring to Bahawalpur and Muridke as "universities of terror." He further added, "The world has witnessed Pakistan Army officers attending terrorist funerals which clearly shows evidence of state-sponsored terrorism."

Highlighting India's response, PM Modi said, "Operation Sindoor has made history, and demonstrated our might in the deserts, the mountains, and in the realm of modern warfare."

In his speech, PM Modi categorically stated that any nuclear threat would not deter India from taking precise action against terror, and India has the capability and competency to conduct a modern-age war in the 21st century. PM Modi also brought global attention to Made-in-India weaponry and the nation's evolving defense capabilities. Through Operation Sindoor, India showcased in front of the world that it's capable of sustaining and dominating modern-day warfare.

He reiterated that "terror and talk cannot take place together, terror and trade cannot go together, and water and blood cannot flow together". He once again highlighted India's firm policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism, particularly emanating from across the border.

On trade and tariff, President Donald Trump got some good news last week related to his trade war with the world. First, he secured a 90-day tariff truce with China, breathing room to negotiate further. Then, newly released inflation figures suggested his import duties have not really raised prices for American consumers yet. U.S. and United Kingdom have agreed to a framework not a deal, but a deal to try to make a deal - to resolve their trade differences.

The White House portrayed the China announcement and the U.K. development as trade agreements, but they aren't. This document does not constitute a legally binding agreement. That doesn't mean it isn't good news for consumers and investors around the globe, many of whom worry Trump's actions may plunge the U.S. economy into recession. And, indeed, markets responded to each development with a happy dance.

U.S.-imposed tariffs are an import tax covered by the American importer of a foreign good, with costs typically passed on to the consumer. While it's possible for a supplier to absorb some of the costs, that does not happen often to a great degree.

"Tariffs are still present and they are not going away anytime soon," said Skyler Weinand, chief investment officer at Regan Capital. "Until tariffs are reduced to zero, inflation will present itself and creep into consumer prices and eventually interest rates, which can cost average Americans over \$3000 annually."

Regarding trade and tariff standoff between India and US, India's Foreign Minister Jaishankar reiterated that any agreement on trade and tariff has to be on equal footing and mutual respect, soon after Trump's announcement on "Zero tariff" with India.

In short, the Trade war, Tariff and Terror will continue, they are not over yet.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are personal to the author

Somy Ali donates 1000 DOLLARS TO PM CARES FUND

Former actress Somy Ali has extended her support to the victims of the recent violence in Kashmir by donating \$1,000 to the PM Cares Fund.

The actress and philanthropist made this contribution as a heartfelt gesture to honor the affected families and stand in solidarity with those impacted by the unrest. Ali described her donation as her way of paying tribute to the victims and families affected by the violence in Kashmir. Speaking about the same, she shared, "India has always been close to my heart. As someone who believes deeply in justice, healing, and sacrifice, I wish to humbly contribute to the PM CARES Fund in support of our brave Jawans who put their lives on the line every day, and to honor the victims and families affected by violence in Kashmir."

This gesture is small compared to their courage. But I hope it reflects the unity of humanity beyond borders, beyond religions, and beyond politics. I stand with India's fight against terrorism and with every family mourning an irreplaceable loss. As the world watches, let India also lead not just with strength, but with compassion," added Somy.

Somy Ali, a human rights advocate who leads the US-based NGO No More Tears and has launched a movement focused on truth and justice called Somyism, has donated \$1,000 to the PM Cares Fund.

IANIS



Sharvari after winning BEST YOUNG ACTOR ZEE CINE AWARDS

Sharvari, who recently clinched the Best Young Actor award at the Zee Cine Awards, took a moment to reflect on her journey in the film industry.

Opening up about the hurdles she overcame and the dedication that fueled her success, the actress shared that the audience has helped her find her feet in this industry. At the Zee Cine Awards 2025, Sharvari won the award for 'Outstanding Performance by a Young Talent' for her role in 'Munjya' and 'Vedaa.'

Sharvari shared, "2024 has truly been my luckiest year - a year filled with amazing opportunities and huge success stories. To have a 100 crore hit, to receive unanimous love for my acting in Vedaa and Maharaj, to get the kind of films that I have got now due to these successes is truly incredible."

She thanked her producers and directors for their belief in her as an actor. "I would like to thank all my directors and producers- my Maddock family Dinesh Vijan sir and Aditya Sarpotdar, my Emmay family Nikhil Advani sir, Monisha and Madhu and of course my YRF family Aditya Chopra sir, Sidharth P. Malhotra sir and my entire team for believing in me. I thank you my visionary producers and directors for giving me the opportunity to be a part of such beautiful and impactful films. IANIS



TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

- 1 Tu Hain Toh Main Hoon: **Sky Force**
- 2 Aaj Ki Raat : **Stree 2**
- 3 Tainu Khabar Nahi: **Munjya**
- 4 Jaane Tu: **Chhaava**
- 5 Ishq Hai: **Mismatched - Season 3**
- 6 Millionaire: **GLORY**
- 7 Aayi Nai: **Stree 2**
- 8 Uyi Amma: **Azaad**
- 9 Tumhare Hi Rahenge Hum: **Stree 2**
- 10 Maniac - Bonus Track: **Glory**

Shilpa Shirodkar tests positive

Actress Shilpa Shirodkar took to social media to inform everyone that she has tested positive for Covid-19.

Taking to Instagram handle, Shilpa shared a note that read, "Hello people! I have been tested positive for COVID. Stay safe and wear your mask! - Shilpa Shirodkar." For the caption, she wrote, "Stay Safe."

Fans flocked to the comments section to wish Shilpa Shirodkar a speedy recovery. Many thanked her for spreading awareness and reminded others to continue staying cautious in their daily lives. One user commented, "Get well soon." Another said, "Take care shilpa ji." IANIS



Disha Parmar hasn't slept well in over 2 years



Television actress Disha Parmar took to social media to share a candid glimpse into her life as a mother, revealing she hasn't had a proper night's sleep in over two years. The 'Bade Achhe Lagte Hain 2' actress is embracing the joys and challenges of motherhood, and she's not shying away from sharing the real side of it. In a recent candid post, Disha spoke about how her sleep

schedule has completely changed since becoming a mom. On Monday, the actress took to her Instagram stories and shared a note that read, "It's been over 2 years since I last slept well! That uninterrupted 8-9 hrs of sleep... I don't remember what that's like or waking up fresh without the cries! Urgh. Waiting for that to come back... hopefully soon!" Disha also posted a sweet image where she is seen holding her baby girl in her arms and captioned it, "Live lately." Notably, Disha

Parmar often shares adorable videos featuring her baby girl, giving her followers heartwarming glimpses into her life as a mom. In September 2023, Disha Parmar welcomed her first child, a baby girl, with her husband and singer Rahul Vaidya. The couple shared the happy news via a joint statement that read, "We are blessed with a Baby GIRL! /ANS

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Priyanka Rewri to debut with Kannada 'Yarrige Beku Ee Loka'

Actress Priyanka Rewri, best known for her work in Telugu films like 'Prema Deshapu Yuvarani' and 'Legally Veer', is now all set to make her Kannada debut alongside actor Aryavardhan in 'Yarrige Beku Ee Loka'.

Recently, the makers of the film released a teaser, much to the delight of fans and film buffs. With the release of the movie's teaser, Priyanka Rewri opened up about the film and her character in it.

Talking about the experience of working in the Kannada film industry, she said, "It was a great experience. I loved the dialects very much, especially because they include many Sanskrit words. The culture and language were new to me, but that made it even more exciting. I got to learn a lot, and it felt like a refreshing change."

Speaking about how she got the role, she explained, "I auditioned for this role and got selected. I prepared for the audition with a lot of focus, and I was thrilled when I got the call confirming my selection. It was a proud moment for me."

When asked what the film was all about, she said, "It is a combination of suspense, thrills, and romance. It's exciting because of its gripping plot. The story keeps you on the edge of your seat, and the mix of emotions makes it a complete entertainer."

Disclosing details about her character in the film, Priyanka said, "I play the hero's love interest, a kind and supportive character that stands by him throughout the story. She adds warmth and emotion to the thrilling plot, and her presence brings a sense of hope and balance to the intense narrative."

Finally, sharing her experience working with co-actor Aryavardhan, Priyanka said, "It was a wonderful experience working with Aryavardhan. He was a fantastic co-star -- joyous, fun-loving, and very helpful. We shared a great bond, and he often helped me with dialogues since he was more familiar with the language." /ANS

Sophie Choudry CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HRITHIK SLAY IN 'WAR 2'

Singer and actress Sophie Choudry is buzzing with excitement, as she eagerly awaits the release of 'War 2.'

In her latest Instagram post, the model expressed her admiration for Hrithik Roshan's incredible talent and screen presence. Sophie also shared that she can't wait to see the actor slay with his action-packed performance in the much-anticipated sequel. Choudry posted a video of her cherished memories with the 'Krrish' actor and added Vishal Dadlani's song 'Tu Meri' from Hrithik's film "Bang Bang."

In the video, Sophie and Hrithik can be seen grooving together on stage on multiple occasions. In the caption, the actress praised the 'Fighter' actor as both an inspiration and a source of motivation. She admires how he perfectly balances his natural talent, hard work, and humility. She also compliments his looks, comparing him to a "Greek God," and appreciates his fun personality.

Sophie Choudry wrote, "He is inspiration and motivation all in one!! The perfect balance of talent, hard work and humility. Greek God looks with a side of fun! And wants to be better with each passing day! Cherishing these moments And cannot wait to see him slay in War 2!"

Sophie had previously shared a video from one of her live performances, captioned with a burst of excitement. She starts with "Hungamaaaaa referring to the high energy of the performance-likely her rendition of the song "Hungama Ho Gaya." She mentioned that this is the same vibrant energy she brings not just to the weekend but to every stage she performs on. Choudry even gave a special mention to one security guard who, even while working, took a moment to enjoy her performance and clapped along, which clearly touched her.

Meanwhile, talking about 'War 2,' the action drama directed by Ayan Mukerji features Hrithik, NTR, and Kiara Advani. The film is slated to hit theatres on August 14, 2025. /ANS





Jacqueline enjoys 'serenity in the magic' air of Cannes

Bollywood actress Jacqueline Fernandez took to social media to share a glimpse of the serenity she experienced amid the magical ambiance of Cannes 2023.

The 'Kick' actress recently shared a few stunning photos, beautifully capturing her tranquil moments and showcasing the peaceful side of the prestigious festival. In the images, she is seen striking poses against the breathtaking backdrop of a beautiful sea landscape, wearing an elegant backless gown. Sharing the post, Jacqueline wrote, "Serenity in the magic air of Cannes @redseafilm 'Women in Cinema.'"

Jacqueline Fernandez, who skipped the opening ceremony's red carpet, made a stylish entrance on day three at the French Riviera to represent Indian cinema. The actress made heads turn in a strapless red gown.

Jacqueline was one of six women worldwide recognized by the Red Sea Film Festival's new initiative, alongside Sarah Taibah, Elham Ali, Amina Khalil, Engfa Waraha, Gaya Jiji, and Rungano Nyoni. She took to Instagram to share her excitement about being honored as part of the 'Women in Cinema' initiative. IANS



Urvashi Rautela misses wheelchair-bound mother at Cannes

Actress Urvashi Rautela, who made a dazzling appearance at the Cannes Film Festival 2025, couldn't hold back her emotions as she spoke about her wheelchair-bound mother.

The actress opened up about how difficult it was to attend the prestigious event without her mother by her side. Holding back tears, Urvashi revealed that her mother, who is now confined to a wheelchair following a tragic accident, has remained her biggest source of strength. The Sanam Re actress shared, "My heart carries a profound story of resilience, inspired by the unwavering spirit of my beloved mother. Despite a tragic accident that confined her to a wheelchair, her love for me remains boundless, a radiant beacon of hope that pierces through life's darkest moments."

Rautela added, "With her words, she weaves a tapestry of wisdom, urging me to rise above negativity, to keep my eyes fixed on my dreams, and to embrace the beauty of life's brighter hues. IANS

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Situated in Himachal Pradesh, Parvati Valley runs along the touristy destinations of the state. The stunning valley is famous for the backpacker hangouts, and adventure activities. It is also a popular amongst hippie travellers for its famous charas (hashish), rave parties, and spiritual experience.

The Parvati River is joined by many smaller tributaries along the way that result in beautiful cascading waterfalls. A clear-view of the Himalayan Mountains greets the visitors as they indulge in trekking, camping and river rafting. The destination is also a popular stop for hippie travellers who arrive here for its famous charas (hashish), rave parties, musical festivals and spiritual experience. Parvati Valley draws equal amounts of young Indian and international travellers who love to sit back and enjoy the solitude promised in snow-clad mountains.

PLACES TO VISIT IN PARVATI VALLEY

Kasol: Kasol is a quaint little village in Himachal situated along the banks of the river Parvati. Commonly known as the 'Amsterdam of India', Kasol is a tourist attraction that is rapidly gaining fame as a popular hub for trekkers, backpackers, and nature lovers. The valley is situated 23 kms from Bhuntar and next to the religious town of Manikaran and is one of the best places in the country just to sit back and chill in the panorama of snow-clad mountains, pine trees and serene river.

Malana: Isolated from the rest of the world lies a solitary village in Malana Nala, which is a side valley of the Parvati Valley. Known as Malana or the Malana Village, it is located in the Kullu district. Widely known for its strong culture and religious beliefs, with various senti-

ments embedded in the past, it is a place meant for people who seek spiritual guidance. This place is also apt for all adventure lovers since the route to Malana is famous for trekking.

Tosh: Popular for its cannabis plantations, the tranquil village of Tosh is just another example of the unparalleled natural beauty that Himachal Pradesh holds within its bounds. Located at the far end of Parvati Valley, Tosh is un-

touched by modernization and fast-paced life. With its gradual terrain and the waters of river Parvati flowing through its bosom, the Tosh Kasol trek is the go-to expedition for all adrenaline junkies. The hippie culture and otherworldly vibe of this village will surely transport you to another world.

Kheerganga Trek: Kheer Ganga (3050 meters) lies at the extreme end of Parvati valley and the last inhabited village while trekking to pin valley via Pin-Parvati pass. Kheerganga's panoramic skies and vast greenery are a much-needed delight to the trekker's eyes and especially the tired legs. It is a holy place with a hot water spring, a small temple of Lord Shiva and a bathing tank. It makes a rare combination for any trekker to bath in hot spring water when everything is covered by snow.

Pulga: Pulga is a village located in Parvati Valley, 3 km from Barshaini. Pulga is known for its scenic beauty and wooden homestays, located amidst denser deodar trees, waterfalls, and apple orchards. A paradise for nature lovers, Pulga is one of three small villages close to Barshaini along with Kalga and Tulga and is located at an altitude of 2,210m above sea level.

Parvati Valley

THE HIPPIE PARADISE



Parvati Valley: The Hippie Paradise

Cont'd from page 40

Rasol: Nestled in Parvati Valley of the Himalayas is the magical village of Rasol. Close to the famous Malana village and Kasol, Rasol is a simple yet exhausting trek from Kasol (around 3-4 hours), spanning between two and four hours. Chalal is the starting point of the trek. Visitors are greeted by an endless expanse of lush greenery as they enter Rasol, which has around 75-100 wooden houses.

Kutla: A quaint village in Parvati Valley, Kutla is situated at an altitude of 2,800m and is the perfect destination for trekking

BEST TIME TO VISIT PARVATI VALLEY

The best time to visit Parvati Valley is during the summer months of March to June or post-monsoon months of October to February. The summer months make up the peak time to visit Parvati Valley and nearby towns of Kasol, Malana, Manikaran, Tosh and others. It is best suited for campers and trekkers as the weather is pleasant for long walks under clear blue skies.

HOW TO REACH PARVATI VALLEY

Parvati Valley is well-connected by road to many famous destinations in Himachal Pradesh



and nature watching. The trek, that runs close to the River Tosh, starts from the village Tosh and provides an opportunity to marvel at waterfalls and walnut plantations while Kutla itself is known for its apple orchards and breathtaking views of the snow-clad peaks.

and major cities in North India. One needs to arrive at the closest town to these destinations that is Bhuntar (which is 6 kms from Kasol). From Bhuntar one can either take local buses or private/shared taxis to arrive at Kasol/Manikaran/Tosh. www.holidify.com



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