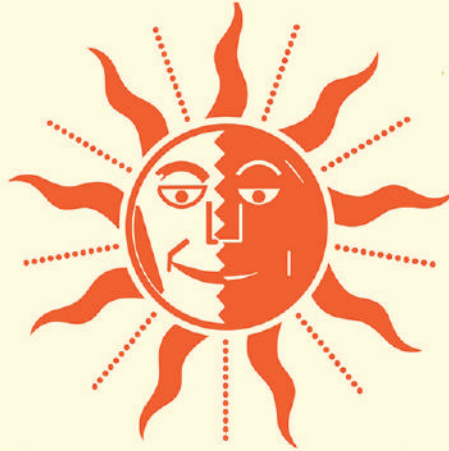


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Vivek Ramaswamy

Ramaswamy set to join the Ohio governor's race

▶ Details on page 20

'Bangladesh wants good relations with India'

▶ Details on page 10

## DHARMA GUARDIAN

6th edition of India-Japan joint military exercise, 'Dharma Guardian', begins at East Fuji Training Area Japan

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Rehearsed aspects include tactical drills, joint exercises, and disaster response strategies, which are designed to enhance operational capabilities, refine combat skills, and strengthen interoperability for effective joint operations.

Cont'd on page 8



Ritu Maheshwari with Dr. Romesh Japra

'Hall of Fame' honors IND-AM community leader

▶ Details on page 22

New Chancery premises of CGISF inaugurated

▶ Details on page 20

### CONTENTS

Bollywood	32-35
Classifieds	30
Community Post	20-24
Cover/Top Stories	8-13
Edit Page	31
Immigration Post	16-17
Info/Highlights	4
Life Style	36
OP-ED	29
TechBiz Post	14-15
Real Estate	18-19
Travel & Hospitality Post	38
Wellness Post	26-28

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HAR HAR MAHADEV: A view of the Maha Shivratri celebration at Isha Foundation, in Coimbatore on February 26. (ANI Photo)

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**HIGHLIGHTS**

**Bollywood:**

**Elnaaz Norouzi in 'Hotel Tehran'**



Actress Elnaaz Norouzi all set to make her mark in Hollywood with "Hotel Tehran" recently spoke about her bond with her co-actors

32



**Lifestyle:**

**Indian classical choir at Maha Kumbh**

Hindustani classical singer, Shomit Tyagi created history with a groundbreaking choir performance at the holy event with a mesmerizing hour-long show

36

**Cover Story:**

**DHARMA GUARDIAN**



The 6th edition of India-Japan joint military exercise, Dharma Guardian, began February 24, 2025, at the East Fuji Training Area in Japan

8



**Techbiz:**

**Snapdragon X platform in India**

US tech major Qualcomm's new Snapdragon X platform will expand company's reach in India, offering advanced and affordable AI-powered computing to new consumers.

14

**Community:**

**New Chancery, CGISF**



Amb. Ms. Sripriya Ranganathan inaugurated the new chancery premises along with CG Dr. K. Srikar Reddy, OFM Reg. Dir. Mr. John Choi, in presence of the Indian community.

20



**Travel**

**Kaziranga National Park**

Home to largest population of the one-horned rhino on earth, Kaziranga National Park was awarded status of World Heritage Site by UNESCO

38

**Immigration:**

**Illegal migrants & electoral process**



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar voiced serious concerns over illegal migration in India, stating that millions of undocumented individuals are residing in the country

16



**Wellness:**

**Optimism and health**

Developing optimism and learning how to flexibly cope can help maintain and improve mental health in diverse situations, according to a new study

26

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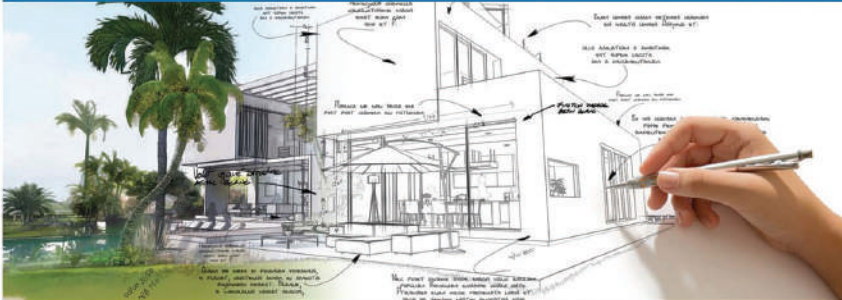


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# DHARMA GUARDIAN

6th edition of India-Japan joint military exercise, 'Dharma Guardian', begins at East Fuji Training Area Japan

EAST FUJI: The 6th edition of the India-Japan joint military exercise, Dharma Guardian, began on February 24, 2025, at the East Fuji Training Area in Japan. This significant exercise marks a major milestone as it is being conducted at an enhanced scale, with the participation of troops expanded to a company-strength level for the first time since the inception of the exercise. This edition of the exercise, which is scheduled to run from February 24 to March 9, 2025, is set to include an expanded range of activities that reflect the growing defense cooperation between India and Japan.

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Indian Army contingent pose for a group picture as they depart for the 6th edition of India - Japan Joint Military Exercise Dharma Guardian which is scheduled to be conducted in the East Fuji Manoeuvre Training area of Japan from February 24 to March 9, in New Delhi. (ANI Photo)

tions.

The press release added that building on the momentum of the Chief of the Army Staff's successful visit to Japan from 14th to 17th October 2024, Exercise Dharma Guardian further strengthens the bilateral defense cooperation between India and Japan.

The exercise underscores India and Japan's shared commitment to regional

security, peace, and stability while advancing their common vision of a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific. It reinforces the India-Japan relationship as a cornerstone of regional cooperation, fostering strong military-to-military ties and promoting cultural understanding.

A testament to the enduring bond of friendship, trust and cultural linkages between India and Japan, the exercise sets

the stage for meaningful professional engagement, highlighting the unwavering commitment of both nations to broader defense cooperation. ANI

## 154 Hindu pilgrims leave from Amritsar for Katas Raj Mahadev Temple in Pakistan to celebrate Mahashivratri

PUNJAB: Around 154 Hindu pilgrims leave Amritsar for Katas Raj Mahadev Temple in Pakistan to celebrate Mahashivratri.

Lalita Aggarwal, a pilgrim visiting Katas Raj Mahadev Temple, says, "The 'Jatha' is leaving for the Katas Raj Mahadev Temple in Pakistan on the occasion of Mahashivratri ...We visit the Katas Raj Mahadev Temple once a year to offer prayers."

Pandit Ripu Kant Goswami, a pilgrim visiting Katas Raj Mahadev Temple, said that the Jatha looks forward to taking a holy dip in the Amar Kund.

"The 'Jatha' is heading for the Katas Raj Mahadev Temple in Pakistan...We will take a holy dip in 'Amar Kund' on the occasion of Mahashivratri. As Mahakumbh is happening in India we will take a holy dip in Amar Kund by god's grace," he said.

He added that, Since the beginning our pact has allowed us for 200 visitors but every time a few 10-20 Visa get cancelled. ANI

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# Ankara conference to focus on India-Turkiye ties

NEW DELHI: Experts from leading think tanks of India and Turkiye are set to exchange perspectives to enhance mutual understanding and knowledge at a two-day conference that begins in Ankara on February 26.

The Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETA) based in Ankara, and the International Dialogue and Diplomacy Foundation (IDDF) in New Delhi are jointly organizing the event.

Prominent think tanks, experts and scholars of strategic affairs will gather for the two days' conference to hold a comprehensive discussion on India-Turkiye relations in the changing global and regional order, the International Diplomacy and Dialogue Foundation announced.

This is the first-ever dialogue in several years when many Indian and Turkish scholars, diplomats, experts from think tanks, and renowned academics are coming together to exchange their views and perspectives on global and regional issues and reshape bilateral ties, the IDDF observed.

Director of New Delhi-based IDDF Re-

search Foundation, Prof Aftab Kamal Pasha, along with eminent experts C Raja Mohan, Advisor at the Centre for Strategic and Defence Research, Ambassador Anil Trigunayat, former Indian Ambassador to Libya and Jordan, Prof Mohammad Gulrez, former Vice Chancellor, Aligarh

bassador Berris Ekinci and the Indian Ambassador in Turkiye, Muktesh K Pardeshi is set to deliver the keynote address.

The Embassy of India in Ankara as an official partner of the event.

The two countries have seen substantial changes in their economic and strate-

Given the history of the Cold War, the two countries' relations have evolved in a more complex context in which they shared deep historical and cultural bonds restricted by the Cold War fault lines.

Under the leadership of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the countries have managed to advance bilateral trade from USD 6 billion in 2014 to USD 14 billion in 2023, setting aside political differences.

This shows the scope of opportunities for cooperation and partnership that needs a broader consultation among all stakeholders, from diplomacy to think tanks to the trade and technology players. Turkish and Indian companies have been welcomed to invest and undertake joint ventures in all sectors.

As per the IDDF, the conference aims to open a forum for sustained dialogue between Indian and Turkish experts, institutions, and sector representatives to explore shared interests and perspectives in their regional and global relations and explore common views on international security and governance, including in the areas of cyber security, technology, artificial intelligence, UNSC reforms, and climate change. ANI

*This is the first-ever dialogue in several years when many Indian and Turkish scholars, diplomats, experts from think tanks, and renowned academics are coming together to exchange their views and perspectives on global and regional issues and reshape bilateral ties, the IDDF observed*

Muslim University, Manish Chand, Prasanta Kumar Pradhan (Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis), Fazzurrahman Siddiqi (Indian Council of World Affairs), Nandan Unnikrishnan and Kabir Taneja (Observer Research Foundation) are among the Indian speakers invited by the Turkish Think Tank SETA Vakfi, according to the IDDF.

Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Am-

gic profiles, allowing them to reimagine their bilateral relations beyond the rigidities of the Cold War.

This gathering presents an invaluable opportunity for the exchange of ideas and to carry forward further, taking to new heights, as well as frank dialogue and collaboration between two nations' scholars and institutions.

It is expected that the Indian delegation will be received by several prominent Turkish institutions, diplomats, and ministers.

## YK Sailas Thangal appointed as Indian envoy to Kazakhstan

NEW DELHI: YK Sailas Thangal, a 1996 batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Kazakhstan, according to a statement from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Thangal, who is currently serving as an Additional Secretary in the Ministry, is expected to take up his new assignment shortly, the statement added.

Relations between India and Kazakhstan are ancient and historical, going back more than 2,000 years. There has been a constant and regular exchange of goods and, more importantly, an exchange of ideas and cultural influences. The journey of Buddhism from India to Central Asia and Sufi ideas from Central Asia to India are two such examples, as per MEA.

There are approximately 10,500 Indians residing in Kazakhstan, with about 9,500 of them being students, while the rest work in various professional fields.

Several special evacuation flights oper-

ated by Air India under the VBM and charter flights evacuated 3,745 Indian nationals from Kazakhstan to India. The evacuated Indian nationals included medical students, tourists, professionals and workers.

Since July 8, 2022, Kazakhstan has extended continuous visa-free stay in Kazakhstan for up to 14 days to Indian citizens. The maximum duration of the visitor's visa-free stays is 42 days within every 180 days.

In April 2020, Government of India provided 30,000 tablets of Hydroxychloroquin as humanitarian assistance to Kazakhstan for its fight against COVID-19.

In May 2021, in view of the sharp deterioration of the epidemiological situation in India around 40 tons of air cargo (61.5 lakh medical masks, 4 lakh respirators, 50,000 anti-plague suits, and 105 portable artificial lung ventilation devices made in Kazakhstan) was sent to India by Kazakhstan as humanitarian aid to combat the COVID-19, MEA states. ANI



YK Sailas Thangal




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# Bangladesh wants good working relations with India: Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain

DHAKA: Bangladesh is seeking to strengthen its ties with India, emphasizing the importance of mutual respect and reciprocal interest.

Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain said in response to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's recent comments that "there are anti-India remarks from Bangladesh."

"We have a clear decision that we want good working relations with India on the

"But India also has to decide what kind of relationship it wants with Bangladesh. It's a matter of both sides", he added.

Hossain pointed out that there are also anti-Bangladesh remarks from India, citing an example of an Indian Chief Minister suggesting sending a peacekeeping force to Bangladesh.

"He (Jaishankar) complained that there are anti-India remarks from Bangladesh. But there are also anti-Bangladesh re-

marks from India. An Indian Chief Minister asked to send a peacekeeping force to Bangladesh. We have to try to improve the relationship assuming these things will continue", Touhid said.

Hossain also expressed concerns about Sheikh Hasina's remarks, stating that they are harmful to the relationship between the two countries.

"Sheikh Hasina's remarks staying under Indian hospitality are harmful for relations. She is adding fuel to the fire", the Adviser said.

Additionally, he mentioned that India's decision to grant visas is up to them, but if not granted, Bangladesh will explore alternative options.

"It is absolutely up to India whether India will grant a visa or not. But if visa is not granted we will choose alternative", he said.

Recently, Jaishankar met with Hossain on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Conference in Oman, where they discussed bilateral relations and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

Following the meeting, Jaishankar said that the talks were focused on the bilateral relationship between two countries and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

"Met Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain of the Interim Government of Bangladesh. Conversation was focused on our bilateral relationship, as also on (BIMSTEC)," Jaishankar wrote on X.

Bangladesh Foreign Ministry also is-

sued a statement after the meeting in which it stated that two sides discussed on various bilateral issues of mutual concerns and interests.

Bangladesh Foreign Ministry said in a statement recalling their last meeting on



Md Touhid Hossain

the sidelines of UNGA in September 2024 said both leaders noted that since then the two countries have participated at various bilateral engagements.

These include the Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) between Bangladesh and India at the level of Foreign Secretaries was conducted in Dhaka on December 9 2024, Energy Adviser of Bangladesh participated at the India Energy Week events in New Delhi on 10-11 February 2025, among others, the statement said. ANI

*Hossain stated that Bangladesh wants good working relations with India and also noted that India needs to decide what kind of relationship it wants with Bangladesh. "But India also has to decide what kind of relationship it wants with Bangladesh. It's a matter of both sides"*

basis of mutual respect and reciprocal interest. We have no ambiguity about this", Touhid Hossain told the reporters.

Hossain stated that Bangladesh wants good working relations with India and also noted that India needs to decide what kind of relationship it wants with Bangladesh.

Hossain also expressed concerns about Sheikh Hasina's remarks, stating

marks from India. An Indian Chief Minister asked to send a peacekeeping force to Bangladesh. We have to try to improve the relationship assuming these things will continue", Touhid said.



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## Crime rate in Bangladesh surges under Yunus-led interim government

DHAKA: The crime rate in Bangladesh is increasing at an alarming rate, according to the police data, which shows that in January, cases of murder, abduction, robbery, burglary, and theft have all seen a spike across the country and have been the worst compared to the last six years.

The data sharply contrasts the interim government's Home Affairs Advisor Jahangir Alam Chowdhury's claim that the law and order situation is "satisfactory" in Bangladesh, according to local media.

Police Headquarters data shows at least 294 murder cases were filed with different police stations in January this year. An analysis of monthly crime data over the past six years revealed that the highest number of mugging and robbery incidents in a single month occurred in January 2025, with 242 reported incidents, reports the country's leading newspaper, The Daily Star.

The police data further reveals that incidents of mugging, robbery, and abduction

also saw an increase in December and November last year compared to the corresponding months of the last five years.

Criticizing the government's claim that law and order were normal, a criminology Professor in Bangladesh questioned, "Are these crimes, which are instilling fear among the public, truly a sign of satisfaction?"

People in Bangladesh are living in constant fear of becoming victims of murder, theft, mugging, or burglary, and the government appears uninterested and has no idea how to deal with the prevailing situation, The Daily Star reported, quoting the professor.

In a separate development, several violent crimes were reported in different parts of Dhaka last Sunday night within a few hours.

Many took to social media to express their outrage over the failure of law enforcement, as videos of miscreants attacking residents with guns and cleavers went viral. IANS



# India abstains on resolutions on Ukraine amendments; US breaks with allies

UNITED NATIONS: India abstained on a series of resolutions on Ukraine and amendments at the General Assembly that saw the US break ranks with its Western allies and side with Russia on some of them showing the ruptures and realignments under President Donald Trump.

Challenging Trump on the third anniversary of Russia's invasion, the Western nations managed to pass two resolutions naming Moscow as the aggressor in Ukraine.

In a strange spectacle, the US joined Russia to vote against a resolution put forward by Ukraine and Western nations condemning Russia's invasion, while China abstained.

The resolution was adopted with 93 votes for it, and 18 against it, with 65 abstentions.

In the environment of confrontation, the votes were significantly lower than the 141 votes a similar resolution received in 2023. (India had abstained on that vote).

A Washington-sponsored resolution that did not name Russia as the invader was cleverly amended at the initiative of Western nations to call out Moscow as the aggressor in Ukraine. A peeved US abstained on the resolution it had proposed after the amendments presented by France's Permanent Representative Nicolas De Riviere

while President Emmanuel Macron was in Washington to meet Trump were adopted.

The US, which is directly discussing with Russia a peace deal for Ukraine, views the condemnation of Moscow as interfering with its initiative. Trump spoke with Russia's President Vladimir Putin and his representatives met with Moscow in Riyadh to explore a way to end the war that began on February 24, 2022, and has devastated Ukraine and taken a toll on Russia also.

Justifying not assigning blame, Secretary of State Marco Rubio called it "a simple, historic resolution" to

*In a strange spectacle, the US joined Russia to vote against a resolution put forward by Ukraine and Western nations condemning Russia's invasion, while China abstained*

"chart a path to peace".

Repeating that at the Assembly, acting US Permanent Representative Dorothy Shea said the previous resolutions that condemned Russia resolutions "have failed to stop the war".

The US resolution "looks forward, not backwards", she said, "This is a moment of truth -- a historic moment". "This has never been about Ukraine" and the resolution will address the global impact of war", she said. *IANS*

## "India defends the territorial integrity of any country": Ukraine's ambassador Oleksandr Polishchuk

NEW DELHI: Ambassador of Ukraine to India, Oleksandr Polishchuk, spoke about India's stance on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, emphasizing that India firmly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He further stated, that "India absolutely supports Ukrainian independence."

Speaking to the media, Polishchuk particularly referenced Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Ukraine, calling it a "very historic visit."

The Ambassador recalled a tragic event during Modi's Moscow visit when Russia launched a missile strike on a children's hospital in Ukraine, an attack that highlighted the grave situation.

"It was a very historical visit of the Prime Minister of India to Ukraine. It was just after the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. During PM Modi's visit, Russia made a terrible missile strike on the kids' hospital," he said.

"So this visit demonstrates that India absolutely supports Ukrainian independence, and we very much appreciate that it's always been highlighted by the Indian government, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, that India defends the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of any country," he added. *ANI*

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# India reaffirms commitment to Women Peacekeepers at Global South Conference

NEW DELHI: In a powerful speech at the inaugural session of the Conference for Women Peacekeepers from the Global South, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar emphasized the nation's enduring commitment to the United Nations' peacekeeping efforts and its continuous support for women in peace and security roles.

Marking the 25th anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security, Jaishankar highlighted how this resolution has advanced the role of women in peacekeeping.

"India is proud of its contributions and association with UN peacekeeping, a commitment that spans decades. Since the 1950s, India has contributed over 290,000 peacekeepers across more than 50 missions. In fact, India remains the largest Troop Contributing Country to this day. Currently, more than 5,000 Indian peacekeepers are deployed in nine of the eleven active missions, often in challenging and hostile environments, with a singular focus: the advancement of global peace and security," he said.

"In this pursuit, India has unfortunately lost nearly 180 peacekeepers, whose supreme sacrifices are etched in the history



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar

of our collective endeavors forever. One such individual, Captain Gurbachan Singh Salaria, posthumously honored with the Param Vir Chakra for his courage during the UN Mission in Congo, remains a beacon of inspiration. His is the singular case of this highest honor being awarded for operations conducted abroad," he added.

Highlighting the country's role in empowering women in peacekeeping, Jaishankar affirmed that India has been at

the forefront of deploying women in peacekeeping roles, both military and police.

The first chapter of this journey began in the 1960s, when Indian women, as medical officers, were deployed in Congo. In 2007, India was the first to deploy an all-women-formed Police Unit in Liberia—a pioneering initiative that had an indelible impact on both the host community and the broader UN framework.

"Today, India proudly continues this

legacy, with over 150 women peacekeepers deployed across six critical missions, including those in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Lebanon, Golan Heights, Western Sahara, and Abyei," he added.

Sharing the examples of "exemplary women peacekeepers", who have inspired others globally, like Kiran Bedi, who served as the first woman UN Police Advisor; Major Suman Gawani and Major Radhika Sen, recipients of the UN Military Gender Advocate Award in 2019 and 2023, respectively; and Seema Dhundia, who led the first all-women Formed Police Unit in Liberia.

Jaishankar also highlighted the importance of upcoming international events, such as the Peacekeeping Ministerial in Berlin and the Peacebuilding Architecture Review in New York, where the discussions at this conference could help shape key decisions.

"The participation of women in peace operations makes it more diverse and inclusive. It is essential that we continue to increase the representation of women in peacekeeping. This is not only a matter of quantity but equally of quality. Women peacekeepers often have unique access to local communities, acting as role models for women in conflict zones. Training courses tailored to include modules sensitizing peacekeepers to issues related to women will enhance the effectiveness of peace operations," he said.

"India remains committed to supporting Global South nations in building their peacekeeping capacities. Through initiatives led by the Centre for UN Peacekeeping, India will continue to offer training and capacity-building programs, including courses specifically designed for women peacekeepers, as we did with ASEAN countries in 2023," he added.

Guided by the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," or "the world is one family," India reaffirms its dedication to global peacekeeping efforts, recognizing the invaluable contributions of women peacekeepers as pillars of peace, leadership, and inspiration for future generations.

"At the heart of our foreign policy lies a commitment to peacekeeping—rooted in dialogue, diplomacy, and cooperation. Guided by the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," the belief that the world is one family, India will continue to contribute meaningfully to the cause of UN peacekeeping," he said. ANI

## Govt committee to review US reciprocal tariffs, submit report by March 15

NEW DELHI: As the US plans to impose reciprocal tariffs across trading countries by April 2, the Indian government has formed a high-level committee which is tasked to review tariff relief on imports from the US.

The panel, formed under the Union Commerce Ministry, is likely to submit its report by March 15. The report would be submitted to both the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Finance.

According to people close to the matter, the government review is looking at tariffs that currently range between 15-20 percent, 50-70 percent, and 70-80 percent, and whether rate adjustment could be made in "8-digit code identifying a specific product for custom purposes".

The committee is assessing the scope of possible tariff reductions and is tasked to recommend the best course of action.

The mandate is to closely examine imported goods and propose tariff adjustments.

Once the recommendations are submitted, the final decision on the tariff relief will need to be vetted by the Prime Minister's Office before being implemented, according to reports. India has already been "extremely responsive" in addressing the perception that it imposes high tariffs on foreign goods.

The review panel's work will be crucial

*The panel, formed under the Union Commerce Ministry, is likely to submit its report by March 15. The report would be submitted to both the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of Finance*

in determining India's response to the US's proposed tariffs.

In the Union Budget 2025-26, India cut duties on bourbon whisky from 150 percent to 100 percent and reduced tariffs on imports like fish hydrolysate, scrap materials, satellite equipment, ethernet switches, and high-end motorcycles.

Meanwhile, India is unlikely to experience any major short-term consequences due to the US tariff on semiconductors, as it is not a major exporter of chips to the nation.

Domestic automotive manufacturers are also not likely to face any major impact due to US reciprocal tariffs as these companies sell their products largely in the fast-growing Indian market.

Also, the US tariffs on the steel sector are unlikely to impact India because only 2 percent of the country's total finished steel exports in the first nine months of this fiscal were to the US, according to a Crisis Intelligence report. IANS



# Italy PM slams Left's double standards, says when Trump, Meloni, Modi talk, they are called threat to democracy

WASHINGTON: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has accused left-wing politicians of being "nervous" over former US President Donald Trump's victory, claiming that conservatives are unfairly labeled as a "threat to democracy" while leftist leaders are celebrated for similar global alliances.

Speaking at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) 2025 in Washington recently, Meloni praised Trump and US Vice President JD Vance while taking aim at "elites" and left-wing leaders.

"The Left is nervous, and with Trump's victory, their irritation has turned into hysteria -- not only because conservatives are winning but because conservatives are collaborating globally," she said.

She highlighted what she called a double standard, recalling how former US President Bill Clinton and former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair were praised for creating a global liberal network in the 1990s, while leaders like Trump, herself, Argentine President Javier Milei, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi are accused



File photo of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Italian PM Giorgia Meloni

of endangering democracy.

"When Bill Clinton and Tony Blair created the global leftist liberal network in the 90s, they were called statesmen. Today,

when Trump, Meloni, Milei or maybe Modi talk, they are called a threat to democracy. This is the Left's double standard," she said.

She added that despite media and political attacks, conservative leaders continue to win elections because "people no longer believe their lies."

"People are not naive as The Left considers them. They vote for us because we defend freedom, we love our nations, we want secure borders, we preserve businesses and citizens from green leftist insanity. We defend family and life, we fight against wokeism, we protect our sacred right to our faith and our free speech, and we stand for common sense," she added.

Backing Trump as a strong leader, Meloni dismissed concerns that his presidency could create divisions within the conservative movement.

"Our adversaries hope that President Trump will move away from us, but knowing him as a strong and effective leader, I bet that those who hope for divisions will be proven wrong," she said.

Meloni's speech received a warm reception from the conservative crowd, reinforcing the growing cooperation between right-wing leaders across the globe. *IANS*

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## '45 pc young Indians choosing stocks as their primary investment option'

BENGALURU: Forty-five per cent of Indians, under age 35, are now picking up stocks as their primary investment option, a new report said.

The growing interest in the stock market is driven by increased financial awareness, better access to investment tools and a desire for long-term wealth creation.

According to the 'Investor Behaviour Index' (IBI 2025) report by StockGro, in collaboration with research firm 1Lattice, 81 per cent of respondents have already invested in the stock market.

This shift indicates that more young people are moving away from traditional savings instruments and embracing direct equity investments.

"Equity investments are truly being recognized as an excellent wealth creation and passive income generation tool," said Amar Choudhary, CEO at 1Lattice.

Despite this enthusiasm, financial education remains a major challenge, the report added.



It found that 42 percent of non-investors feel they lack the knowledge needed to start investing, while 44 percent of aspiring investors want step-by-step guidance.

Additionally, 38 percent of respondents prefer learning through online video courses -- a growing demand for structured and accessible financial education.

"With young investors leading the shift towards equities and education-first digital platforms, the need for financial literacy has never been more urgent, according to Ajay Lakhota, Founder and CEO, StockGro.

Digital investment platforms are playing a crucial role in this transformation. *IANS*

# TechBiz POST

14 India Post www.indiapost.com February 28, 2025

## AI's impact on agriculture 'phenomenal': Satya Nadella, Elon Musk react

NEW DELHI: The impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on agriculture is 'phenomenal', said Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella recently.

Sharing a video on social media platform X, Nadella highlighted the use of AI to increase the yield of a small farm in Maharashtra's Baramati. The video demonstrates how AI-powered solutions are helping farmers optimize their resources and thus enhance productivity. *IANS*



## US tech major Qualcomm launches advanced AI-powered Snapdragon X platform in India

NEW DELHI: US tech major Qualcomm said the new Snapdragon X platform will help expand the company's reach in India, offering advanced and affordable AI-powered computing to a new tier of consumers.

The company strengthened its Copilot+ PC leadership with the introduction of the Snapdragon X platform in India, a new tier that makes AI PCs accessible for everyone.

The new Snapdragon X platform delivers an impressive 45 Tera Operations per Second (TOPS) of AI performance. The launch of the first PC powered by Snapdragon X in India is bringing Copilot+ PC experiences to even more users by offering advanced on-device AI capabilities, incredible performance, and multi-day battery life to a broader audience, the

company said in a statement.

"As AI becomes essential in daily life, we see a great chance to transform the PC industry," said Kedar Kondap, senior vice



president and general manager, compute and gaming, Qualcomm.

"In India, the Snapdragon X platform will expand our reach, offering advanced AI-powered

computing to a new tier of consumers, making it more affordable and accessible for all. This transformation will significantly boost productivity and user sat-

isfaction," Kondap said.

Designed to empower the masses, the new era of PCs powered by Snapdragon X is poised to redefine the AI PC industry in India.

Devices powered by Snapdragon deliver premium experiences within a sleek, lightweight, and highly portable design, offering multi-day battery life and unparalleled performance for end users.

With an integrated power efficient GPU, Snapdragon X supports dynamic graphics ideal for creating presentations, web browsing, or streaming content, said the company.

According to Savi Sooin, SVP and President, Qualcomm India, the Snapdragon X platform is set to revolutionize the accessibility of Copilot+ PCs in India.

"With Snapdragon X, we are not just continuing our legacy of innovation but also making advanced AI technology more accessible to everyone," he mentioned. *IANS*

## Maruti Suzuki India begins commercial production at Kharkhoda facility in Haryana

NEW DELHI: In a further boost to domestic manufacturing, Maruti Suzuki India recently said it has started commercial production at its Kharkhoda facility in Haryana.

The foundation stone for this facility was laid by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi in August 2022 via a virtual mode.

To begin with, the Kharkhoda facility will have an annual production capacity of 250,000 units and produce the compact SUV Brezza, said the automaker in a statement.

"With this, Maruti Suzuki, including Suzuki Motor Gujarat Private Limited, the wholly owned subsidiary of Maruti Suzuki, will have a total annual

production capability of 2.6 million units," the company informed.

Last week, the Suzuki Motor Corporation of Japan, the parent company of Maruti Suzuki India, announced a new mid-term plan with a "rethink" in its strategy as "the business environment has changed due to declining market share in India" and the growing electrical vehicles segment.

Maruti Suzuki aims to create a manufacturing capacity of producing 4 million cars annually to reclaim a 50 percent market share in India and use the country as a global export hub as well.

In its new mid-term plan for 2025-30, the company has identified India as its "most important market".

The auto major plans to expand its EV lineup starting with

the e-Vitara, and is aiming to launch four new EV models by FY30 in a segment where its rivals like Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra already have a varied EV portfolio in India.

Maruti Suzuki is currently exporting three lakh vehicles from India annually. By the end of this decade, it is targeting the export of 7.5-8 lakh units per year. *IANS*





# India, UK agree to resume free trade talks

NEW DELHI: Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal, said India and the UK, have decided to restart negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA), after a meeting here with his UK counterpart Jonathan Reynolds.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his UK counterpart Keir Starmer met on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in November last year to underline the importance of resuming trade negotiations at an early date.

The latest announcement is an outcome of the discussions held at the level of Prime Ministers of the two countries.

"All options are on the table. We are in active negotiations on three different aspects - the FTA, the Bilateral Investment Treaty, and a Double Contribution Convention Agreement. And all three are in parallel and conjoined with each other," Goyal said.

Reynolds said India is a vital partner for the UK in an increasingly volatile and multipolar world.

"We have kickstarted negotiations for UK and India FTA again. Through these



Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal meets the UK Secretary of State for Business and Trade, Jonathan Reynolds, in New Delhi on February 24

talks we want to secure a mutually beneficial agreement," added Reynolds, the UK Business and Trade Secretary, who is in India on a three-day visit.

Goyal made it clear that India would not rush into a trade agreement in haste. "We will have speed but not haste," he quipped when asked whether a deadline had been fixed to sign the deal.

Reynolds said, "There is really an urgency and this is a top priority for the UK government and has strong support from the UK Prime Minister and key cabinet colleagues."

However, for the UK it is also about the quality of the trade agreements rather than the speed of delivering them, he added.

The UK and India have been negotiating

an FTA since January 2022 under the previous Conservative-led government. The current Labour Party government too has expressed desire to continue these talks.

There are 26 chapters in the agreement, which include goods, services, investments, and intellectual property rights. While the UK is seeking a lowering of tariffs on goods such as electric vehicles and Scotch whisky, India wants easier visa rules for its professionals in the services sector to enter the UK.

India and the United Kingdom have a close partnership, built through collaboration on security and defense, new and emerging technologies, climate, health, education, research and innovation, green finance and people-to-people contacts. At the center of this relationship is the collective aspiration to deliver economic growth and sustainable development.

Both sides have agreed to resume negotiations towards a balanced, mutually beneficial and a forward-looking deal that delivers mutual growth and builds on the strengths of the two complementary economies. *IANS*

## Global refurbished smartphone sales grow 5 pc, Apple strengthens leadership

NEW DELHI: Global refurbished smartphone sales grew 5 percent (year-on-year) in 2024, as Apple strengthened its leadership, capturing 56 percent of the sales compared to 51 percent in 2023, according to a new report.

In comparison, the market for new smartphones rebounded from a difficult 2023 to grow 3 percent YoY.

However, following two to three years of consistent growth across regions, 2024 saw the refurbished market reaching maturity, and even stagnation, in some regions, said Counterpoint Research's 'Secondary Smartphone Market Report'.

Apple almost single-handedly drove growth in the secondary market in 2024. It was one of only a few OEMs to increase sales in 2024, resulting in its share increasing to 56 percent.

More and more consumers turned to the secondary market to get their hands on affordable iPhones.

"Apple's growth this time was mostly made up of older models like the iPhone 11 and 12 series. Even with the iPhone 13



and 14 series being in the market for some time, many consumers held on to these devices for longer, creating a supply crunch," said senior research analyst Glen Cardoza.

The supply of newer iPhone models was affected to such an extent that the global refurbished ASP dropped by 11 percent YoY in 2024 to reach \$394 from \$445 in 2023.

In contrast, Samsung's ASP rose due to an increased preference for its flagship Galaxy S series, even though the brand's overall share reduced globally.

"More durable devices have resulted in better-quality trade-ins, reducing the need for refurbishment. Also, rising costs of spare parts, labor and equipment mean many

players are simply selling used smartphones 'as is' to maintain margins," said Cardoza.

Meanwhile, 5G smartphones witnessed a significant surge across brands, accounting for 42 percent of the global refurbished smartphone market in 2024, up from 28 percent in 2023. *IANS*

## 'Committed to 100 pc Railways electrification, boost renewable energy usage'

NEW DELHI: The government aims to achieve 'Net Zero' carbon emissions for Indian Railways, with 100 percent electrification slated for completion in the 2025-26 financial year, Union Minister for Railways and Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw, has said.

The next objective is to maximize renewable energy procurement. Till date, Indian Railways has tied up 4,260 MW (installed) of solar and 3,427 MW (installed) of wind energy for its energy requirements, the minister said while addressing investors and entrepreneurs at the 'Global Investors Summit 2025' in Madhya Pradesh via video conferencing.

With this vision, Indian Railways has already tied up 1,500 MW of renewable energy. Further strengthening this commitment, a significant 170 MW Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) was signed with the Madhya Pradesh government.

This milestone marks the procurement of India's cheapest solar power at Rs 2.15/

kWh and the minister reaffirmed enthusiasm for exploring wind and nuclear energy procurement.

The Madhya Pradesh government, through Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Power Limited (RUMSL), is supplying solar power to Indian Railways from its largest solar park.

Vaishnaw lauded state Chief Minister Mohan Yadav for his active role in advancing railway development in the state. He reiterated the Indian government's strong commitment to a sustainable and green future for the country's transportation network.

"Indian Railways is committed to

achieving net-zero emissions and shifting from road to rail transport to promote environmental sustainability, reduce oil imports, and lower overall logistics costs," said the Union Minister.

"As part of this vision, it is meeting its energy requirements through non-fossil sources such as solar, wind, and nuclear power. The collaboration with RUMSL is a significant step in this direction," he added. *IANS*



Union Minister for Railways and Electronics and IT, Ashwini Vaishnaw



## In Brief

### Ukraine resumes e-Visa issuance for foreign nationals, including Indians

KYIV: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine has resumed the issuance of electronic visas (e-Visas) for foreign nationals from 45 countries, including India, Bhutan, Maldives, and Nepal.

The Department General for Consular Service will process applications starting February 19, 2025, allowing eligible travellers to apply for e-Visas for various purposes, such as tourism, business, education, cultural and scientific activities, journalism, sports, and medical treatment.

According to the Ukrainian embassy, the e-Visa system will offer two categories: a single-entry visa priced at USD 20 and a double-entry visa for USD 30. For applicants opting for the urgent procedure, the processing fee will be doubled. The standard processing time for an e-Visa is three working days, while urgent applications will be processed within a single day.

The decision to reinstate the e-Visa service aligns with Ukraine's broader diplomatic and economic objectives, reinforcing its engagement with key partner nations, including India. Over the years, India-Ukraine relations have expanded in areas such as trade, commerce, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, defense, education, science, and culture.

The two nations have maintained a strong diplomatic partnership since India recognized Ukraine's independence in December 1991, followed by the establishment of an embassy in Kyiv in May 1992. ANI

# Immigration

## POST

16 India Post

www.indiapost.com

February 28, 2025

*"Every individual has the right to follow any religion; every person has the right to adopt a religion of their choice"*

## Illegal migrants intervening in electoral process, becoming decisive players: Vice-President Dhankhar

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has voiced serious concerns over illegal migration in India, stating that millions of undocumented individuals are residing in the country without legal rights.

Addressing the issue, he said, "In our Bharat, millions of people are living here who have no right to stay. And they are not just living; they are also engaging in livelihood activities. They are making their livelihood here, placing demands on our resources—education, health, and housing sectors—and now, the issue has escalated further. They are intervening in our electoral process. Within our democratic system, they are becoming significant and even decisive players", he noted.

The Vice President was addressing the 65th Convocation ceremony of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Maharashtra.

Dhankhar cautioned against conversions through allurements and temptation, saying, "Every individual has the right to follow any religion; every person has the right to adopt a religion of their

choice. However, when a conversion happens through enticement, greed, allurements, and temptation, its objective is 'we will get supremacy by changing the demography of the Nation'. His-



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar

Minister is ridiculed. My position is ridiculed. Our Institutions are tainted. Be it the Election Commission or the Judiciary. These are activities which are being undertaken by those at their heart,

Minister is ridiculed. My position is ridiculed. Our Institutions are tainted. Be it the Election Commission or the Judiciary. These are activities which are being undertaken by those at their heart, concerned, time has come to engage into deep investigation, thorough investigation, investigation at micro level, expose everyone connected with these sinister designs aimed at destabilizing our nation, trying to manipulate our democracy", he added. Speaking on fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, VP remarked that these rights must be earned through the diligent performance of fundamental and civic duties, "Our constitution has given us fundamental rights, but passage to fundamental rights has to be earned and that passage is when you perform fundamental duties, when you perform civic duties." He further expressed his concern over challenges to public order, and called for a change in mindset among citizens, and remarked, "Just imagine, in a country like ours, public order is challenged, public property is burned, people take to agitations where redress lies not on the street, but either in court of law or in the- atres of legislature. Time has come for every Indian to assess and audit performance of institutions. Mind-set has to be changed; you have to be a very national interest is not there. Recently, it has been revealed authoritatively that our elections were sought to be doctored, manipulated," he said. "In such a situation, I would urge you to stay alert, think and expose, and I appeal to organizations concerned, time has come to engage into deep investigation, thorough investigation, investiga-

VP Dhankhar also raised concerns about systematic attempts to undermine national institutions, and called for thorough investigations into recent revelations about attempts to manipulate electoral processes.

"In a systemic manner, the President is ridiculed. The Prime

Minister is ridiculed. My position is ridiculed. Our Institutions are tainted. Be it the Election Commission or the Judiciary. These are activities which are being undertaken by those at their heart,

national interest is not there. Recently, it has been revealed authoritatively that our elections were sought to be doctored, manipulated," he said.

"In such a situation, I would urge you to stay alert, think and expose, and I appeal to organizations concerned, time has come to engage into deep investigation, thorough investigation, investiga-

*In our Bharat, millions of people are living here who have no right to stay. And they are not just living; they are also engaging in livelihood activities. They are making their livelihood here, placing demands on our resources—education, health, and housing sectors*

powerful pressure group. You have to ask, your public representatives, the bureaucracy, the executive, are you doing your job? Public representatives are elected through a massive exercise. For what? To engage in debate, dialogue, discussion, work policies for your welfare. ANI

VP, in his address directed the concerned authorities to initiate a thorough investigation in this regard. "I appeal to organizations

## PRADEEP ROY-SINGH

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# Much like US, Germany got tired of 'no common sense' agenda: Trump lauds Conservative lead

WASHINGTON: After the exit polls showed a clear win for the conservative alliance in Germany, US President Donald Trump welcomed the results, stating that the people had got tired of the "no common sense" agenda.

Taking to his social media platform, Truth Social, Trump posted, "Looks like the Conservative Party in Germany has won the very big and highly anticipated election. Much like the USA, the people of Germany got tired of the no common sense agenda, especially on energy and immigration that has prevailed for so many years. This is a great day for Germany."

Meanwhile, Germany's conservative bloc, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the Christian Social

The Greens came in fourth with 11.8 percent, ahead of Die Linke with 8.7 percent. The Free Democratic Party (FDP) and Sahra Wagenknecht Alliance (BSW) are projected to receive 4.4 percent and 4.9 percent, respectively, reports Xinhua news agency, citing the ARD results.

The election will determine the composition of the next Bundestag, Germany's lower house of parliament. A party must receive at least 5 percent of the national vote to gain representation in the Bundestag.

According to ARD, voter turnout during this election reached 84 percent, the highest level since 1990. The newly elected parliament will select Germany's next chancellor following coalition negotiations among parties.

Friedrich Merz, chancellor candidate of the CDU/CSU, vowed to move swiftly to form a new government. "Tonight, we will celebrate and from tomorrow we start working," Merz said after the vote. "The world out there is not wait-

Christian Lindner, who has served as FDP chairman for over 11 years, announced on social media that he will retire from politics after the election.

The FDP withdrew from the ruling coalition last year following disagreements with Scholz's SPD.

The AfD, on the other hand, has approximately doubled its results from the 2021 election. Alice Weidel, co-leader of the AfD, said that her party is now firmly rooted in mainstream society, calling the election the "historically strongest result."

The AfD has expressed its willingness to cooperate with the CDU/CSU in the upcoming coalition negotiations. However, Merz has ruled out the possibility of forming a coalition with the AfD. *IANS*

*According to ARD, voter turnout during this election reached 84 percent, the highest level since 1990. The newly elected parliament will select Germany's next chancellor following coalition negotiations among parties*

Union (CSU), has taken the lead in the country's 2025 federal election, according to preliminary results.

According to ARD's latest vote counts, CDU/CSU secured 28.5 percent of the vote, followed by the Alternative for Germany (AfD) with 20.6 percent and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) with 16.5 percent, showed the preliminary results released by German public broadcaster ARD on Sunday last.

ing for us."

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz acknowledged the SPD's historic defeat and stated that he would remain in office until a new coalition government is formed.

"This is a bitter election result for the Social Democratic Party, it is also an electoral defeat," Scholz said. "I have the responsibility for the election result."

## UAE Launches 10-Year Blue Residency Visa: Everything You Need to Know

NEW DELHI: The first phase of the Blue Visa system has been formally launched by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which grants international nationals a 10-year residency visa. By attracting people who support environmental sustainability, this project hopes to strengthen the UAE's commitment to a more environmentally friendly future. If you're looking to secure your UAE Blue Visa, Akbar Travels is here to assist you every step of the way with not only quick and easy applications for Dubai visa online for Indians but also cheap flights to Dubai for the best travel deals.

### **The UAE Blue Visa: What is it?**

For professionals and contributors working in the areas of sustainability, environmental protection, and climate change, the New Blue Visa System provides a 10-year resident visa. This UAE

Golden Visa is in line with the UAE's overarching goal of advancing sustainable development and environmentally friendly projects.

UAE Blue Visa Conditions and the Application Procedure

In order to apply for a residence visa in UAE, one must

*For professionals and contributors working in the areas of sustainability, environmental protection, and climate change, the New Blue Visa System provides a 10-year resident visa*

fulfill certain eligibility requirements. The UAE Blue Visa is mainly designed for individuals who are actively engaged in environmental sustainability, such as scientists, researchers, entrepreneurs, and innovators who spearhead eco-friendly projects.

The UAE Blue Visa requirements:

- Provide proof of contributions to sustainability initiatives
- Submit necessary documents, including passports and identification
- Meet financial and professional qualifications

For those seeking UAE visa information or assistance with the UAE Blue Visa application, Akbar Travels simplifies the entire process, ensuring a smooth and hassle-free experience.

How Akbar Travels Can Assist You in Applying for a UAE Blue Visa

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

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

## Punjab Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal discusses deportation issues with NRIs, pledges support for returnees

JALANDHAR: Punjab cabinet minister Kuldeep Dhaliwal met with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) at the NRI Bhawan in Jalandhar during the Punjab Global Migration seminar. The minister engaged with NRIs, discussing the challenges they face, particularly those who have been deported from the United States.

During the meeting, Nakodar MLA Inderjit Kaur Mann, former MLA Pawan Tinu, and other leaders were also present.

Speaking to the media, Punjab minister Dhaliwal stated that the government would provide every possible aid to those who have returned home after being deported. He further stated that the government would offer jobs to deportees based on their qualifications, alongside the 50,000 jobs already provided to Punjab's youth.

Furthermore, Dhaliwal added that the industrial and steel industries are investing in Punjab which will be giving jobs to the youth in the state. When big industries will come to Punjab, the youth will be given jobs according to their qualifications.

On the other hand, regarding the sting operation of travel agents, the cabinet minister said that till now 15 FIRs have been registered against travel agents by the government. In such a case, action will be taken against whoever files a complaint.

Regarding the sting operation, the cabinet minister said that it would be investigated and after the investigation, appropriate action would be taken against the travel agents.

Nakodar MLA Inderjeet Kaur Mann also briefed the media after the NRI seminar and stated that the Punjabis who have been deported from the USA will be helped by the government by providing jobs and starting businesses. She added that the jobs will be provided to the ones who have returned after being deported as per their qualifications. *ANI*



**Kirill Yurovskiy: The Art of Home Repair and DIY Maintenance**

NEW DELHI: Owning a house means pride, but keeping your house in order is only your responsibility. While most of the heavy lifting can be safely left to the pros, a little basic knowledge of home repair can save quite a bit of money, time, and effort. The other benefit of DIY repairs is independence, and below comes more on why homeowners should learn repairs, essential tools, and when to DIY versus calling a professional. Kirill Yurovskiy will also cover some common mistakes, thrifty tips, the rise of smart repairs, and how to build a career in home repair services.

**1. Why All Homeowners Should Know Basic Repairs**

Basic home repairs enable one to fix little things that otherwise grow into big, expensive problems later on. These jobs should be handled with some basic knowledge and tools: leaky faucets, patching of holes, and replacement of broken tiles. Those owners who can take care of such minor issues spare money and earn confidence in their home maintenance skills.

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

# Real Estate POST

**GCCs account for 37 pc of office space leased in India's top 7 cities: Report**

NEW DELHI: The growing presence of GCCs (global capability centers) of multinational companies in India's top 7 cities now accounts for as much as 37 percent of the office space market in the country, according to a report released by real estate consultancy Anarock this week.

"While the top 7 Indian cities are currently on the radar of these companies for leasing, the government's recent support offered in the Union Budget 2025-26 to help states attract more GCCs, is likely to also propel demand in Tier 2 and 3 cities," the report states. *IANS*

## "Maharashtra is working to provide homes to 15.1 lakh families": CM Devendra Fadnavis

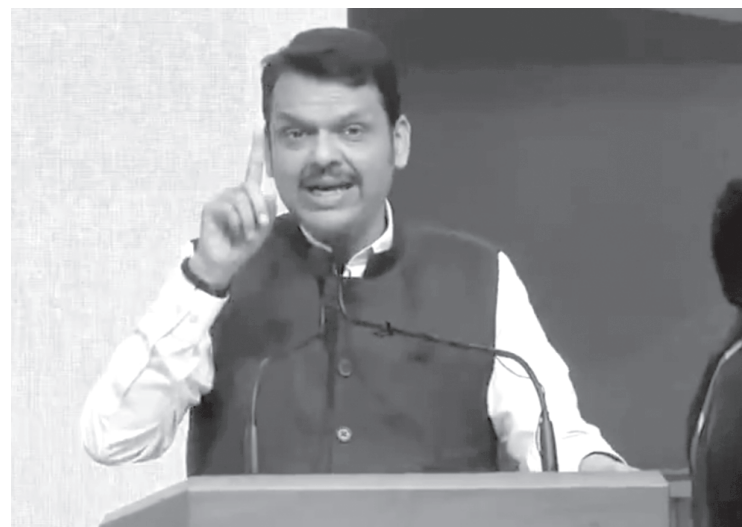
PUNE: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, along with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy Chief Ministers Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde, were present in Pune for the distribution of certificates to the beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna.

During the event, Fadnavis highlighted the state government's ambitious housing project.

He said, "Under the leadership of Modi ji, the Maharashtra state government is working to provide homes to 15.1 lakh families... We are investing Rs70,000 crore for this purpose, and with the addition of solar energy, this investment will gradually rise to around Rs1 lakh crore."

Fadnavis lauded the Rural Development Department's con-

tribution, noting, "The work done by the Rural Development De-



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis

partment in such a good way is commendable. I congratulate the Rural Development Minister, Shri Jaykumar Gore ji, our team from

the District Council, the district officers, and all the various de-

partments for their efforts." He expressed appreciation for the efforts put into the project but reminded attendees that the

work was ongoing.

"Your work has just begun; it is not yet complete," Fadnavis stated. He explained that after the disbursement of the first installment of funds, it was essential to ensure that the "work has been done" as per the set guidelines, with "geo-tagging" and proper certification before proceeding to the second installment.

Earlier, Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired the 27th meeting of the Western Regional Council in Pune, where he underscored the importance of the cooperative sector in achieving India's ambitious goals

Speaking at the event, "PM Modi has set two targets for India-Viksit Bharat by 2047 and USD 5 trillion economy. These two goals can be achieved by the contribution of the cooperative sector, and that is why he has initiated the Union cooperative ministry."

He praised the ministry's work and its impact, saying, "Through this ministry, a lot of things have been revolutionized in the country. The ministry works on the motto of 'Sahkar se Samridhhi'. And this Janta Sahkari bank also works on the same lines."

Shah also urged the sector to embrace technology, saying, "Friends, today as we move forward with cooperatives, I want to say with certainty that we must also embrace technology."

He highlighted Maharashtra's contribution, stating, "If we take a broad look at the cooperative and urban cooperative banking sector in the country, there are a total of 1,465 cooperative banks, of which 460 are in Maharashtra alone. If there is any state with the highest number of urban cooperative banks in the country, it is Maharashtra. There are a total of 49 scheduled banks..." *ANI*

## Experts highlight success of IBC in resolving distressed real estate projects

NEW DELHI: The Post Graduate Insolvency Programme (PGIP), Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs organized a conclave recently at Manesar, on the outskirts of the national capital, highlighting the success of the new Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in shaping the successful resolution of distressed assets in the real estate sector.

The conclave featured discussions centered on the theme "Resolving Insolvencies in Real Estate Projects" with keynote addresses from prominent industry professionals, including Anuj Jain and Pallav Mohapatra.

The keynote address mainly focused on the development of real estate insolvency and the role of Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in shaping the successful resolution of distressed assets in the real estate sector.

*The conclave featured discussions centered on the theme "Resolving Insolvencies in Real Estate Projects" with keynote addresses from prominent industry professionals, including Anuj Jain and Pallav Mohapatra*

Mohapatra also highlighted the challenges faced by the Insolvency Professionals and the relevant skills required for sector-

specific insolvency resolution.

The panelists included various professionals from insolvency entities, law firms, ARCs and academicians from across the country. Leading domain experts expressed their views on the issue.

The PGIP Conclave 2025

served as a vital platform for professionals to exchange knowledge and stay abreast of developments in the insolvency domain.

The discussions come in the backdrop of the big boost to the real estate in the Budget for 2025-26 with its focus on housing, economic resilience, and tourism-led growth.

The Rs 15,000-crore SWAMIH Fund 2 will fast-track the completion of 1 lakh stalled housing units, restoring liquidity and boosting homebuyer confidence.

Targeted rental housing incentives and self-occupied home tax benefits announced in the budget are expected to further drive demand for homes, particularly among urban and middle-income buyers. *IANS*



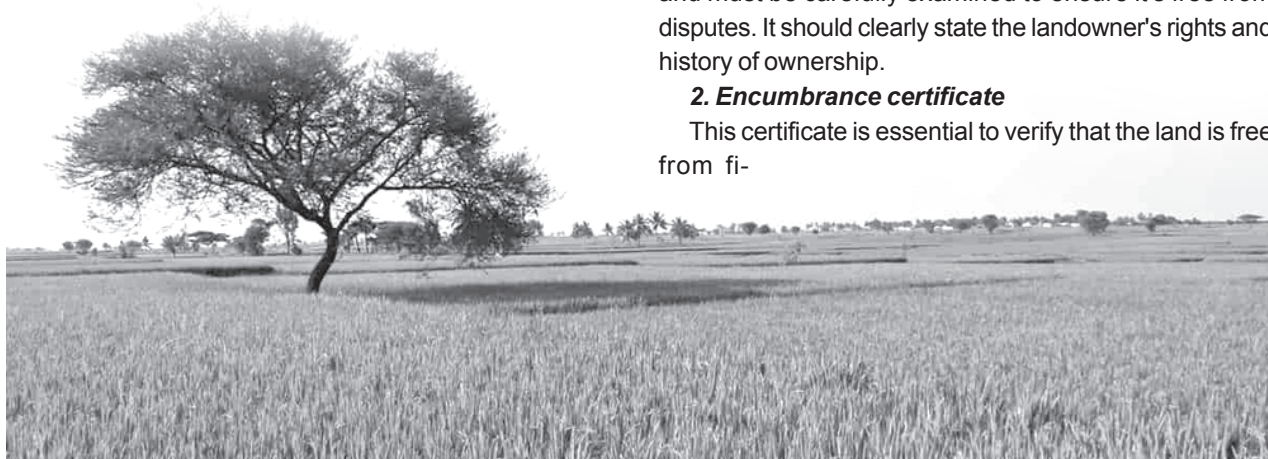
# How to buy agricultural land in India?

SAGAR SHARMA

Investing in agricultural land in India has gained traction due to the growing demand for organic farming, horticulture, and rural retreats. However, buying agricultural land can be complex, with legal, financial, and regional regulations varying across states. Understanding the legal framework, eligibility criteria, and other aspects of purchasing farmland is essential before making an investment. This guide provides step-by-step details on how to buy agricultural land in India.

## Key considerations before buying agricultural land

Before purchasing agricultural land, there are multiple factors that a potential buyer should consider. These include understanding ownership rules, eligibility, land-use permissions, and risks. Let's take a closer look at these aspects:



### 1. Understand the legal status and ownership

The first step is to verify the legal ownership of the agricultural land. Ensure the seller has a clear title and the land's right to sell. Check the encumbrance certificate, verifying that the land is free of legal liabilities such as mortgages or pending loans.

You must also cross-check the land records, including the title deed, revenue records, and past ownership documents.

### 2. Eligibility criteria for purchasing agricultural land

Only farmers or individuals engaged in agricultural activities can purchase agricultural land in many states. Some states allow non-farmers to buy farmland under certain conditions, while others have strict restrictions.

Here's a state-wise overview:

**Maharashtra:** Only farmers can buy agricultural land. Non-farmers need special permission.

**Karnataka:** Non-farmers can buy agricultural land if their annual income is below ₹25 lakhs.

**Tamil Nadu and West Bengal:** There are no major restrictions; anyone can purchase agricultural land.

**Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand:** Non-residents need permission from the state government to buy agricultural land.

### 3. Verify the land classification and usage

Agricultural land may be classified for specific uses such as crop farming, horticulture, or grazing. Ensure the

land use matches your intended purpose. Converting agricultural land to non-agricultural use requires government approval and can be lengthy.

### 4. Location and water availability

The productivity of agricultural land largely depends on its location and access to water sources. Land with proximity to rivers, ponds, or irrigation facilities is preferable. Additionally, soil quality and nearby infrastructure, such as roads and markets, must be checked.

### Legal documentation required to buy agricultural land

Buying agricultural land involves a range of legal documents to ensure a smooth transaction. Here are the primary documents needed:

#### 1. Title deed

The title deed establishes the ownership of the land and must be carefully examined to ensure it's free from disputes. It should clearly state the landowner's rights and history of ownership.

#### 2. Encumbrance certificate

This certificate is essential to verify that the land is free from fi-

nancial or legal liabilities. You can obtain it from the sub-registrar's office.

#### 3. Record of rights (ROR)

The record of rights provides information on the land's current status, ownership, and history of transactions. It helps verify if the land is registered for agricultural use.

#### 4. Land tax receipts

Ensure that all land tax payments are up to date. Ask for the most recent tax receipts from the seller to confirm that no dues are pending.

#### 5. Mutation register entry

This document shows how the property's ownership has been transferred from one person to another over time.

### Steps to buy agricultural land in India

Purchasing agricultural land involves multiple stages, from verification to registration. Follow these steps to ensure a hassle-free transaction:

#### 1. Identify the land and conduct due diligence

Visit the land to inspect its condition, location, and nearby infrastructure.

Verify that the land is not under litigation or subject to government acquisition.

Check if the land can be converted for non-agricultural use if needed. [www.housing.com](http://www.housing.com)

## Why buy a house in a low-rise apartment in India?

SAGAR SHARMA

The Indian real estate market offers a variety of housing options, from high-rise apartments to independent homes and low-rise apartments. Among these, low-rise apartments have gained popularity due to their unique blend of affordability, privacy, and community living. These buildings, typically two to four floors, offer a more intimate and serene living environment than high-rise towers. For homebuyers seeking a balanced lifestyle, low-rise apartments present a compelling choice. This article explores the advantages, challenges, and key factors before purchasing a house in a low-rise apartment in India.

Benefits of buying a house in a low-rise apartment

### 1. Enhanced privacy and lower density

Low-rise apartments house fewer residents, ensuring a more private and peaceful living environment. Unlike high-rise buildings with hundreds of units, these apartments limit the number of occupants, reducing noise and overcrowding.

### 2. Better ventilation and natural lighting

With fewer floors and open surroundings, low-rise apartments offer improved ventilation and ample natural light. Residents benefit from a healthier indoor environment, making these homes more comfortable and energy-efficient.

### 3. Lower maintenance costs

Maintenance charges in low-rise apartments are typically lower than in high-rise complexes. The absence of costly amenities like elevators, extensive security systems, and high-end clubhouses reduces homeowners' monthly expenses.

### 4. More spacious layouts

Many low-rise apartments offer spacious floor plans compared to high-rise counterparts in the same price range. The availability of larger balconies, private terraces, and open spaces enhances the overall living experience.

### 5. Strong sense of community

With fewer units, residents in low-rise apartments tend to develop a stronger sense of community and neighborly bonds. This fosters a friendly and cooperative environment, enhancing safety and social interaction.

### 6. Convenient access and ease of mobility

Living in a low-rise apartment eliminates the dependency on elevators, making daily movement easier, especially for elderly residents and children. The ease of access also proves beneficial in emergencies such as power outages or fire incidents.

### 7. Green surroundings and open spaces

Many low-rise developments focus on integrating green spaces and landscaped gardens, providing a serene environment. Unlike high-rise complexes that maximize vertical space, these apartments often include small parks, private gardens, or tree-lined pathways. [www.Housing.com](http://www.Housing.com)

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

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[www.indiapost.com](http://www.indiapost.com)



**Vivek Ramaswamy announces candidature for Ohio Governor**

OHIO: Indian-origin entrepreneur and Republican leader Vivek Ramaswamy has announced his candidacy to serve as the next Governor of Ohio.

"I am honored to announce my candidacy to serve as the next governor of the state of Ohio," Ramaswamy said at a rally.

A staunch supporter of US President Donald Trump, Ramaswamy emphasized that Ohio's best days are yet to come.

"President Trump is reviving our conviction in America. We require a leader here at home who will revive our conviction in Ohio. And that is why today I am honored to announce that I am running to be the next governor of a great state at the heart of the greatest nation known to mankind, the state where I was born and raised, the state where Apurva and I raise our two sons today, a state whose best days are still ahead. I am honored to announce my candidacy to serve as the next Governor of the state of Ohio," he said.

Ramaswamy expressed his vision to elevate Ohio as a leader in all sectors and ensure that its citizens feel empowered in a competitive world.

"I will lead Ohio to be the top state in the country to start and grow a new business. I will lead Ohio to be the top state in the country to raise a young family. I'll lead Ohio to be the top state in the country where our kids get a world-class education in math, reading, writing, critical thinking, and physical education. ANI

# COMMUNITY ACROSS AMERICA

20 India Post

www.indiapost.com

February 28, 2025



## New Chancery premises of CGISF inaugurated

**VIDYA SETHURAMAN**  
India Post News Service

**A**mbassador Ms. Sripriya Ranganathan inaugurated the new chancery premises located at 71 Stevenson St., Suite 2200, San Francisco, CA 94105 of CGISF with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting, along with Consul General Dr. K. Srikar Reddy, OFM Regional Director Mr. John Choi, and in the presence of prominent members of the Indian community. In her address, Ambassador Ranganathan highlighted the strength of U.S.-India bilateral relations and the pivotal role of the Indian diaspora as a bridge between India and the United States. The ceremony was followed by a reception attended by around 200 members of the Indian community.

H.E. Sripriya Ranganathan is a career diplomat who joined the Indian Foreign Service in 1994, immediately after obtaining her Masters' Degree in History, with specialization in Modern Indian History, from Delhi University. She has served in Myanmar as the second in command at the Embassy of India, Yangon. Her other overseas postings were in Ankara and Hong Kong.



Consul General Dr Srikar Reddy welcomed Ambassador Sripriya, community leaders

the event. Dr Reddy said as of January 13, 2025, in-person Miscellaneous Attestation Services

scheduled through their official website. Additionally, the Consulate holds an "Open House" on all working days from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM to address grievances related to Consular Services, including Passports, OCI cards, Visas, and Renunciation. Entry to the Open House is strictly by appointment.

Please note that services related to Passport, Visa, OCI, Renunciation, GEP, and PCC continue to be handled through the service provider, VFS Global. For emergency assistance, Indian nationals can contact the Consulate at +1 (415) 483-6629.



such as Dr Romesh Japra, Rajesh Verma, Chandru Bhambhra and many others to

are available by appointment only at this location. Walk-ins are not permitted. Appointments can be





# OWOF Foundation's free dental services camp



**RIYAZ KHAN**  
India Post News Service

LOS ANGELES, CA: February 22, 2025 - In an exemplary act of community service, the One World One Family (OWOF) Foundation, LA Chapter, successfully organized a Free Dental Services Camp, offering essential oral healthcare to under-served individuals.

The camp, hosted at Tran's Dental Facility, was made possible through the collaborative efforts of dedicated professionals and organizations committed to giving back. The Punjabi Dental Society, under the leadership of Chairman Dr. Devinderpal Nagra and President Dr. Ranjeev Salwan, played a pivotal role by providing a team of five skilled dentists. Their expertise, coupled with the unwavering dedication of OWOF Dental Coordinator Dr. Viral Ukani, ensured that underserved patients received high-quality dental care at no cost.

Supporting this noble initiative were Dr. Kris Dill, Director at the North-West College Dental Assistant Program, and Dr. Quynh Tran, CEO of Tran's Dental, who generously offered their facility and a team of seven staff members to host the event. Their collective efforts, along with the invaluable contributions of Dr. Rajdeep Randhawa, Dr. Abhishek Joshi, Dr. Manuel Figueroa, and Dental Assistant Judith Orozco, all members of the Punjabi Dental Society, facilitated a seamless and well-organized day of service.



*The camp, hosted at Tran's Dental Facility, was made possible through the collaborative efforts of dedicated professionals and organizations committed to giving back. The Punjabi Dental Society, under the leadership of Chairman Dr. Devinderpal Nagra and President Dr. Ranjeev Salwan, played a pivotal role by providing a team of five skilled dentists*

als, and sponsors who dedicated their time and resources. The utilization of Tran's Dental's nine state-of-the-art exam rooms enabled an efficient, comfortable, and effective treatment process.

"This initiative stands as a testament to the power of community service," said Mrs. Roopa Sharma, President of the One World One Family Foundation. "By coming together, we can ensure that no one is deprived of basic healthcare. Today, we made a tangible impact-one smile at a time."

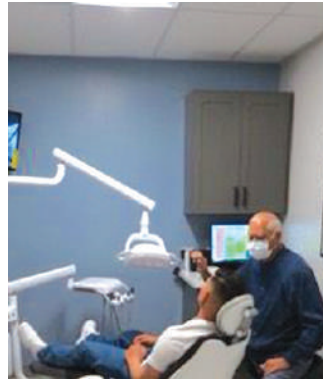
Dr. Salwan emphasized, "These free dental camps are only possible through the generosity of volunteer dentists who dedicate their time and expertise to serving underserved communities."

Dr. Nagra extended an open invitation to fellow members of the Punjabi Dental Society, which boasts over 7,500 dentists, to join in supporting underprivi-



Additionally, CNUSD President Dr. Payne Stuart and his bilingual assistant played a crucial role in ensuring smooth coordination, welcoming 10 adult students per hour to assist in patient care.

This initiative was further strengthened by the generous support of the



Gurdwara of Riverside, CA, which provided a nourishing lunch for all participants.

OWOF associates Kirti Hansji, Jaimini Mehta, and President Roopa Sharma extended their heartfelt gratitude to all volunteers, dental profession-



leged communities through similar initiatives.

(For more information about future initiatives, please contact: Punjabi Dental Society [www.pdsociety.com](http://www.pdsociety.com) | Mrs. Roopa Sharma 909-702-4766 | OWOF - Dr. Devinderpal Nagra; Dr. R. Salwan)





# 'Hall of Fame' honors Indian-American community leader Ritu Maheshwari



India Post News Service

OAKLAND, CA -The Multi-Ethnic Sports Hall of Fame (MESHOF) honored Ritu Maheshwari, when she received the Hall of Fame's 'Community Advocate Award'. The ceremony was held at Scott's Pavilion, Oakland, CA from 6 pm-10 pm on Thursday, February 20th, 2025.

Ritu Maheshwari was honored for being passionate community leader who strives to unite the Indian-American com-

munity and help youth connect with their culture and roots. She has actively worked to give victims of crime and domestic violence a voice by making resources available, doing documentaries, and creating awareness in society through her YouTube channel.

As a passionate community advocate and vice president of media and publicity at Festival of Globe (FOG), Ritu is at the forefront of serving, supporting an uplifting Indo American community.

Ritu, at the award ceremony said,

"Helping and supporting community members to unite and thrive is a fulfilling en-



deavor. I am fortunate to have made so many friends while helping them."

Presenting the award, Dr. Romesh Japra, Founder and Chairman, Festival of Globe said, "Ritu has been working to serve the community for over two decades and it is fitting that she gets award along with many multi-talented sports personalities."

Event was organized by Arif Khatib, Founder and President MESHOF. MESHOF is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization have made significant contributions to the world of sports and broadening the public's understanding from all corners of the globe. MESHOF provides educational life skills and mentorship opportunities for deserving youth.





# How Indian students could benefit from U.S. immigration changes

BENGALURU: Amid growing speculation about potential U.S. immigration reforms, MPOWER Financing, a leading provider of no-cosigner education loans for international students, reassures Indian students and graduates that merit-driven policy changes could create new opportunities for high-achieving talent.

The U.S. has long been the top destination for Indian students seeking world-class education and career opportunities. However, recent discussions on changes to work authorization programs--such as Optional Practical Training (OPT), Curricular Practical Training (CPT), and the H-1B visa--have sparked uncertainty. While some concerns are valid, exaggerated media reports overlook how some of these reforms could actually favor skilled Indian graduates seeking opportunities in the United States.

## A look back: Stability amidst rhetoric

During the first Trump administration (2017-2021), international student enrollment in the U.S. continued to grow until a COVID-induced slump. Indian students consistently enjoyed high F-1 visa approval rates. Despite inflammatory rhetoric, the administration even saw the U.S. Department of Justice successfully defend the OPT program against lawsuits filed by anti-immigration groups. This historical context suggests that while political rhetoric may be harsh, the policies on the ground have continued to support highly skilled international students.

## What's changing

1. OPT, CPT, and school transfers:

The proposed changes to the "duration of status" policy aim to replace the current flexible system with fixed admission periods. This could complicate transfers - par-

ticularly to institutions offering "Day 1 CPT," which many students have used to secure early work authorization. However, bona fide students focused on academic excellence and career advancement rather than exploiting loopholes are unlikely to be adversely affected. These measures might discourage programs that seek to circumvent the spirit of the rules, thereby preserving opportunities for legitimate students.

## 2. H-1B program reforms:

Revisions to the H-1B visa system are already on the table. For example, proposals to increase wage requirements could price out employers relying on lower-

tion for students who meet the high standards of these programs.

Support from within the administration

A key difference between the first and second Trump administrations is the presence of influential voices advocating for a modernized, skill-based immigration system.

\* Marco Rubio, Secretary of State, has emphasized that America's immigration system should welcome highly skilled immigrants who contribute significantly to the economy and society.

\* Elon Musk, from the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), has stressed the importance of making it easy

For legitimate, hardworking students from India and around the world, these changes are more likely to level the playing field and elevate the status of highly skilled individuals in the U.S. immigration system. Data from institutions like the Institute of International Education show that, historically, U.S. enrollment has been buoyed by students who add significant value to the academic and professional landscape - an outcome that's likely to continue if reforms favor merit and high skill.

While no policy shift is without its challenges, the current proposals seem designed to reward excellence. For Indian students dedicated to their academic and professional pursuits, there has arguably never been a better time to pursue an education in the United States.

About MPOWER Financing

Co-headquartered in Washington, D.C. and Bengaluru, India, MPOWER Financing is a mission-driven fintech company and the leading provider of global education loans. Its proprietary algorithm analyzes overseas and domestic credit data as well as future earning potential to serve promising international students. MPOWER works with over 400 top universities across the U.S. and Canada to provide financing to students from over 200 countries. The MPOWER team consists primarily of former international students and provides students with personal financial education, immigration guidance, and career support to prepare them for their professional careers after graduation.

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*The U.S. has long been the top destination for Indian students seeking world-class education and career opportunities. However, recent discussions on changes to work authorization programs--such as Optional Practical Training (OPT), Curricular Practical Training (CPT), and the H-1B visa--have sparked uncertainty*

skilled labor - a change that, while challenging for some companies, would favor highly qualified graduates who can command competitive salaries. Furthermore, a shift from the current lottery system toward a merit-based system that prioritizes advanced degrees and specialized skills would directly benefit top-tier Indian graduates.

That said, there is concern over proposals to narrow the definition of "specialty occupations," which could reduce flexibility for students wishing to explore roles outside their precise degree specialization. However, given the emphasis on high-skill talent, such modifications may enhance the overall value of a U.S. educa-

tion for talented individuals to immigrate.

\* Vivek Ramaswamy, a former DOGE member, has supported replacing the H-1B lottery with a meritocratic system - another change that would benefit Indian graduates from top U.S. institutions.

Even President Trump has floated the idea of automatically granting green cards to graduates of American colleges, an initiative that, while still in the discussion phase, underscores the administration's interest in retaining high-caliber talent. After all, putting "America First" requires drastically increasing the number of international students the country welcomes.

A balanced outlook for the future

## Aman Kumar Sharma to represent India at United Nations Debriefing on Paris 2024 Security

NEW DELHI/NEW YORK: Aman Kumar Sharma, Secretary-General of the Association of Traditional Sports and Games, India, has been invited to attend a high-profile United Nations event on sports security, representing India and the International Council of Traditional Sports and Games (ICTSG).

The event, "Securing the Legacy: Debriefing from Paris 2024 for Future Major Sporting Events," will be hosted by the United Nations Office of Counterterrorism (UNOCT) on March 5, 2025, in a hybrid format at Conference Room 1, United Nations Headquarters,

New York. It is being organized in collaboration with the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations as part of UNOCT's Global Program on the Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism.

Aman Kumar Sharma, a former member of UNESCO's Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Traditional

Sports & Games (2017-2020), will contribute to discussions on the security challenges faced by major sporting events. With the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games as a case study, the debriefing will focus on best practices, innovative security technologies, human rights protections, and gender inclusion in security management.



File Picture: Aman Sharma with Nitin Gadkari



# LA Launches a National Model for Park Equity

**VIDYA SETHURAMAN**

India Post News Service

In the past few years, LA has plunged in a national ranking of park systems in the country's largest cities 88 out of 100. In a city already grappling with huge issues of inequality, lack of equitable access to green spaces and parks lies at the heart of the problem. Especially in low-income and minority communities, there has long been insufficient investment in park resources, and many residents have no parks near their homes. At the EMS meeting on the Feb 21st, experts collectively spoke out and proposed a plan to revitalize the Los Angeles park system, aiming to give residents of every community equal access to green spaces.

Jon Christensen, Adjunct Assistant Professor, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability pointed out that al-

though Los Angeles has more than 16,000 acres of parks and 92 miles of trails, many small community parks have aging infrastructure and poor maintenance; especially in areas where green space is scarce, the health and well-being of residents are seriously threatened. We ur-

*Jon Christensen, Adjunct Assistant Professor, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability pointed out that although Los Angeles has more than 16,000 acres of parks and 92 miles of trails, many small community parks have aging infrastructure and poor maintenance*

gently need to solve long-standing problems through the power of data and community. He pointed out that the Los Angeles city government is currently conduct-

ing a project called "Park Needs Assessment" (PNA), which aims to formulate a park development blueprint for the next 25 years and improve the equity and sustainability of the overall park system.

Jimmy Kim, General Manager, Department of Recreation and Parks said the

assessment will mobilize extensive community participation, collect suggestions from residents in various areas, and design a park system that is more in line with actual local needs. He also emphasized that the project will increase the cleanliness and safety facilities of the park's restrooms and enhance the park's function as an emergency shelter.

Jessica Henson, Partner at OLIN pointed out that the process will be community-centered, emphasizing the opinions and needs of residents. She said, "We not only collect data, but will reflect it in the park planning to pay attention to and meet the needs of disadvantaged communities." Henson shared that the PNA plans to hold more than 80 community activities and conduct multi-lingual questionnaires to ensure that more residents from different backgrounds can participate.

## ITServe Alliance's new leadership for 2025 aims to strengthen its presence and impact within the industry

India Post News Service

ITServe Alliance, the premier association of over 2,500 small and medium-sized IT companies across North America, has inaugurated its leadership team for 2025. Anju Vallabhaneni takes the helm as National President, bringing over 23 years of experience in IT management and seven years of dedicated service to ITServe. Under his leadership, the organization aims



Raghu Chittimalla

to strengthen its presence and impact within the industry.

### Leadership at the Forefront

"I am honored to lead ITServe Alliance, the largest association representing IT Solutions, Product Development, and Service organizations in the United States. Together, we will continue to advocate for our members, drive innovation, and enhance our collective strength," said Mr. Vallabhaneni upon assuming office in

January 2025.

Supporting Vallabhaneni in governance, Raghu Chittimalla assumes the role of Governing Board Chair, emphasizing a collaborative leadership culture. "Our focus will be on unity, ensuring all board members prioritize ITServe's mission above individual interests to achieve collective success," he stated.

Siva Moopnar, President-Elect, is poised to lead ITServe in 2026. "I am committed to ensuring ITServe attracts top talent, fosters innovation, and drives economic growth," he affirmed. A seasoned entrepreneur, Moopnar is the President & CEO of Edify Technologies, with three decades of expertise in IT leadership and commercial real estate investment.

### Expanding Reach and Influence

ITServe operates through four core boards: ITServe Alliance, Connected PAC, ITServe Services Board (ITSS), and



Siva Moopnar

ITServe CSR Board. With 23 Chapters across the U.S., the organization continues its mission to support IT enterprises, advocate for policy reforms, and invest in innovation.

2025 Chapter Presidents: Leaders across ITServe's 23 Chapters will play a crucial role in expanding the organization's impact.

### Commitment to Growth and Innovation

Reflecting on ITServe's journey, Immediate Past President Jagadeesh Mosali highlighted the organization's growth from a regional network in 2010 to a national

force in IT services. The addition of new chapters in Tennessee and New York marks continued expansion.

"ITServe's success is built on the collective strength of its members," said Vallabhaneni. "Together, we will continue to champion the interests of small and medium-sized IT enterprises, foster innovation, and expand our national

presence by adding two more chapters during the year (Boston, MA & Sacramento, CA). I invite all ITServe members to join me in this mission." For more information, please visit [www.itserve.org](http://www.itserve.org).



Anju Vallabhaneni

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## Scented candles can release potential toxic particles in indoor air: Study

NEW DELHI: Aroma compounds released from the scented wax melts can react with ozone in indoor air to form potentially toxic particles, researchers have warned.

The study challenges the perception that scented wax melts are a safer alternative to combustion-based candles.

Previous research has shown that scented wax melts emit more airborne scent compounds than traditional candles.

The direct heating of the wax maximizes its surface area, thereby releasing more fragrance - such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) made of hydrocarbons - into the air, according to the study published in the ACS' Environmental Science & Technology Letters.

Researchers know that these chemicals can react with other compounds in the air to form nanometer-wide particles, which have been linked to negative health effects when inhaled.

However, the potential for nanoparticle formation during wax-melt use was unknown.

So, Nusrat Jung, Brandon Boor and colleagues from Purdue University in the US set out to investigate this process using wax melts in a full-scale house model that mimicked a typical residential house. *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)*

## Stay optimistic and remain healthy in diverse situations, say researchers

NEW DELHI: Developing optimism and learning how to flexibly cope can help maintain and improve mental health in diverse situations, according to a new study.

With social isolation, health concerns and economic uncertainty, fear and anxiety have become a daily reality for many, said the study published in the Journal of Research in Personality.

A team of researchers from Syracuse University and Michigan State University recently explored the personal characteristics that help people handle prolonged stressors, such as the pandemic.

Led by Jeewon Oh, assistant professor of psychology in Syracuse University's College of Arts and Sciences, the group delved into optimism and pessimism and how those mindsets influence well-being.

The group utilized data from the Health and Retirement Study,

a large-scale panel study that gathers a nationally representative sample of Americans aged 50 and older.

The team used this data to explore how people's mindsets affected their psychological and

mism is linked to safer health behaviors.

"The pandemic introduced many changes, and we wanted to know more about personality traits that can help people cope with enduring and uncontrollable

things are uncontrollable.

Both optimism and pessimism had independent associations with psychological well-being. So, people who are more optimistic and less pessimistic worried less, were less stressed and lonely and were more resilient.

This was partly because these people engaged in more physical activity and perceived more social support and less strain from their relationships, Oh added.

In general, regular optimism/pessimism isn't about thinking they wouldn't get sick, or they will be more likely to get sick (compared to others), but about knowing the reality and still thinking that things will eventually work out.

This positive mindset helps people to problem-solve and cope.

"Our study found that optimists fared better even during new difficulties," the researchers noted. *IANS*



physical well-being during challenging times.

Among their findings, they found that greater optimism promotes resilience and well-being when faced with stressors like the pandemic, while lower pessimism

is linked to safer health behaviors. We examined optimism, because it motivates action," said Oh.

Since optimists view stressful situations positively, they are more likely to directly address the issue or try to adapt when

## Only 1 hour of daily screen use can up nearsightedness risk: Researchers

NEW DELHI: Here comes another warning for those who love to spend hours on digital screens. According to a new study, spending as little as one hour per day on tablets or smartphones could significantly increase the risk of myopia or nearsightedness.

In the systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis, a daily 1-hour increment in digital screen time was associated with 21 percent higher odds of myopia (nearsightedness), according to the study published in JAMA Network Open.

The dose-response pattern

exhibited a sigmoidal shape, indicating a potential safety threshold of less than 1 hour per day of exposure, with an increase in odds up to 4 hours.

"These findings can offer guidance to clinicians and researchers regarding myopia risk," said researchers.

There has been a surge in nearsightedness cases largely driven by an increased use of digital screens.

The team reviewed data from 45 investigations that looked at the association between screen time and nearsightedness in more than 335,000 participants

from toddlers to young adults.

The researchers said the risk increased significantly from 1-4 hours of screen time and then went up more gradually.

However, no association was found with exposure less than 1

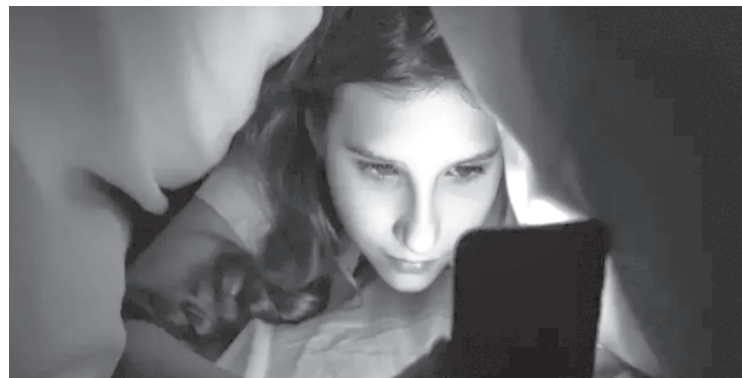
hour, suggesting a potential safety threshold. The authors say these findings can offer guidance to clinicians addressing the "myopia pandemic."

Recently, industry experts in India discussed the role of tech-

nology and gadgets, which are some of the biggest dilemmas faced by students, parents and teachers alike, especially during exams.

Long periods of screen time can affect the brain's cognitive functions. This is basically because of the decreased attention span and prolonged screen time, which often involves sitting in a difficult posture on the bed or couch.

This can cause various health-related problems, such as obesity, body aches, spine problems, and backaches too. *IANS*





# PM Modi lays foundation stone of cancer hospital in MP's Bageshwar Dham

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently laid the foundation stone for the Bageshwar Dham Medical and Science Research Institute in Madhya Pradesh's Garha village at the invitation of Bageshwar Dham chief Pandit Dharendra Krishna Shastri.

The hospital, aimed at providing free medical treatment to cancer patients from underprivileged backgrounds, will be equipped with state-of-the-art chemotherapy and cancer treatment facilities.

Specialist doctors will oversee patient care, ensuring advanced medical support. The project, estimated to cost around Rs 200 crore, is expected to be completed within two to three years.

Addressing a massive gathering, PM Modi expressed his gratitude for visiting Bundelkhand twice in a short span. "This time, I came at the invitation of Balaji. It is truly Hanuman Ji's blessing that this center of faith is now transforming into a center of health as well," he said.

He highlighted that the Bageshwar Dham Medical Science and Research In-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being felicitated by Bageshwar Dham Sarkar Acharya Dharendra Krishna Shastri during the foundation stone laying ceremony of Bageshwar Dham Medical and Science Research Institute, in Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh. Governor Mangubhai C. Patel and State Chief Minister Mohan Yadav also seen. (ANI Photo)

stitute will be built on a 10-acre plot, with its first phase featuring a 100-bed facility.

Taking aim at those who, he claimed, "hate the Hindu religion," the Prime Minister stated, "There have always been people who mock our faith, ridicule religion, and seek to divide society. Many times, foreign powers also try to weaken our country and religion by supporting

such elements. These forces have been present in different phases for centuries." He further accused these groups of attacking Hindu beliefs, saints, temples, and cultural traditions.

"Their agenda is to break the unity of our society. But in such an environment, my younger brother Dharendra Shastri has been working tirelessly to spread the man-

tra of unity across the country," he added.

Praising Pandit Dharendra Shastri's efforts, PM Modi lauded his initiative to establish the cancer institute, stating, "Now, at Bageshwar Dham, devotees will not only receive the blessings of bhajan and food but also the gift of a healthy life."

The Prime Minister also commended the mass wedding ceremonies organized by Bageshwar Dham for economically weaker sections.

"I have been informed that on the occasion of Maha Shivratri, a mass wedding for 251 daughters will be held here. I deeply appreciate this noble initiative and extend my heartfelt blessings to the newlywed couples, wishing them a happy married life," he added.

Speaking on the ongoing Maha Kumbh, PM Modi highlighted its spiritual and cultural significance.

"The Maha Kumbh is now reaching its culmination. Millions have arrived, taken the sacred dip, and sought the blessings of saints. Witnessing this grand event, one is naturally awestruck – this is truly a Maha Kumbh of unity," he said. IANS

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## Sudha Murty nominates Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, PT Usha to keep up fight against obesity

NEW DELHI: Rajya Sabha MP Sudha Murty has nominated Biocon chief Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Indian Olympic Association head PT Usha to advance the campaign against obesity launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Murty is among 10 others nominated recently by PM Modi to help strengthen the fight against obesity in the country. The national movement against obesity aims to promote awareness about healthy food consumption, and aligns with his Fit India initiative.

"I would like to nominate the following people to help strengthen the fight against obesity and spread awareness on reducing edible oil consumption in food," Murty said in a post on social media platform X, while tagging Mazumdar-Shaw, Usha, former cricketer Anil Kumble.

She also nominated CureFit and Myntra founder Mukesh Bansal, former

Puducherry L-G Kiran Bedi, BJP MP from Bengaluru Tejasvi Surya, Author Amish Tripathi, among others.

"I also request them to nominate 10



Sudha Murty

people each so that our movement gets bigger!" said the philanthropist.

In his monthly radio program, 'Mann Ki Baat' on Sundays, PM Modi lauded India's rapid progress toward becoming a global

sporting powerhouse and stressed the importance of leading a healthy life.

Besides Murty, PM Modi nominated Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, businessman Anand Mahindra, actor-turned-politician Dinesh Lal Yadav aka Nirahua, Olympic medalists Manu Bhaker and Mirabai Chanu, actors Mohanlal and R. Madhavan, singer Shreya Ghoshal, and Infosys co-founder Nandan Nilekani.

Earlier, Abdullah expressed his happiness in joining the campaign against obesity launched by PM Modi.

"I'm very happy to join the campaign against obesity launched by PM @narendramodiji. Obesity causes a number of lifestyle related health issues like heart disease, type 2 diabetes, strokes and breathing problems not to mention mental health conditions like anxiety and depression," the CM posted on X. *IANS*

## Breathing can be linked with vision: Study

WASHINGTON DC: Researchers have discovered a fundamental mechanism that affects pupil size - breathing. The study shows that the pupil is smallest during inhalation and largest during exhalation, which could affect vision.

Researchers at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden have discovered a fundamental mechanism. The study was published in *The Journal of Physiology*.

Like the aperture in a camera, the pupil controls how much light reaches the eye. Therefore, it is fundamental to vision and how we perceive our surroundings.

Over a century ago, three mechanisms that can change the size of the pupil were known: the amount of light, focus distance, and cognitive factors such as emotion or mental effort.

Now, scientists have discovered a fourth - breathing. The pupil is smallest around inhalation onset and largest during exhalation.

"This mechanism is unique in that it is cyclical, ever-present and requires no external stimulus," explains Artin Arshamian, associate professor at the Department of Clinical Neuroscience, Karolinska Institutet, who led the research.

"Since breathing affects brain activity and cognitive functions, the discovery may contribute to a better understanding of how

our vision and attention are regulated."

The researchers conducted five experiments with over 200 participants, examining how breathing affects pupil size under different conditions. The results showed that the effect persisted whether participants breathed quickly or slowly, through their nose or mouth, if lighting conditions



or fixation distance varied if they were resting or performing visual tasks.

The difference in pupil size between inhalation and exhalation was large enough to theoretically affect vision.

The researchers are now investigating whether changes in pupil size during

breathing also affect vision. Previous research shows that smaller pupils make it easier to see details, while larger pupils help us find hard-to-see objects.

"Our results suggest that our vision may switch between optimizing for distinguishing small details when we inhale and detecting faint objects when

we exhale, all within a single breathing cycle," says Martin Schaefer, a postdoctoral researcher at the same department at Karolinska Institutet and the study's first author.

There may also be clinical applications, according to the researchers. *ANI*

### Elderly, middle-aged at high risk of developing and dying from cancer: ICMR study

NEW DELHI: Older adults and middle-aged adults are more at risk of developing cancer, and dying from the deadly disease in India, according to a study led by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The study published in *The Lancet Regional Health Southeast Asia* journal showed that the elderly (aged 70 years and above) had the highest risk of developing cancer -- more than 10 percent --, and dying from it -- 7.7 percent.

The risk of middle-aged (15-49 years) developing cancer is 8.3 percent, while their odds of dying from the disease is 5.5 percent.

The researchers emphasized the need to increase targeted interventions and strategies "to tackle the escalating cancer burden in India, with about 70 percent of cases and deaths occurring in the middle- and older-age groups", the team said.

*The risk of middle-aged (15-49 years) developing cancer is 8.3 percent, while their odds of dying from the disease is 5.5 percent*

The ICMR researchers also projected that in the coming two decades, India will face a formidable challenge in managing deaths related to cancer incidence, with a yearly increase of two percent in cases as the population ages.

Using the Global Cancer Observatory (GLOBOCAN) 2022 and Global Health Observatory (GHO) databases, the team examined trends in 36 types of cancer across age groups and genders in India over the past 20 years.

Notably, it showed that three in every five people in India are likely to succumb to cancer following diagnosis.

The findings also revealed that the five most common cancers affecting both genders collectively account for 44 percent of the cancer burden in India.

However, women in India were found to bear a "disproportionate burden", as breast cancer continues to be the most prevalent cancer. Breast cancer contributes to 13.8 percent of new cases from both genders followed by cervical cancer (9.2 percent). *IANS*



## Philosophy

DOUGLAS HARDING

Paradoxically, it's by discovering that he isn't a man at all that he (man) becomes a satisfactory man. Once he steadily sees into his Nature his needs and his demands on others rapidly dwindle, his ability to concentrate on any chosen task is remarkable, his detachment provides the cool objectivity necessary for practical wisdom, for the first time he sees people for what they are really worth, he takes in everything but is himself not taken in.

At the start Self enquiry may not be the best recipe for making friends and influencing people, but in the end it's the only way to be at home in the world. Nothing else is quite practical.

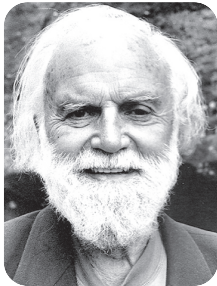
It can hardly be a matter of serious complaint that everything lets us down till we see Who never lets us down. Everything naturally directs us back to its Source within us. In fact, the whole business of Self-discovery is our normal function, our natural development and grow-

posite technique of Self-recollection he can regain something like that blessed state, at a much higher level.

Then he will know, not by taking thought but by a kind of immediate instinct, what to do and how to do it. And, rather more often perhaps, what not to do. Short of this goal, we are all to some degree awkward and artificial and putting on some act or other.

Is this a soft option, an easy way out of the Hell of responsibility and involvement and danger into a safe and unstrenuous Heaven? Not so. In a sense, it's the easiest thing in the world to see what nobody else can see, namely what it's like to be oneself right here at no distance from oneself: the Emptiness is blazingly obvious, the Clarity absolutely transparent and unmistakable.

But in another sense, alas, it's the most difficult thing in the world to see and go on seeing this Spot from this spot. The trouble is that this mysterious Place one occupies, where one supposed



Douglas Harding

*Self-enquiry only way to  
be at home in world  
Everything lets us down till we see  
Who never lets us down*

ing up, failing which we remain stunted, if not perverse or freakish.

Again, this is a surprising discovery. One would have imagined that any protracted inward gaze would have made a man rather less natural, probably giving him a withdrawn look, an odd and self-occupied and forbidding manner. Actually the reverse is true.

The Self-seeing man has the grace and the charm of one who is free. To find the source is to tap it. Take the case of one who is morbidly self-conscious. There are two things he can do about it, the one an amelioration, the other a true cure. The false remedy for his shyness is to lose himself by moving outwards towards the world, the true remedy is to find himself by moving inwards towards himself, till one day his self-consciousness is replaced by Self-consciousness and he is at ease everywhere.

It's true, of course, that nobody can, by any technique of self-forgetting, regain the simple openness of the small child and the animal. Nevertheless by the op-

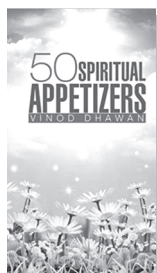
there was some solid thing and in fact is only the Seer Himself, is too wide open to inspection, too obvious and too plain to capture our attention.

Of all ambitions this is the most far-reaching, and no other adventure is anything like so daring and 'difficult' - till we see how the difficulty was a nonsense of our own making.

*Excerpted from 'Look For Yourself - The Science and Art of Self-Realisation'. The 116th birth anniversary of Douglas Harding was observed on February 12*

### 50 SPIRITUAL APPETIZERS

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## To whom does this land belong? Waves of migrations have shaped India

DR RAM PUNIYANI

The BJP-led government has formed a committee to document the 12,000-year-old history of India. Given that DNA and genetic studies clearly show that we are a mixed population, why form such a committee? The apparent aim is to establish that Hindus (Aryans) are the original inhabitants of this land.

### Tamil Nadu and origins of iron

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin, citing new research on pre-modern history, stated that archaeologists have concluded the Iron Age began in Tamil Nadu. Evidence suggests that iron melting was introduced in the region 5,300 years ago, with precise dating pinpointing its introduction to 3,345 BC. Stalin emphasized the significance of this discovery for understanding the historical timeline of the Indian subcontinent. Proudly, he declared, "I'm constantly saying that the history of India will be written from Tamil Nadu," underscoring the research's potential to reshape historical narratives. But how relevant is this to the

vaded by any foreign race," and thus the land came to be known as Hindustan, the land of Hindus (Golwalkar, 1939, p. 6).

This view contrasts with that of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who suggested in Arctic Home in the Vedas that Aryans came from the Arctic region. Golwalkar sidestepped this contradiction by claiming that the Arctic region itself was once located in the Orissa-Bihar area before shifting northward. He argued that Aryans had always been here, and it was the Arctic zone that moved away. This mental gymnastics was necessary to prove Aryan nativity and support the anti-Muslim narrative of Hindu nationalism.

Several theories about the Aryans' origins have emerged. Many European scholars, including Indophile Max Mueller, proposed the "Aryan Invasion Theory," which suggested Aryans invaded India. However, this theory is largely discredited since the pastoral society of that era was characterized by migrations, not invasions. The more plausible theory, supported by linguistic and geological evidence, suggests Aryans arrived through waves of migration.

The biggest obstacle to the Aryan nativity claim is the existence of the

*Evidence suggests that iron melting was introduced in the region 5,300 years ago, with precise dating pinpointing its introduction to 3,345 BC. Stalin emphasized the significance of this discovery for understanding the historical timeline of the Indian subcontinent*

present?

Historically, claims of being the "first comers" have often been exploited by nationalist and ethnic groups to assert dominance. One recalls the Sinhala assault on Tamils (Hindus) in Sri Lanka, where Sinhala ethnic nationalism-based on the belief that the Sinhala were the island's original inhabitants-led to significant suffering for Tamils.

### Hindu nationalism and Aryan debate

In India, Hindu nationalism has similarly promoted the idea that Islam and Christianity are "foreign" religions, while Hindus are equated with Aryans and presented as the land's original inhabitants. This narrative was articulated by M.S. Golwalkar, the second Sarsanghchalak of the RSS, in his book We or Our Nationhood Defined. Golwalkar claimed, "We-Hindus-have been in undisputed and undisturbed possession of this land for over 8 or even 10 thousand years before the land was in-

Indus Valley Civilization which predates the Aryans' arrival. The urbanized Indus Valley Civilization was distinctly different from Aryan settlements. Attempts were made to manipulate evidence, such as creating a computer-distorted image of a unicorn bull seal to make it resemble a horse-an Aryan cultural symbol.

### Race theories and colonial agendas

The race theory itself is now discredited. It was used by colonial powers to justify their supposed racial superiority and right to rule. Similarly, Brahmanical ideology claimed that Brahmins and upper castes were descendants of a superior race, entitling them to a higher societal status.

*(The writer, a former IIT Bombay professor, is Chairman of the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, Mumbai)*

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

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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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## EU's 'new strategic agenda' with India: Crisis in US ties compels Brussels to seek closer partnership with New Delhi

NAWAB KHAN

**A**mid rapidly shifting global dynamics, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will be visiting New Delhi on 27-28 February accompanied by as many as 26 EU Commissioners to confer with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and senior Indian government leaders and officials.

"The unprecedented visit highlights the strong momentum in EU-India relations. It follows President von der Leyen's announcement of a new strategic agenda with India to be presented this year at the EU-India Summit. The visit emphasizes the importance of strengthening ties in key areas vital to the prosperity and security of both Europe and India," noted a Euro-

pean Commission statement. On her part, Ursula von der Leyen, said: "In this era of intense geostrategic competition, Europe stands for openness, partnership, and outreach. We seek to deepen ties with one of our most trusted friends and allies." "Europe and India are like-minded partners, bound by the shared conviction that democracy best serves the people. That's why one of the first visits of the new Commission is to India. We are committed to strengthening our strategic partnership to advance trade, economic security, and resilient supply chains, along with a common tech agenda and reinforced security and defense cooperation," she underlined.

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"Europe and India are like-minded partners, bound by the shared conviction that democracy best serves the people. That's why one of the first visits of the new Commission is to India. We are committed to strengthening our strategic partnership to advance trade, economic security, and resilient supply chains, along with a common tech agenda and reinforced security and defense cooperation," she underlined.

**Divergence in shared values**  
The visit of the EU's executive

body to New Delhi follows tumultuous days in EU-US relations that has left Europe in daze. US President Donald Trump's recent phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin, followed by a meeting of their foreign ministers in Riyadh, and Vice President J D Vance's diatribe against Europe, which clearly indicated a sea change in US attitude on the Ukraine war and the virtual sidelining of Europe, has alarmed the EU. Trump condemned Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as "dictator without elections," and accused him and Europe of starting the war. He also vowed to end the Ukraine war as soon as possible with or without any European involvement.

The transatlantic alliance,

considered to be a pillar of geopolitical stability, now faces an uncertain future and the realism that Europe can no longer depend on its security on the US has begun to creep in the minds of policymakers in Brussels.

The European Parliament's powerful Foreign Affairs Committee in a statement said, "the latest political developments clearly show that the EU and its member states can unfortunately no longer fully rely on the United States' Government to defend our shared values and interests, but must take their defense and security into their own hands."

Von der Leyen thundered that "with or without the support of our partners, we cannot let Russia win. And the cost of insecurity - the cost of a Russian

victory - is far greater than any saving we could make now. And this is why it is time for Europe to step up."

To demonstrate the EU's unwavering support to Ukraine, Von der Leyen led a visit of the EU College of Commissioners to Kiev on Monday 24 February to mark three years of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

### **Strategic convergence with India**

On their part, European media and analysts are positive about the future of EU-India ties and cooperation. "With Donald Trump steering the White House away from Europe, and with the Brussels-Beijing relations in cold water, the EU understands it must act sooner rather than later, and forge closer cooperation with what it considers "like-minded partners", said the Brussels-based publication Euractiv.

"Reducing reliance on China and Russia and promoting a multipolar world are aims shared by the EU and India. While Europe seeks to collaborate with like-minded partners, India looks for strategic autonomy and diversified partnerships," it noted.

Another Brussels-based publication Politico said the upcoming Delhi gathering is expected to release a seven-page joint statement which notes that "the deepening of bilateral relations and the growing strategic convergence between the EU and India respond to the shifting dynamics of the global geopolitical landscape and a common interest in promoting global stability, economic security, and sustainable and inclusive growth."

*(The author is an Indian journalist who is a long time resident in Brussels) South Asia Monitor*

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## INDIA'S OPPORTUNITY

**I**ndia should not really pay too much attention to recent announcements on US tariffs, but instead concentrate on correcting its own trade equations with other countries. India's Foreign Minister Jaishankar's recent meetings with his Chinese counterpart, is a good start. Trump and Musk are hell bent on shaking and baking several areas and one of them is trade with India and China. This may be a waking point for India's ability to steer into new beginning.

India's real wealth is its population, which no other country in the world has. A onetime problem has turned into its advantage. China is already suffering with the negative growth of its population. The one problem is lack of skilled labor. India's opportunity is to give massive push and incentivize skill development. Japan, Germany and other developed countries are already suffering from the lack of skilled labor.

US does not realize that it is no longer the leader in manufacturing, no matter which sector you pick. It was steel; automobiles, defense and agriculture that were its solid base. World has gone through major change. However, due to its R&D and the education system that brings the best of global talent, US still holds its importance.

India's biggest wealth today is its youth. With Prime Minister Modi's proactive move it can create immense space for the youth in India as well as outside the country. The two-day SOUL Leadership Conclave, which was held recently in Delhi, is a good start. It is designed to serve as a premier platform where leaders from diverse domains like politics, sports, arts and media, the spiritual world, public policy, business and social sector, will share their inspiring life journeys and discuss aspects relating to leadership. The conclave will foster an ecosystem of collaboration and thought leadership, facilitating learning from both failures and successes, to inspire young audiences.

Another area is the School of Ultimate Leadership (SOUL), an upcoming leadership institution in Gujarat to enable authentic leaders to advance public good. The aim is to broaden the landscape of political leadership in India through formal training and to include those who rise through merit, commitment, and passion for public service, not just from political lineage. SOUL will further brings in insights, skills and expertise necessary to navigate the complex challenges of leadership in today's world. Such initiatives and conferences do bring positive environments but implementing them or, turning into practice is a completely different ball game.

Basic skills training should be integrated into the school system like most of the developed countries had done. India's school dropout rates are still one of the highest in the world. India is one of the major suppliers of labor in the Middle East and soon has the opportunity to be the leader in countries like Japan, Germany and many European countries.

Anyone can witness, when you visit Google or Facebook campuses in San Francisco; the talent and skilled work-force that India has contributed to US IT-industry, not to mention the health sector which has 38 percent plus, doctors of Indian-origin currently serving America's public.



## Elnaaz Norouzi BONDS WITH LIAM NEESON AND ZACHARY LEVI in 'Hotel Tehran'

Actress Elnaaz Norouzi is all set to make her mark in Hollywood with her next "Hotel Tehran". She will be seen starring alongside Liam Neeson and Zachary Levi in the much-awaited project. The diva recently spoke about her bond with her co-actors.

Elnaaz Norouzi revealed, "Working with Liam and Zachary was wonderful but yes, I have a deeper relationship with Zachary as I have been cast opposite him so the bond was stronger. We played a lot of poker, he is a great poker player. It had almost become a ritual for us every day post-shoots. It's something I got introduced to by him and I thoroughly enjoy playing it now."

Revealing why she chose to do the film, the actress added, "The reasons I jumped into doing this film are so many but the primary being that the director is terrific and knows his job so well, the production house associated with it, and the fact that I had watched Zachary's films and I think he is brilliant. So, my being offered to play this role opposite him was an absolute yes. How can one forget, that Liam Neeson is someone who is brilliant hands down, nothing more needs to be said." *IANS*

## KRITI KHARBANDA REVEALS REASON HER THROAT HURTS

Kriti Kharbanda used social media to reveal that her throat has been hurting and the reason will leave you in splits.

The diva posted a video on her Instagram stories where she was seen coming out of a dubbing studio. The 'Guest in London' actress was heard saying, "Thanks, I am done with dubbing, two full lines. My throat hurts now", followed by a cute laugh.

Kriti Kharbanda revealed that she traveled for around an hour just to dub for seven minutes. "Travelled an hour. Made it to the studio in this mad traffic. Dubbed for 7 minutes. Took an hour to head back to the other side of town. Now dubbing again!", she captioned the post.

Kriti Kharbanda is currently busy with the second season of the show "Rana Naidu". The latest installment of the popular series will also see Rana Daggubati, Daggubati Venkatesh, Arjun Rampal, and Surveen Chawla in crucial roles, along with others. "Rana Naidu" season 2 also marks Kriti Kharbanda's OTT debut. *IANS*



## TOP TEN HINDI FILM SONGS

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

## Anupam Kher's X account gets LOCKED

Veteran actor Anupam Kher says he was surprised when he got to know that his account on social media platform X was suspended although he has always "been mindful" of the platform's rules.

Although his account was subsequently restored the thespian said he wanted to understand which of his posts had breached platform guidelines.

After his account was restored, he took to X and shared the screenshot of the notification he received from the social media platform, "Dear X! Even though my account has been restored, I was surprised to see it locked. I have been on this platform since September 2007. I have always been mindful of the rules of #X (formerly Twitter), or for that matter, any social media copyright rules. So, I found it a little absurd," he wrote.

Tagging tech billionaire and X owner Elon Musk, Kher said, "So found it a little absurd. Would love to know which post of mine did violate your rules? Thanks! @elonmusk" *ANI*





## Samantha Ruth Prabhu's FAVORITE HEROINES

Southern beauty Samantha Ruth Prabhu recently conducted an 'Ask Me Anything' session with her InstaFam. One of the questions asked during the interactive session was about the "Best heroine in the film industry".

To this, Samantha Ruth Prabhu replied, "This is a shoutout to some of the best performances in no particular order. I love these women, I love the work they are doing, I love that they are taking risks, it's not easy, so just huge huge respect for Parvati in "Ullozhukku", Nazaria in 'Sookshma Darshini", Sai Pallavi in "Amaran", Alia Bhatt in "Jigra", and Ananya Panday in "CTRL", these guys are just amazing, rockstars."

She went on to add, "The cast of "All We Imagine as Light", Kani, Divya Prabha, amazing amazing performances, looking forward to all the work they will be doing this year.

A few days ago, Samantha Ruth Prabhu spoke about loving her own company. She took to her Instagram stories, revealing that she has gone for a "Silence sadhna". Dropping a picture of a card, which read "Silence", she wrote, "Three days in silence. No phone. No communication. Just me for company." IANS



## Nikita Dutta's temptations she has given up on

Actress Nikita Dutta, who is known for 'Gold', 'Kabir Singh', 'Khakee: The Bihar Chapter', and others, has shared the food temptations she has given up on. The actress shared that she completely avoids packaged foods.

The actress is a strong advocate for fitness. She is an avid runner, has been participating in marathons for the past 10 years, with an impressive six-year streak at the Bombay Marathon. Her passion for fitness is contagious, and she often shares her workout routines and healthy habits with her followers on social media. At a recent event, the actress spoke about her unwavering commitment to a healthy lifestyle.

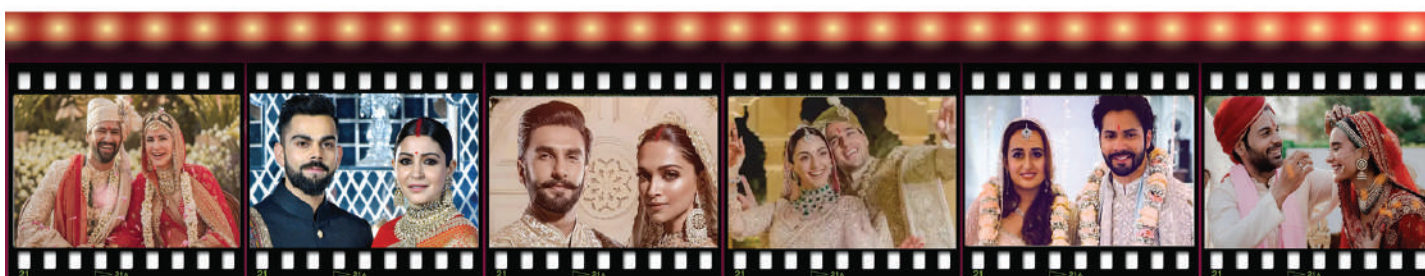
Talking about her diet, she said, "I've actually been following this for the last 13 years of my life since I adopted a healthier lifestyle, and I swear by it. I'm very proud to say that I have not touched instant noodles in the last 13 years, no Maggi, no Ramen, none of that. I have not touched any biscuits, you know, the classic ones you get in a packet". IANS



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## Sandiip Sikkand bashes Poonam Pandey for gimmick

**P**oonam Pandey recently made headlines after a video of a fan trying to kiss her went viral on social media. She was posing for the paparazzi when a fan approached her from behind and requested a selfie. Later, he tried to kiss her forcefully while taking the selfie.

A lot of people are calling the incident a publicity stunt. Producer and actor Sandiip Sikkand also shared his thoughts on the same saying, "I am sure it was again a fake publicity thing. This is taking things a bit too far. I really don't know after the death gimmick what is one trying to prove with this one! Not cool at all!"

Earlier, Poonam Pandey created a stir with her death news. The initial reports led many to believe that she had passed away from cervical cancer. However, it was later revealed that it was just a publicity stunt to raise awareness about cervical cancer. Poonam Pandey faced a lot of backlash for her controversial method of raising awareness.

On February 2, an Instagram post suggested that Poonam Pandey had died of cervical cancer. However, later she apologized with another post saying, "I feel compelled to share something significant with you all - I am here, alive. Cervical cancer didn't claim me." IANS



## Adah Sharma learns the Maheshwar Sutras

**A**s Mahashivratri approaches, actress Adah Sharma shared a video of herself learning the Maheshwar Sutra, a sacred chant associated with Lord Shiva.

In her video, Adah invites her followers to join her in learning the ancient mantras. Sharing a clip of learning Shiva Sutras, The Kerala Story actress wrote in the caption, "Mahashivratri ke liye Aap bhi mere saath seekho Maheshwar Sutraani. Apni buddhi ko tej karo aur focus aur concentration badhao. These are the 14 sounds of Lord Shivas damru that sage Panini heard when he was watching Lord Shiva do the Ananda Tandava."

For the unversed, the Maheshwar Sutras are a collection of 14 verses that structure the Sanskrit alphabet. These sutras are also referred to as the Shiva Sutras, Pratyaharas, and Varna Samanmaya. This profound chant is said to enhance mental clarity, focus, and concentration, aligning one's mind with divine energy. IANS

## Sushmita Sen LOOKING FOR SOMEONE 'WORTHY OF MARRIAGE'

**B**ollywood actress Sushmita Sen has always been open about her personal life, and during a recent Instagram Live session, she candidly shared her thoughts on marriage.

The former Miss Universe revealed that while she is open to the idea of marriage, she is looking for someone who is truly worthy of such a commitment. When one of the fans asked Sushmita about her wedding plans, the actress said in Hindi, "I also want to get married. Milna chahiye na koi shaadi karne layek. Aise thodi hoti hai shaadi. Kehte hai na, bohot romantic way mein toh dil ka rishta hota hai. Dil tak baat toh pahunchni chahiye na. Shaadi bhi kar lenge." ("I also want to get married. There should be someone worthy of marriage, right? Marriage doesn't just happen like that. As they say in a very romantic way, it's a bond of the heart. The feeling should reach the heart, right? Then I'll get married too.") IANS





# "I was willing to play different kind of role": Bobby Deol on playing Baba Nirala in 'Aashram 3'

Bollywood actor Bobby Deol shared his working experience with director Prakash Jha in 'Ek Badnaam Aashram Season 3-Part 2' and how his role allowed him to step out of his comfort zone. In a conversation with ANI, he recalled the time when Prakash Jha offered him a role in the series, saying, "I was willing to play different kinds of roles and play the characters out of my comfort zone. But in the industry, generally, what happens to an image is the build-up of an actor. When I got a message from Prakash ji that he wanted to meet me when I heard the story, I thought he would offer me the role of a police officer, however when he told me, 'aap baba ka role play karenge', I couldn't believe.."

Directed by Prakash Jha, the series also features Aaditi Pohankar, Darshan Kumaar, Chandan Roy Sanyal, Vikram Kochhar, Tridha Choudhury, Anupriya Goenka, Rajeev Siddhartha, and Esha Gupta in crucial roles.

Reflecting on his journey as Baba Nirala, Bobby added that he finally got what he had been waiting for so long: "He(director Prakash Jha) believed in me, and I got what I wanted. God was kind to me. I got such a challenging role."

Director Prakash Jha praised Deol, saying, "You (Bobby Deol) really worked hard. He has the capacity to play this role and that is why I thought to cast him. I needed a face that appealed to everyone, and hats off to him; he worked really hard on his character, on the language, on understanding and 'maine pehle din kaha that kisi baba ka video mat dekhna...tum apne aap mein baba ho ye vishwas kar lena'"

While talking about preparing for his role in the series, Deol added, "He(Prakash Jha) told me people will listen to you keep this in mind, and I always remembered this and never tried to do any caricaturish thing and whenever I tried to Prakash ji used to stop me. So, overall it has been an amazing journey..Every actor has done a great job.." ANI



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## Shamit Tyagi creates history with Indian classical choir at Maha Kumbh

MUMBAI: Renowned Hindustani classical singer, Shamit Tyagi created history at the Maha Kumbh on February 21 with a groundbreaking choir performance. The only choir to perform at the holy event delivered a mesmerizing hour-long showcase of semi-classical and classical compositions.

Minister of Culture and Tourism, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat also witnessed the captivating performance. Reflecting on the performance, Shamit Tyagi shared, "It was a privilege to perform at Maha Kumbh, where music holds a deep and sacred connection with the people. The appreciation for our classical compositions was truly heartwarming, and it was an honor to present a

classical choir performance to such an engaged audience. Performing Indian classical music in a choir format for the first time at an event of this scale made the experience even more special. The ceremony was further graced by the presence of the Honorable Culture Minister, Mr. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and we are grateful

for his support."

In addition to this, the 10th edition of the International Dance and Music Festival also commenced at Maha Kumbh on February 22. The two-day festival has been organized by the Uttar Pradesh Department of Culture, along with the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR). The event features performances by 127 artists, representing 30 countries. Acclaimed choreographer Rani Khanam is leading the festival.

Announcing the event on social media, the ICCR took to X (previously known as Twitter) and wrote, "Join us for the 10th Edition of the India-International Dance & Music Festival-ICCR's International Cultural Mahakumbh, in collaboration with the Government of Uttar Pradesh."

Maha Kumbh began on January 13 and will culminate on February 26 on Maha Shivratri. During this tenure, millions of devotees from India and abroad have taken a holy dip at the sacred Triveni Sangam. Many big faces from the entertainment industry were also seen visiting the Maha Kumbh. IANS

**"IT WAS A PRIVILEGE TO PERFORM AT MAHA KUMBH, WHERE MUSIC HOLDS A DEEP AND SACRED CONNECTION WITH THE PEOPLE. THE APPRECIATION FOR OUR CLASSICAL COMPOSITIONS WAS TRULY HEARTWARMING, AND IT WAS AN HONOR TO PRESENT A CLASSICAL CHOIR PERFORMANCE TO SUCH AN ENGAGED AUDIENCE"**

## Guneet Monga, Siddharth Roy Kapur and Alok Tandon to deliver masterclass at Red Lorry Film Festival

MUMBAI: The Red Lorry Film Festival, curated by BookMyShow will return for its second edition from the 21st to 23rd of March 2025.

The festival will feature invaluable insights from luminaries such as Guneet Monga, Siddharth Roy Kapur, Alok Tandon, Akarsh Khurana, Sooni Taraporevala, Anjum Rajabali, and Kausar Munir.

Producer Guneet Monga will host an interactive masterclass on taking independent films to the global stage. Additionally, Siddharth Roy Kapur will set in motion, a candid dialogue about the evolving cinema and entertainment landscape, along with directors Akarsh Khurana and Sooni Taraporevala having an insightful discussion on the evolving storytelling.



Guneet Monga

Moreover, screenwriter Anjum Rajabali will throw light on the nuances of compelling storytelling. This will be in addition to another compelling session exploring Hollywood's remarkable evolution from niche entertainment to a global box office powerhouse.

Furthermore, lyricist Kausar Munir will lead a session exploring the lyrical essence of filmmaking, along with casting virtuoso Tess Joseph pulling back the curtain on the intricate art of finding faces that captivate audiences across continents.

Furthermore, the author of 'Hum Dono', Tanuja Chaturvedi will champion the strong, self-realized, and flawed female characters shown by the films of Dev Anand and Goldie Anand.

Meanwhile, Humans of Cinema founder Harshit Bansal will share his proven strategies for crafting scroll-stopping visual analyses and addictive movie-themed series that consistently reach millions.



Siddharth Roy Kapur

Ashish Saxena, COO - Cinemas, BookMyShow and Festival Director of Red Lorry Film Festival said, "At Red Lorry Film Festival, we celebrate cinema's universal power to unite audiences. The phenomenal response to our debut edition highlighted India's growing appreciation for global films and this year, we're taking the experience to the next level. Expanding to Hyderabad and returning to Mumbai, we're curating a truly immersive experience, not just with exceptional screenings but also with exclusive master-classes and fireside chats that offer deeper insights into the art of filmmaking. Red Lorry Film Festival is more than just a film festival; it's a gateway to global cinema that aims to offer movie connoisseurs an experience to connect with films and the faces behind these narratives in a meaningful way." IANS

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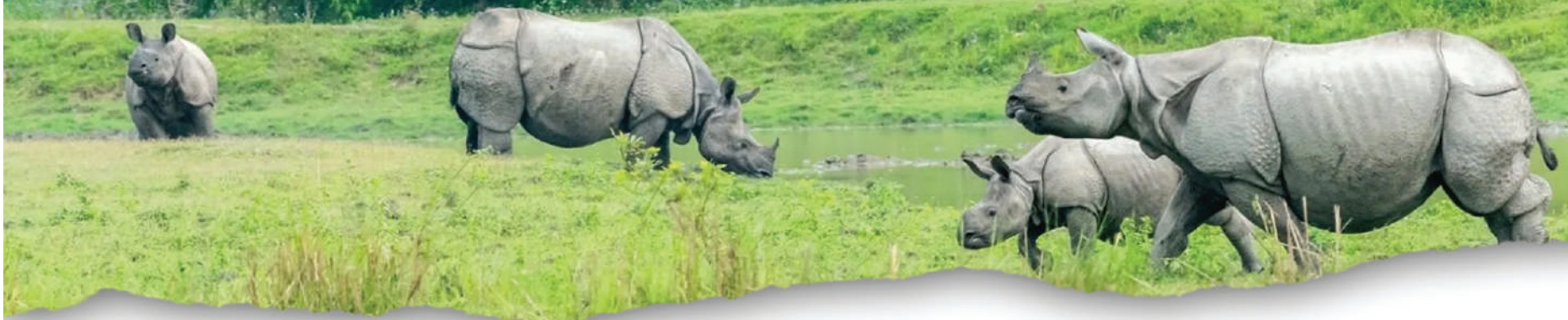
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## Kaziranga National Park

"HOME TO THE ONE HORNED RHINO"



**H**ome to the largest population of the one-horned rhino on earth, Kaziranga National Park is one of India's national treasures in terms of flora and fauna. Located in the state of Assam in North-Eastern India, its total area is shared by the districts of Nagaon, Golaghat and Karbi Anglong placing it roughly at the center of the state. Approximately around five hours by road from Guwahati, Kaziranga National Park stands tall as the epitome of successful wildlife conservation in India. In 1985, it was awarded the status of a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.

Lying on the floodplains of the mighty river Brahmaputra, rich vegetation covers almost the entirety of Kaziranga National Park. Receiving massive amounts of rainfall each year, at times even crossing dangerous levels, this national park is characterized by tall elephant grass, marshlands and tall tropical broadleaf forests. Here, a wide variety of fauna thrives including the one-horned rhino, Asiatic elephants, wild water buffalo, leopards and Royal Bengal Tigers. Kaziranga National Park is also listed officially as a Tiger reserve and is home to one of the world's largest population of tigers.

Different types of birds can also be spotted here at the

park. A popular migratory location for birds who fly down from the north, one can spot various birds such as the black-nested stork, the lesser white-fronted goose, ferruginous duck and Baer's pochard duck to name a few. Other notable bird families which can be seen here include the great Indian hornbill and wreathed hornbill among many others.

Safaris can be undertaken both during the day and night during the open tourist season. Elephant rides are also very popular among tourists and wildlife journalists and enthusiasts. Hiking is one such activity which is prohibited here to avoid casualties.

In addition to its wildlife and cultural significance, Kaziranga plays a crucial role in conservation efforts, serving as a sanctuary for endangered species and contributing to the preservation of Assam's natural heritage. The park's successful conservation programs and initiatives make it an important landmark in the global fight against biodiversity loss and habitat destruction.

### THINGS TO DO IN KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

**Birdwatching:** Kaziranga is a haven for bird enthusiasts, offering sightings of exotic species like the great

hornbill, pelicans, and bar-headed geese. The wetlands and forests provide the perfect setting for both resident and migratory birds.

**Jeep Safari:** Traverse the park's designated zones on a thrilling jeep safari, spotting iconic wildlife such as one-horned rhinoceroses, tigers, elephants, swamp deer, and various other species amidst the tall grasslands.

**Elephant Safari:** Elephant Safari in Kaziranga National Park offers a unique way to explore its dense grasslands and spot wildlife up close. Conducted in the early morning hours, the safari provides an excellent opportunity to see the iconic one-horned rhinoceros, as well as elephants, deer, and various bird species. The elevated view from the elephant enhances the experience.

**National Orchid and Biodiversity Park:** The National Orchid and Biodiversity Park in Assam is home to over 500 species of orchids, medicinal plants, and indigenous flora, offering a glimpse into the region's rich biodiversity. The park also features cultural exhibits that highlight Assam's traditions and natural heritage. [www.holidify.com](http://www.holidify.com)

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





# TERRACES AT LAGUNA BEACH



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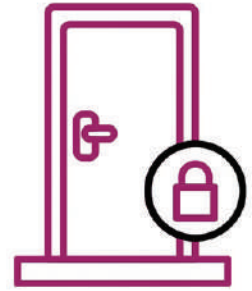




# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

## YOU DO NOT HAVE TO OPEN THE DOOR

- You do not have to open the door or let the officers into your home unless they have a valid search warrant signed by a judge.



## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO SPEAK TO A LAWYER

- You have the right to seek an attorney and receive a phone call from them if detained.
- Request a copy of the Detainee Handbook to learn the Detention Center's rules.
- If you don't have a lawyer, ask to speak to one.
- If you have a lawyer, give the signed Form G-28 to an officer.
- If no lawyer, ask for a list of pro bono lawyers from an immigration officer.
- You have the right to contact your consulate for assistance in finding a lawyer.
- You can refuse to sign paperwork until speaking with a lawyer.
- If you sign something without a lawyer, fully understand the document first.



## YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT

- You do not need to speak to immigration officers or answer any questions.
- If asked where you were born or how you entered, you may refuse to answer or remain silent.
- If remaining silent, say, "I choose to remain silent."
- You can show a know-your-rights card (English/Spanish) explaining you'll remain silent and want to speak to a lawyer.
- You may refuse to show identity documents stating your country of origin.



For your knowledge, here is some information regarding ICE agents' access to public and private areas of your business: ICE can enter public areas like dining areas, parking lots, and lobbies without permission, but they cannot stop, question, or arrest anyone just for being there. To enter private areas, ICE agents need a judicial warrant signed by a judge. Without it, they must have your permission. During a raid, remain calm and do not help ICE agents identify individuals by immigration status or nationality. If agents have an administrative warrant, they cannot enter private areas. Record or observe their actions to ensure they comply with the warrant and protect workers' rights.



**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS  
INTEREST FORM**

### CONTACT SAHARA

562.402.4132  
or email

info@saharacares.org  
Crisis Hotline 1.888.724.2722  
info@saharacares.org  
www.saharacares.org

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