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The INDIAN PANORAMA
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We are pleased to announce a special edition to mark the **77th Republic Day of India**. Articles and advertisements may please be submitted at salujaindra@gmail.com by January 18th. For any questions, please email at info@theindianpanorama.news or call 646-247-9458

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UN chief on 'erosion' of international law: 'Charter not à la carte menu'

In the wake of the US military action in Venezuela, the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine as well as other geo-political challenges, UN Secretary General António Guterres said the world is brimming with conflict, impunity, inequality and unpredictability

**JANUARY 16, 2026
UNITED NATIONS (TIP)**

Asserting that the UN Charter is not "à la carte menu", UN chief denounced nations for brazenly violating international law, saying when leaders "pick and choose" which rules to follow, they undermine global order and set a "perilous" precedent.

As Guterres enters the final year of his tenure as UN Secretary General, he told the 193-member General Assembly on Thursday, January 15, that he will make every day of 2026 count and remains fully committed and determined to keep working, fighting, and pushing for a better world.

Against the backdrop of the recent US military action in Venezuela, the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine as well as



UN chief Antonio Guterres. -File Photo : ANI

other geo-political challenges, Guterres said the world is brimming with conflict,

impunity, inequality and unpredictability.

"A world marked by self-defeating geopolitical divides... brazen violations of international law... and wholesale cuts in development and humanitarian aid. These forces and more are shaking the foundations of global cooperation and testing the resilience of multilateralism itself," he said.

"That is the paradox of our era: at a time when we need international cooperation the most, we seem to be the least inclined to use it and invest in it. Some seek to put international cooperation on deathwatch. I can assure you: we will not give up," the UN chief said. UN Secretary General's second five-year term at the helm of the world body

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US Ambassador Sergio Gor presents credentials to President Droupadi Murmu



US Ambassador to India, Sergio Gor, on Wednesday, January 14, presented his credentials to President Droupadi Murmu.

Photo credit: Tribune

Envoy pledges to deepen India-US cooperation amid challenges over trade and tariffs

JANUARY 15, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor on Wednesday, January 14, formally presented his credentials to President Droupadi Murmu at an official ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan. With this, Gor has assumed charge as the 27th United States Ambassador to India.

Following the ceremony, the US Embassy in New Delhi quoted Ambassador Gor as saying that he looked forward to working closely with the Government of India and the Indian people to advance shared priorities in defense, trade, technology and critical minerals. He added that his efforts would focus on further strengthening

CONTD ON PAGE 38

Venezuela's Machado presented her Nobel Peace Prize to Trump during their meet

JANUARY 16, 2026

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Venezuelan opposition leader María Corina Machado said she presented her Nobel Peace Prize medal to President Donald Trump at the White House on Thursday, January 15, even as he has questioned her credibility to take over her country after the US ousted then-President Nicolás Maduro, reports AP.

The Nobel Institute has said Machado could not give her prize to Trump, an honor that he has coveted. Even if it the gesture proves to be purely symbolic, it was extraordinary given that Trump has effectively sidelined Machado, who has long been the face of resistance in

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U.S. President Trump meets with Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado in the Oval Office, during which she presented the President with her Nobel Peace Prize on January 15. (Photo released by the White House, January 15, 2026)



HDMS Knud Rasmussen of the Danish navy patrolling near Nuuk, Greenland, on Thursday, January 15. Photograph: Evgeniy Maloletka/AP

Germany, the UK, Norway and Sweden, among others, were on their way to Greenland, a largely autonomous territory of the kingdom of Denmark, on Thursday, January 15. Denmark also announced it would be increasing its military presence. People walk along a snow-covered street in Nuuk city, Greenland.

CONTD ON PAGE 38

Greenland's defence is 'common concern' for Nato, Danish PM says as European troops fly in

JANUARY 16, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): The Danish prime minister, Mette Frederiksen, has said Greenland's defence is a "common concern" for the whole of Nato, as troops started arriving from across Europe as a result of Donald Trump's threats to take the Arctic island by force.

AP reported that troops from France, Germany, the UK, Norway and Sweden, among others, were on their way to Greenland, a largely autonomous territory of the kingdom of Denmark, on Thursday, January 15. Denmark also announced it would be increasing its military presence. People walk along a snow-covered street in Nuuk city, Greenland.



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COMMENT**Martin Luther King Jr.: When History Became a Life, and a Life Became History**

Martin Luther King, Jr.

In three days, America will once again commemorate Martin Luther King Jr., a man whose life became inseparable from the moral history of the United States. King is remembered not merely as a charismatic speaker or a skillful organizer, but as one of the true leaders of the masses who emerged from among ordinary people and led them with extraordinary moral courage. His greatness lay not in the power he wielded, but in the conscience he awakened; not in authority imposed, but in dignity restored. In his case, history did not merely record a life-it flowed through it.

King stepped onto the national stage at a moment when America was struggling to reconcile its founding ideals with its lived realities. The Constitution proclaimed equality, liberty, and justice, yet millions of citizens-particularly African Americans-were systematically denied these promises. Segregation was law in many states; discrimination was normalized; exploitation was an everyday condition. For Black Americans, the legacy of slavery had not ended with emancipation; it had taken new and insidious forms through Jim Crow laws, voter suppression, economic deprivation, and social exclusion. This was the America King confronted-not with bitterness or vengeance, but with moral clarity and disciplined hope.

What distinguishes King from many other leaders is the path he consciously chose. Deeply influenced by Christian ethics and inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence, King believed that injustice could not be defeated by hatred and that violence could never cleanse a society of oppression. His movement was a Gandhian experiment on American soil-one that sought to rid the nation of inequality through moral force rather than brute strength. King understood that violence might secure temporary concessions, but only nonviolence could achieve lasting transformation by changing hearts as well as laws.

King did not invent the civil rights movement, but he gave it focus, coherence, and a unifying moral language. Through the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Birmingham Campaign, the Selma marches, and the historic March on Washington, he helped turn localized protests into a national moral awakening. He compelled America to look unflinchingly into the mirror-and to

confront the gulf between its professed ideals and its daily practices. He made the suffering of the marginalized visible, and he did so in a way that appealed to the nation's highest values rather than its lowest instincts.

Perhaps King's most enduring contribution was his insistence on the universality of justice. Though he emerged as a leader of the Black community, he never confined his message to one race or one grievance. His dream was not of one group's ascendancy over another, but of a shared humanity bound by equal dignity. When he spoke of a nation where people would be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character, he articulated a moral ideal that transcended race while directly confronting racial injustice. In doing so, he transformed the civil rights struggle from a sectional demand into a national moral imperative.

It must be acknowledged-honestly and without evasion-that America still suffers from many of the ailments King sought to remove. Inequality persists; discrimination has not vanished but often changed form; economic disparities remain stark; and the wounds of racial injustice continue to reopen with troubling regularity. The realities of unequal policing, voter disenfranchisement, unequal educational opportunities, and disproportionate incarceration serve as reminders that the journey King began remains unfinished.

Yet these truths do not diminish King's achievement; they magnify it. Before King, segregation was defended openly as tradition and law. After King, discrimination became morally indefensible-even when it persisted in practice. Before King, vast sections of America accepted inequality as inevitable. After King, equality became a shared national aspiration, however imperfectly realized. He shifted the moral center of gravity of the nation.

King's leadership lifted a large section of the American population-particularly the Black community-from the quagmire of invisibility and institutionalized exploitation. His efforts helped secure landmark legislative victories such as the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, reshaping the legal architecture of American democracy. These were not mere statutes; they were declarations that the nation would no longer legitimize exclusion as policy.

Crucially, King's moral vision widened toward the end of his life. He spoke not only against racial injustice, but also against economic exploitation and militarism. He recognized that poverty was a form of violence and that endless war abroad eroded justice at home. His opposition to the Vietnam War-controversial and costly to his popularity-flowed from a consistent belief that a society cannot value human life selectively. Justice, for King, was indivisible.

King paid dearly for his convictions. He was surveilled, harassed, and maligned. Ultimately, he was assassinated. Yet even in death, his voice did not fade. It gained permanence. His legacy took root not only in laws and institutions, but in the American conscience itself-where it

INDRAJIT
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continues to question, challenge, and inspire.

As America prepares to honor Martin Luther King Jr., it must resist the temptation to reduce him to a ceremonial figure adorned with safe quotations. To honor King authentically is to engage his life as a challenge, not a comfort. It is to reckon honestly with progress achieved and failures endured, and to accept responsibility for the work that remains.

The Unfinished Trust: A Charge to Today's Leaders

This is where the present generation of leaders must be addressed-plainly and directly. The responsibility of carrying King's mission forward now rests squarely on their shoulders. King did his part. He showed the path, bore the burden, and paid the price. What remains unfinished is not due to a lack of vision, but to an erosion of moral courage among those entrusted with power.

King's dream was never meant to be preserved as an artifact of history. It was meant to be practiced and advanced. Today's leaders-elected officials, policymakers, judges, educators, and civic voices-must rise above partisan advantage and ideological trench warfare. Leadership worthy of the name unites people; it does not profit from their division.

America today stands dangerously polarized along racial, economic, ideological, and cultural lines. Much of this division is cultivated, amplified, and weaponized. King warned against such temptations. He believed power was legitimate only when it served justice; authority authentic only when it uplifted the vulnerable; governance honorable only when it respected human dignity.

The question for leaders today is stark: are they builders of bridges or architects of walls? Are they healers or amplifiers of grievance? King understood that America's diversity was not a liability to be managed but a strength to be honored. Unity, as he envisioned it, did not require uniformity, fairness, empathy, and a shared commitment to justice.

To carry forward King's mission is not to recite his words but to embody his values. It is to reject politics of fear and embrace politics of hope; to ensure that the law protects the powerless as faithfully as it serves the powerful; and to guarantee that no American feels excluded from the nation's promise because of race, faith, or economic circumstance. Above all, it is to practice leadership that elevates the moral tone of public life.

King believed that the arc of the moral universe bends toward justice-but only if people are willing to bend it. His life proves that progress is neither automatic nor inevitable; it is earned through sacrifice, restraint, and moral resolve. If today's leaders can summon that spirit-if they can rise to King's standard rather than merely praise it-then his dream can live on not as memory, but as reality.

A nation united by justice is a nation nothing can divide. That was Martin Luther King Jr.'s faith. It must now become America's resolve.

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Eminent oncologist Dr Jatin Shah honored by The South Asian Times as its Person of the Year 2025



The South Asian Times Person of the Year plaque presentation to Dr Jatin Shah: (from left) Kamlesh Mehta, Sant Chatwal, Dr Shah, Dr Sudhir Parikh and Dr. Dattatreya Nori

BY PARVEEN CHOPRA
JANUARY 10, 2026
WOODBURY, NY (TIP)

Dr Jatin Shah, the leading head and neck surgeon in the world, was felicitated as The South Asian Times - Person of the Year 2025 at a gala function at Crest Hollow Country Club here on January 9, 2026. The gala was attended by who's who of the Indian American community and many distinguished professionals.

Kamlesh Mehta, Chairman and Publisher of The South Asian Times, along with three Padma Awardees -- Padma Bhushan Sant Singh Chatwal, Padma Shri Dr Sudhir Parikh, Chairman of Parikh Worldwide Media, and Padma Shri Dr Dattatreya Nori, an eminent oncologist, presented the POY crystal plaque to Dr Shah.



Dr Jatin Shah making his acceptance speech

Dr Parikh, a family friend of Dr Shah, wished him more achievements and honors, good health and a long life.

Dr Shah, who is 85 and completed 50 years of service at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York last year, including over two decades as Chief of Head and Neck Service, said in his acceptance speech, "I am honored and feel privileged to be chosen by The South Asian Times as the Person of the Year for 2025. Being recognized by your own - family, community or society - is a unique honor that is hard to come by, and even harder to achieve than any award or recognition from a professional or academic organization. For that, I am grateful to The South Asian Times. I will cherish this high honor for the rest of my life."

Dr Shah, who is world renowned for transforming the medical discipline in his specialty with research, innovations and fostering collaborations worldwide, was introduced by Dr Ashok Shaha, Attending Surgeon on the Head and Neck Service at Memorial Sloan Kettering for the past 35 years.

Dr Jatin Shah was also felicitated by eminent doctor friends of his - Doctors J. Ganesh Bhat, Nitin and Leena Doshi, Shashi Shah, Narinder Kukar, and Bhupi Patel.

A video message from Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman congratulating Dr Shah and The South Asian Times was played at the event.



Unveiling The South Asian Times Person of the Year Special Edition featuring Dr Jatin Shah: Kamlesh Mehta, Nimmi Mehta, Dr Jatin Shah, Dr Ivana Shah, Deputy Consul General Vishal Harsh, Jori Kohli and Parveen Chopra



Honoring Dr Jatin Shah with a shawl: (from left) Kamlesh Mehta, Dr J. Ganesh Bhatt, Dr Leena Doshi, Dr Jatin Shah, Dr Shashi Shah, Dr Narinder Kukar, Dr Bhupi Patel and Dr Nitin Doshi.

The honorees of The South Asian Times - Person of the Year from previous years - Chintu Patel (2017), Naveen Shah (2018), Ranju & Ravi Batra (2019), Ravishankar Bhooplapur (2020), Mohan Wanchoo (2021) and Mukund Padmanabhan (2024) - spoke and congratulated Dr Jatin Shah.

The South Asian Times has been honoring a Person of the Year since 2010 with a special pull-out section coinciding with the New Year edition.

Mrs Nimmi Mehta, Kamlesh Mehta's wife, gave the welcome speech and felicitated Dr Ivana Shah, Jatin Shah's orthodontist wife, with a shawl and bouquet.

The special edition of The South Asian Times recognizing and featuring Dr Jatin Shah as Person of the Year 2025 was unveiled on the occasion. Joining Kamlesh Mehta and Dr Shah for the unveiling were Vishal Harsh, Deputy Consul General at the Indian Consulate in New York, Dr Ivana Shah, Nimmi Mehta, Parveen Chopra, Founding Editor of The South Asian Times and Founder of A Lotus In The Mud, and Jori Kohli, an entrepreneur.



Distinguished personalities including previous Person of The Year honorees congratulated Dr Jatin Shah - (from left) Naveen Shah, Kamlesh Mehta, Ravi Batra, Nimmi Mehta, Sant Chatwal, Dr Ivana Shah, Dr Jatin Shah, Dr Sudhir Parikh, Dr Dattatreya Nori, Ravishankar Bhooplapur, Ranju Batra, DCG Vishal Harsh, Chintu Patel, Mukund Padmanabhan and Mohan Wanchoo

The Dr Jatin Shah POY Special carries an intensive and extensive interview with him, as well as over 50 congratulatory messages from his colleagues at Memorial Sloan Kettering, eminent head and neck surgeons, his peers and former trainees as well as friends and family. They include Hollywood superstar Michael Douglas and Bollywood actor-director Rakesh Roshan.

The program concluded with the cutting of the cake, where all the key people joined in to congratulate Drs Jatin and Ivana Shah.

The program was EmCeed by Jori Kohli, who kept it soulful and energetic. Sneha 'Sunny' Thakkar, Artistic Director of Music for the Indo-American Arts Council, curated and presented a Sitar recital by Radhika Samson, who was accompanied by Ramanan Venkatraman (on Hansaveena), Manav Khurana (Tabla) and Joseph Costello (Ghatam). Ganesh Vandana and Kathak performance was by Aiyana Begani, Arya Gosalia, Aranya Kathpal, Zara Lakhani and Nina Patel, students of Preya Patel of Vivarta Arts.

A sumptuous, elaborate dinner was catered by Benares. The elegant gala event, attended by over 150 elite guests, was held at the exquisitely-decorated Grand Ballroom of Crest Hollow Country Club, one of the most beautiful venues on Long Island.

(Parveen Chopra is the former founder editor of the South Asian Times and the founder editor of ALotusInTheMud.com, the premier wellness and spirituality web magazine)

INDIAN-ORIGIN 52-YEAR-OLD MAN FACES TRIAL OVER WIFE'S MURDER IN CANADA



Jagpreet Singh, 52, is accused of killing his wife, Balwinder Kaur, stabbed her multiple times days after he arrived from India on March 9, 2024

**JANUARY 14, 2026
OTTAWA (TIP)**

A Murder trial has begun in a Canadian court for an Indian national accused of stabbing his wife to death in British Columbia, a media report has said.

Jagpreet Singh, 52, who is accused of killing his wife, Balwinder Kaur, stabbed her multiple times days after he arrived from India on March 9, 2024, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC News) said on Tuesday, January 13.

On Monday, January 12, Singh appeared in British Columbia's Abbotsford courthouse, which was told that Singh arrived in Canada on a visitor visa to visit his wife and daughter.

"Six days later, Ms. Kaur was dead, and Mr. Singh was in police custody," Crown prosecutor Rob Macgowan told the court, outlining the brief timeline between Singh's arrival and the killing.

Local news portal Langley Advance Times said that despite receiving treatment at Abbotsford Regional Hospital, Kaur was pronounced dead at 12.03 am on March 16.

Singh's charges were then updated to second-degree murder. He underwent multiple police interviews and as a result of Singh's responses to the police, Macgowan said the focus of the trial is centered more around his state of mind during the time of the killing, the news portal said.

"It does not appear that there is likely to be any issue taken with the fact that Mr. Singh is responsible for Ms. Kaur's death," he said. The Crown will try to prove that Singh possessed a state of mind that meets the qualifications for second-degree murder, which carries a minimum sentence of life in prison with no parole for 10 years, he added.

Singh pleaded not guilty in July 2025, his defense counsel, Josh Oppal, was quoted as saying by CBC News. The couple married in India in 2000 and had two children. Kaur moved to Canada to care for their daughter, who developed serious medical issues, while Singh remained in India. Police also gave a detailed background to their relationship.

The trial is scheduled to continue until February 23, CBC News said.

Former Alberta MLA Parmjit Singh 'Peter' Sandhu sets eyes on NRI Sabha Punjab poll

**JANUARY 14, 2026
CHANDIGARH / NEW YORK (TIP):**

Parmjit Singh 'Peter' Sandhu, who has been elected MLA twice from Edmonton-Manning, met Sabha members during his ongoing visit to Punjab.

Discussing his plans during a visit to Jalandhar, he said, "I wish to go back to my roots and do something for my people back home. I felt that my NRI brethren were not happy with the way their issues were being handled in Punjab. Sitting here, I want to do some

'sewa'. NRI Sabha is the only global organization that bridges the gap between the NRIs and the government and I want to pitch in."

A native of Moga and the nephew of former Akali MP Gurcharan S Galib, the 64-year-old owns a construction works company in Canada, now being run by his children.

The two-year term of the last NRI Sabha president, Parvinder Kaur Banga, expired on January 5. The next elections are expected to be announced soon.



In a first for NRI Sabha Punjab, a two-time member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, Canada, has expressed interest in contesting for the post of president.

Indian-origin man sentenced to 12 years for posing as 'sugar daddy' in Singapore

**JANUARY 14, 2026
SINGAPORE (TIP)**

A Singapore court on Tuesday, January 13, sentenced an Indian-origin Malaysian man to 12 years in jail and 15 strokes of the cane for posing as a "sugar daddy" and duping three women into engaging in sexual acts with him, a media report said.



Rajwant Singh Gill
Narajan Singh, 38

Photo for representation only

Rajwant Singh Gill Narajan Singh, 38, has pending charges involving 13 other alleged victims, which will be dealt with later, as per reports.

Singh was married with children but went on to coerce the women - identified in court documents as PW1, PW2 and V3 - into

engaging in sexual acts with him.

He often took on different personas online, often posing as wealthy Caucasian men.

Singh was charged in 2020 and sentenced on Tuesday to 12 years' jail and 15 strokes of the cane.

Deputy Public Prosecutor Bin termed Singh's crimes as depraved, sadistic and malicious, and said that a joint covert operation between the Singapore Police Force and Royal Malaysian Police Force was needed to apprehend him.

In 2025, Singh was sentenced to four and a half years in jail and ordered to pay compensation of SGD 7,000 (approximately USD 5,437) after he pleaded guilty to two cheating charges involving V3, a 52-year-old woman.

He matched V3 on a dating platform in early May 2019.

Singh posed as "Michael Nolan", a rich American trader living on a yacht in Malaysia, and promised to pay her USD 20,000 (SGD26,000) per month to be his "girlfriend".

He had V3 engage in sexual acts with him and sent explicit videos but never paid her, the report said.

He committed offences against 31-year-old PW1 and 32-year-old PW2, similarly, posing as a Caucasian man, and he promised to pay the victims for sexual favors.

He also extorted the three victims, threatening to disseminate their explicit footage if they did not transfer him money.

Court documents stated that the victims suffered psychological harm, with the victim identified as PW1 later being diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

Singapore PM strips opposition leader Pritam Singh of post after lying conviction

Workers' party invited to nominate new opposition leader

**JANUARY 15, 2026
SINGAPORE (TIP)**

Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong stripped Pritam Singh of his post as Leader of the Opposition on Thursday, saying his position had become untenable after his conviction for lying to parliament.

The move, the first of its kind in Singapore, comes after parliament decided in a vote on Wednesday that Singh of the opposition Workers' Party was unsuitable to continue in the post given his "dishonorable and unbecoming" conduct after a lying conviction.

Wong in a statement said the decision was necessary to uphold the rule of law, as well as the dignity and integrity of parliament.

"Having considered the matter carefully, I have decided that Mr. Singh's criminal convictions, taken together with Parliament's considered view of his unsuitability, make it no longer tenable for him to continue... Mr. Singh's designation as the LO will therefore cease with immediate effect," Wong said.

The Leader of the Opposition is designated by the head of government and not provided for in the constitution or parliament's standing orders. Despite the parliamentary vote, it was entirely up to Wong whether to remove Singh from the role.

The post comes with certain privileges and duties, such as staff support and an additional allowance, as well as access to confidential government briefings, especially in the event of a national crisis or emergency.

Wong said he has asked the opposition party to nominate another lawmaker not embroiled in the lying scandal to serve as the next leader of the opposition, which he described as an "important position in our parliamentary democracy".

Walid Jumblatt Abdullah, a political scientist at Nanyang Technological University, said he did not think removing Singh from the post would have a big impact.

"The only substantive things he would be losing are his allowance, which won't affect the party, and speaking time," he said.

Singh will remain a lawmaker and the leader of his party.

The Workers' Party said it would study the letter sent by Wong to its central executive committee.

"We will deliberate on its contents carefully through our internal processes and respond in due course," it said.

In February, a Singapore court found Singh guilty of giving false testimony to a parliamentary committee in 2021 about a fellow party member, Raeesah Khan, who admitted to lying in a parliamentary speech about an account of her accompanying a sexual assault victim to make a police report. Singh was Singapore's first leader of the opposition and was appointed after the 2020 election, when his party gained five seats in parliament, bringing its total to 10.

In 2025, the People's Action Party won its 14th consecutive election by taking 87 of 97 seats up for grabs to extend its unbroken six-decade rule. The Workers' Party won the remainder and Singh was reappointed as leader of the opposition.



Leader of the Opposition
Pritam Singh.

File photo / Reuters



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Suozzi Joins Bipartisan Letter Expressing Outrage at SAMHSA Cuts

JANUARY 15, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

The Trump Administration, yesterday, suddenly and without warning, notified several agencies across Long Island and throughout America of the immediate termination of grants. Several Long Island institutions quickly reported to Congressman Suozzi's office that nearly \$2 million in SAMHSA grants have been cut, and possibly more. Nationwide, 2000 organizations have been cut off from \$2 billion in



"We must ensure that SAMHSA programs serve their congressionally intended purpose of getting lifesaving resources to our communities," the letter reads.

funding.

Congressman Suozzi reached out to the affected organizations. He joined more than 100 colleagues in the House of Representatives, both Democrats and Republicans, on the attached letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Kennedy to express bipartisan outrage at these sudden cuts.

"We strongly urge you to rescind all of the terminations immediately. Too many people across the country are suffering without the necessary resources. We must ensure that SAMHSA programs serve their congressionally intended purpose of getting lifesaving resources to our communities," the letter reads.

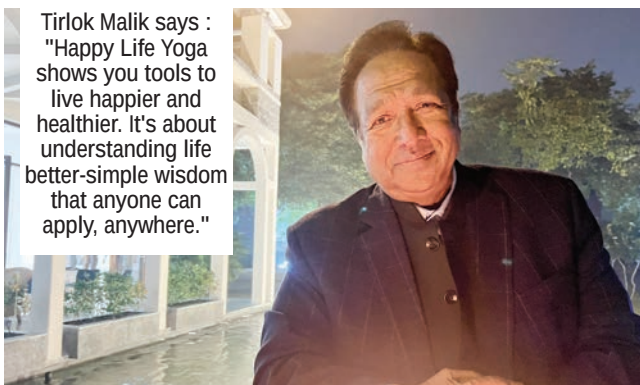
That evening, the cuts were reversed.

"This pattern and practice of cutting programs without warning that not-for-profits are counting on, in the middle of the fiscal year, is unfair, unproductive, and maddening. While I'm relieved these cuts were reversed, we can't keep doing this," said Suozzi.

"Without warning, grants were terminated. It's a reckless and awful move that undermines efforts to deliver drug treatment, alcohol counseling, and mental health care," said Suozzi. "These programs are how we save lives and help our neighbors and loved ones escape the grip of opioids and other addictive drugs. Cutting off already-awarded grants throws organizations into chaos and puts patients at risk. Addiction and mental health crises do not stop mid-year, and neither should the support systems people depend on."

Nearly \$2 million in funding cuts would have impacted organizations in the 3rd Congressional District. CN Guidance has reported \$1,250,000 in cuts to programs to address child trauma, drug addiction, and mental health first aid training. The Family and Children's Association has reported \$125,000 in cuts to mental health first aid training. The YES Community Counseling Center has reported \$544,970 in cuts to its Bridge Program to curb addiction in young adults.

Suoizzi's office is in contact with local organizations and will ensure their funding cuts are reversed.



Tirlok Malik to Lead "Happy Life Yoga" Workshop at Bhakti Marga New York on Jan 24

JANUARY 12, 2026
NEW YORK, NY (TIP)

Emmy-nominated filmmaker and wellness advocate Tirlok Malik will conduct a one-hour Happy Life Yoga workshop on Saturday, January 24, from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM, at the Bhakti Marga New York Center, located at 243 West 30th Street, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10001.

The Happy Life Yoga workshop offers simple, practical tools to live a happier and healthier life. Unlike conventional yoga sessions, this workshop requires no yoga mats and is designed as a "yoga of life"-focusing on how to live well through eating right, thinking right, and moving right. The session is entertaining, inspiring, and deeply engaging, blending practical exercises, affirmations, laughter, and reflection on the beauty of life.

Speaking about the workshop, Malik says, "Happy Life Yoga shows you tools to live happier and healthier. It's about understanding life better-simple wisdom that anyone can apply, anywhere."

The knowledge shared in Happy Life Yoga is drawn from Ayurveda, Indian philosophy, yoga traditions, and Malik's own lived experiences. The workshop is suitable for people of all ages and backgrounds and is conducted in the spirit of philanthropy, reminding people from all walks of life that true happiness lies within.

Tirlok Malik has conducted over 100 workshops and programs across New York, including landmark public spaces such as Central Park and Times Square. He has also spoken at Central Park Uplift, New York (International Yoga Day 2025), founded by Meera Gandhi, and at the Times Square Peace Day event, among many others. Through these initiatives, Malik continues to spread joy, laughter, and happiness.

ABOUT TIRLOK MALIK

Tirlok Malik is an Emmy-nominated filmmaker, restaurateur, entrepreneur, and the founder and speaker of Happy Life Yoga. He is known for his significant contributions to both Hollywood and Bollywood, and for pioneering the portrayal of the immigrant experience in America through films such as Lonely in America and Khushiyaan. His work has earned numerous awards and global recognition for highlighting cultural connections and human stories. Through Happy Life Yoga, Malik actively promotes Ayurveda, yoga, and Indian philosophy as a holistic way of living in balance.

ABOUT BHAKTI MARGA

Bhakti Marga, founded by Satguru Paramahansa Vishwananda, is a global spiritual path rooted in devotion and love. Satguru Paramahansa Vishwananda is a spiritual living master (Satguru) whose presence and guidance lead seekers to the direct experience of divine love.

Bhakti Marga New York Center is a sacred space for busy New Yorkers to find inner peace and renewal, offering daily programs and a wide range of spiritual and wellness-based activities led by experienced practitioners.

The event is hosted by conscious filmmaker Neha Lohia, fondly known as the Chief Happiness Officer for Happy Life Yoga.

For more information about Happy Life Yoga, visit: www.happylifeyoga.org

MEDIA CONTACT: Happy Life Yoga
Website: www.happylifeyoga.org

Ritesh Shah named among the 50 most influential People In Pharmacy

JANUARY 14, 2026
RED BANK, NJ (TIP)

Ritesh Shah has been recognized as one of the 50 Most Influential People in Pharmacy, a prestigious national honor celebrating leaders whose work is shaping the future of the profession through innovation, advocacy, and service.

This distinction highlights Shah's impact as a community pharmacist and healthcare innovator, as well as his leadership in advancing patient access, medication affordability, and the sustainability of independent pharmacies. His efforts have elevated the role of pharmacists as essential frontline healthcare providers and trusted community partners.

Shah is best known as the founder of the Ritesh Shah Charitable Pharmacy, a pioneering model that provides free medications to uninsured and underinsured patients. The initiative demonstrates how mission-driven pharmacy practice can be both scalable and sustainable, influencing policy discussions and reinforcing the importance of equity and compassion in healthcare delivery.

"Ritesh's influence goes far beyond traditional pharmacy practice," said Joe Howe, President of the Ritesh Shah Charitable Pharmacy. "He has shown that pharmacists can lead systemic change by expanding access, strengthening communities, and proving that innovation and compassion are not mutually exclusive. This recognition is incredibly well deserved."

"I'm deeply honored by this recognition," Shah said. "Pharmacy is ultimately about people-meeting patients where they are and ensuring access to life-saving medications. This work is only possible because of the dedicated partners, volunteers, and communities we serve."

The 50 Most Influential People in Pharmacy list, curated by Pharmacy50, highlights professionals whose leadership is driving meaningful change across the pharmaceutical and healthcare landscape. Shah's inclusion underscores his continued commitment to strengthening independent pharmacies, improving patient outcomes, and redefining the role of pharmacy in advancing public health.

ABOUT RITESH SHAH CHARITABLE PHARMACY

The Ritesh Shah Charitable Pharmacy is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing free medications to uninsured and underinsured patients. Founded on the principles of equity, compassion, and sustainability, the pharmacy serves as a model for mission-driven healthcare delivery that strengthens communities and expands access.

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Ritesh Shah, founder of the Ritesh Shah Charitable Pharmacy

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Trumpism and the way forward for India

PRABHU
DAYAL



"Trump's ego-driven decision-making has influenced major global events, such as trade negotiations and alliances. If his ego is hurt, he becomes very vengeful. I think India is discovering this grim and sad reality about Trump. During Donald Trump's first term (2017-2021), India-US relations were marked by a high-profile personal chemistry between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Trump and significant advancements in defense and strategic cooperation despite persistent friction over trade and immigration. The period was highlighted by massive joint rallies: the "Howdy Modi" event in Houston (2019) and the "Namaste Trump" rally in Ahmedabad (2020), which showcased a unique personal rapport between the two leaders."



President Donald Trump.
File photo / Reuters

Indian-American Congressman Suhas Subramanyam recently said that President Donald Trump has 'completely messed up' the India-US relationship, warning that deteriorating ties between the world's two largest democracies are hurting both countries' economic and strategic interests. What is the way forward for India under Trumpism?

Trumpism is described as a right-wing political ideology, movement, and communication style associated with US President Donald Trump and his political base. It is characterized by an "America First" agenda, which fuses

elements of right-wing populism, economic nationalism, and neo-nationalism, often featuring illiberal and authoritarian leanings. It is also characterized by anti-globalism and a distrust of traditional institutions.

Trumpism is linked to slogans like "Make America Great Again" and aims to challenge the liberal world order. Some of the core tenets and characteristics of Trumpism are prioritizing nationalism and America First over international cooperation, populism, economic protectionism and anti-globalism, which means skepticism towards international organizations.

There is an important aspect which should not be overlooked. Trumpism is highly personality-driven, and a very important part of Trump's personality is his big ego. His ego is a central factor in his decision-making and his policies. In a 1995 New York Times opinion piece which he authored, Trump himself said that ego plays a major role in his life. The title of the article was 'What My Ego Wants, My Ego Gets'. Trump discussed the role of his ego in his business transactions.

There can be no doubt that Trump's ego plays a big role in shaping his approach and policies as the President of the United States of America, which is perhaps the most powerful position in the world. Many observers, including mental health professionals, have described President Trump as displaying traits consistent with egotism, which is a personality trait marked by a sense of self-importance and an excessive need for self-admiration. His behavior is characterized by inflated self-esteem, self-centeredness, and a tendency to talk about himself too much, often viewing himself as superior or better than others.

Trump's behavior is also characterized by an extreme intolerance for criticism. His typical response to criticism involves lashing out, blaming others, or attempting to discredit the source of the criticism. Trump frequently uses personal insults and derogatory nicknames to belittle critics, whether they are political opponents, journalists, or even fellow Republicans. He often blames others (such as the "fake news media", the "deep state", or previous administrations) for problems or negative outcomes to deflect attention from his own actions.

Trump has often attempted to silence dissent by threatening legal action against media organizations, revoking press credentials, and surrounding himself with loyal individuals who are unlikely to challenge him.

Trump rarely admits mistakes and instead makes excuses, rationalizes his actions, and vehemently denies having made certain statements, even when there is video or audio evidence to the contrary.

Analysts suggest Trump is "notoriously thin-skinned" and reacts with anger or rage to perceived challenges to his authority or self-image, often responding disproportionately to the original criticism.

Thus, a craving for admiration and loyalty is a key aspect of Trump's presidential style. Trump needs constant

admiration, and this has an effect on all his interactions. Playing to Trump's ego is often seen as advantageous for those who deal with him, leading not just his own cabinet members but also foreign leaders to offer him praise and unwavering support. World leaders have massaged Trump's ego to manage diplomatic relations. His ego-driven decision-making has influenced major global events, such as trade negotiations and alliances.

Leaders like Nato Secretary General Mark Rutte publicly referred to Trump as "Daddy" in a jocular but calculated manner and sent private, fawning texts predicting "BIG" success at summits, which Trump then made public. Multiple leaders, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and officials from Pakistan, nominated Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, knowing his desire for the award, in an effort to curry favor.

When Prime Minister Keir Starmer of the UK paid a visit to the White House in February 2025, he brought a letter tucked in his jacket pocket. It was a formal invitation from King Charles III for a rare second state visit. Starmer presented it to Trump with rhetorical flourish in the Oval Office, saying, "This is really special. This has never happened before. So, this is a very special letter." Trump was very flattered.

Trump's ego-driven decision-making has influenced major global events, such as trade negotiations and alliances. If his ego is hurt, he becomes very vengeful. I think India is discovering this grim and sad reality about Trump. During Donald Trump's first term (2017-2021), India-US relations were marked by a high-profile personal chemistry between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Trump and significant advancements in defense and strategic cooperation despite persistent friction over trade and immigration. The period was highlighted by massive joint rallies: the "Howdy Modi" event in Houston (2019) and the "Namaste Trump" rally in Ahmedabad (2020), which showcased a unique personal rapport between the two leaders.

Not surprisingly, the India-US relationship thrived in Trump's first term. The defense partnership was the strongest pillar of the relationship, with India being elevated to a major defense partner. Key defense pacts were signed to enhance military interoperability, including the Comcasa (2018) for secure communications and the Beca (2020) for sharing geospatial intelligence.

The relationship was cemented by a shared concern over China's growing influence. The Trump administration revived the Quad (US, India, Japan, and Australia) and renamed the Pacific Command as the Indo-Pacific Command to signal a broader strategic focus on a partnership with India. A Strategic Energy Partnership was launched in 2018, making the US a significant supplier of crude oil and LNG to India.

The first Trump administration (2017-2021) was widely characterized by a "tough" and often confrontational stance toward Pakistan, marked by significant aid cuts and public rebukes over terrorism.

Trump famously began 2018 with a

tweet accusing Pakistan of giving the US "nothing but lies & deceit" while providing "safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan". In January 2018, the Trump administration suspended nearly \$1.3 billion in annual security assistance. The US adopted a tougher stance on Pakistan-based terrorism, supporting the designation of Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist and backing Pakistan's "grey-listing" by the FATF. However, the relationship shifted toward tactical cooperation by 2019 to facilitate the US withdrawal from Afghanistan.

In Trump's second term, things are quite different. The India-US relationship is currently defined by sharp economic friction and a significant recalibration of strategic priorities. The starkest departure from the first term is the use of high tariffs as a central policy tool. Trade relations between India and the United States have reached a point of acute tension due to a series of steep tariffs imposed and threatened by President Trump. Trump has frequently labelled India a "trade abuser" and the "king of tariffs", publicly calling India's economy "dead" or "one-sided".

There have been several instances where PM Modi's refusal to massage Trump's ego reportedly "hurt" or frustrated Trump's personal ambitions and public image. First, in September 2024, during the US presidential election campaign, Trump publicly stated that PM Modi would be meeting with him during his US visit.

However, despite PM Modi's three-day visit to the United States from September 21 to 23, no meeting between the two leaders took place. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) were reportedly surprised by the claim, as no such meeting had been included in the official itinerary.

Second, following a ceasefire between India and Pakistan in 2025 (linked to "Operation Sindoor"), Trump repeatedly claimed credit for de-escalating the conflict, as he wanted to bolster his case for a Nobel Peace Prize. Modi flatly rejected this, stating the ceasefire was settled directly between the two nations without US mediation.

Third, when Modi went to Canada for the G7 Meeting in June 2025, he declined an invitation from President Trump for a Washington stopover on his way back from the G7 Meeting. Modi himself said, "The President of the United States called me, saying, 'Since you are in Canada, please come over. We will have a meal and talk'."

PM Modi said that he declined President Trump's invitation as he did not want to miss his scheduled visit to the "land of Lord Jagannath" (Odisha). However, insiders say that Pakistan's Army Chief Asim Munir was going to meet Trump over lunch, and PM Modi reportedly feared a "photo trap" where Trump might engineer a staged handshake between Modi and Munir to

CONTD ON PAGE 9

CONTD FROM PAGE 8

use as a publicity prop for his pitch to get the Nobel Peace Prize.

In April 2025, the Trump administration imposed a 25 per cent baseline reciprocal tariff on Indian goods to address trade deficits. In August 2025, Trump put an additional 25 per cent punitive penalty specifically for India's continued purchase of Russian crude oil. These tariffs heavily affect labor-intensive industries such as textiles, gems and jewelry, pharmaceuticals, auto parts, and seafood. Nearly 55 per cent of India's annual exports to the US (valued at approximately \$87 billion) are directly threatened.

A pivotal ruling is expected regarding the legality of Trump's use of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) to bypass Congress in levying these broad-based tariffs. A

by disrupting the Indian IT industry's business model, limiting opportunities for Indian professionals and students, and potentially slowing India's economic growth. The primary mechanism of this impact is the increased cost and stricter eligibility criteria for the visa, which Indian nationals largely dominate.

The H-1B visa changes, particularly the steep \$100,000 fee for new applications, directly challenge the business model of Indian IT giants like Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys and Wipro, which have historically deployed large numbers of Indian engineers in the US. The new fee, a massive increase from the previous \$1,000-\$5,000 range, significantly raises the cost of sending employees to the US, eroding their profit margins.

Indian nationals make up over 70 per cent of all H-1B visa recipients, making them the most affected demographic

between Trump and Modi is characterized by a "blow hot, blow cold" dynamic. While both continue to profess a "very good relationship", significant policy friction-particularly over trade and energy-has led to public disagreements and reports of personal tension. Their personal chemistry appears to have eroded.

Recent statements from the Trump administration suggest that a significant trade deal with India collapsed due to a lack of direct personal communication between the two leaders, rather than a policy disagreement.

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick publicly said in an interview that a nearly finalized trade deal stalled in late 2025 because PM Modi did not personally call President Trump to close it. Lutnick stated that while the deal was "all set up", the Indian side appeared "uncomfortable" making the final call,

He said, "India's reluctance to set up the phone call between Modi and Trump meant the agreement ran into trouble."

In other words, the US side wanted PM Modi to massage Trump's ego for securing the deal, but PM Modi did not make the call. Of course, many people in India feel that deal or no deal, Modi did the correct thing by refusing to massage Trump's ego.

Summing up, there are currently very big challenges in India-US relations due to economic friction and Trump's transactional foreign policy approach. Donald Trump's ego will continue to be a primary driver, making his foreign policy highly personal, transactional, and unpredictable. This represents a significant departure from the institutional, rules-based approach of previous US administrations. The highly personal and transactional nature of Trump's foreign policy also makes the



Donald Trump seen with his extended family - as well as Elon Musk who is holding his son, Techno Mechanicu.

-File Photo / kaitrumpgolfs

ruling against the administration could provide immediate relief to Indian exporters, though White House officials have signaled they have "other tools" to reimpose duties if necessary.

India's Ministry of External Affairs criticized the US tariffs as "unfair, unjustified, and unreasonable". India said that its energy sourcing is guided by the need to secure affordable fuel for its 1.4 billion citizens and is a matter of strategic autonomy. This criticism has further annoyed Trump, who has threatened further tariffs.

Recently, in early January 2026, President Trump gave the green light for the Russia Sanctions Bill proposed by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham. The legislation authorizes the US President to impose secondary tariffs of up to 500 per cent on any country that continues to purchase Russian petroleum or uranium products. This bill explicitly targets China, India and Brazil. A vote in the US Senate is possible soon. This has placed India's \$85 billion export market to the US at risk of becoming commercially unviable.

The Trump administration's H-1B policies have negatively impacted India

group by the policy changes. The prohibitive costs and stricter eligibility criteria (favoring higher salaries) mean fewer opportunities for entry- to mid-level Indian professionals and recent Stem graduates from US universities to secure H-1B sponsorships. India's tech sector contributes significantly to its GDP (around 7 per cent), with the US accounting for a large portion of tech exports.

While the tariffs and high H1B visa fees have caused acute diplomatic tension, many US experts believe the long-term trajectory remains unchanged because Washington still views India as an essential counterweight to China in the Indo-Pacific. They argue that the core geopolitical reasons for engagement are overwhelming, as Washington views partnering with India as critical to sustaining its own long-term leadership and successfully navigating competition with China. In late 2025, the two nations signed an expansive new defense framework to strengthen their "Major Defense Partnership" over the next decade. However, Trump's ego problem will continue to be an obstacle.

As things stand, the relationship

which Trump viewed as a necessary step for finalizing agreements.

The US applied a "staircase" model to these negotiations, rewarding countries that acted quickly. The UK finalized a deal first, followed by Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Lutnick said that because India missed its specific "three Fridays" window, the previous favorable terms offered are no longer available.

The Spokesman of India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) rejected the US Commerce Secretary's remarks as "not accurate" and said that PM Modi and Trump had spoken on the phone eight times last year, covering "different aspects of our wide-ranging partnership". However, the phone call issue which US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick spoke about is a bit different from how the MEA spokesman has explained it.

While Modi and Trump may have spoken eight times, Lutnick is saying that PM Modi did not call Trump to request him to close the trade deal. Lutnick said in his interview that the US side wanted PM Modi to call Trump when the deal was nearing finalization.

relationship susceptible to sudden shifts based on Trump's whims or immediate domestic political considerations, making long-term planning difficult for India. The relationship has soured over the implementation of 50 per cent tariffs on Indian goods and general aggressive trade policies, which have caused economic friction.

The US is considering 500 per cent tariffs on countries doing business with Russia, but India has continued to import Russian crude, highlighting a conflict in priorities that clashes with US pressures. Strategic cooperation in defense remains good, and both governments maintain that the relationship is too important to be entirely derailed. The future trajectory of relations will depend heavily on how both nations manage their divergent economic and foreign policy priorities.

(First published in First Post)

(The writer is a retired Indian diplomat and had previously served as Ambassador in Kuwait and Morocco and as Consul General in New York. Views expressed in the above piece are personal and solely those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect The Indian Panorama's views.)

Can India harm Pakistan by restricting Indus waters?

VIVEK
KATJU



A full account of how much water India is losing because of the Indus treaty should be made public by the government

"THE IWT WAS NEGOTIATED WITH THE HELP OF THE WORLD BANK. THE PROCESS TOOK NINE YEARS. INDIA GENEROUSLY GAVE PAKISTAN WATERS OF THE INDUS, JHELUM AND CHENAB (CALLED THE WESTERN RIVERS IN THE TREATY). IT ONLY RETAINED THE RIGHT TO USE A SMALL PORTION OF THEIR WATERS FOR IRRIGATION AND RUN-OF-THE-RIVER POWER GENERATION. INDIA RETAINED FULL USE OF THE RAVI, SUTLEJ AND BEAS. THAT MEANT THAT ITS "SHARE" OF THE WATERS OF THE INDUS RIVERS SYSTEM (IRS) REMAINED ONLY 20 PER CENT; THE REST WAS GIVEN UP TO PAKISTAN."

During an interaction with students of IIT-Madras on January 2, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar turned his attention to India's "bad neighbor to the west". He made the valid point that India had the right to defend its people against a country which perpetrated terrorism "deliberately, persistently and unrepentantly".

He went on to emphasize that it was up to India to decide how it would "exercise that right". He recalled that "many years ago", India had, as a measure of goodwill, agreed to a "water-sharing arrangement" with the western neighbor. However, as Pakistan had been involved in terrorism against India over the decades, it could not ask for sharing of waters. Jaishankar was essentially reiterating Prime Minister Narendra Modi's point that "blood and water cannot flow together".

Both Modi's and Jaishankar's comments relate to the river waters that flow from India to Pakistan. Both are general expressions of anger and dismay against Pakistan's pursuit of cross-border terrorism. However, they lack specificity and precision. They also do not take into account to what extent India can control the rivers that flow from India to Pakistan.

The "water-sharing arrangement" is the India-Pakistan Indus Waters Treaty

(IWT) of 1960. Pakistan had from the outset raised the apprehension that India had the capacity to deny it water. This is because the rivers that sustained life in Pakistan - Indus, Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej - flowed through India and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) before entering its territory.

Pakistan's fears were unfounded because in the case of the Indus, Jhelum

power had changed since 1960. Pakistan had responded by suggesting that the matter be raised in the India-Pakistan Indus Waters Commission under the IWT. India had rejected this approach. It wanted a Pakistani commitment for renegotiating the treaty. Now, this has become academic because India has held the treaty in abeyance.

Pakistan has warned that restricting

waters? Perhaps not. In any event, a full account of how much water India is losing because of the IWT should be made public by the government.

Pakistan has followed an obstructive approach to the IWT and desperately wants it to continue. The reasons are two-fold. First: it does not wish to lose even a small quantity of water because it has become a water-scarce country.



Retaliation: India has held the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance since the Pahalgam terror attack.

-Photo credit: PTI

and to a large extent Chenab, India simply could not, wholly or substantially, hold back their waters. That was true then and it is so now as well. India could stop the waters of the Ravi, Beas and Sutlej from flowing into Pakistan, but they hold only 20 per cent of the waters of these six rivers taken together. Hence, Pakistan's real desire was that India should not impede the flow of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab. The waters issue was also used in Pakistan to fuel anti-India sentiment.

The IWT was negotiated with the help of the World Bank. The process took nine years. India generously gave Pakistan waters of the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab (called the western rivers in the treaty). It only retained the right to use a small portion of their waters for irrigation and run-of-the-river power generation. India retained full use of the Ravi, Sutlej and Beas. That meant that its "share" of the waters of the Indus Rivers System (IRS) remained only 20 per cent; the rest was given up to Pakistan.

India has held the IWT in abeyance since the Pahalgam terror attack in April last year. Earlier, in September-October 2024, there were reports that India had asked Pakistan for a renegotiation of the treaty because the situation concerning the use of waters and the generation of

the flow of water into its territory would be "an act of war", but it's unlikely that the threat would prevent India from undertaking actions to use the IRS's waters where it can for the benefit of its people.

The terrain through which the Indus flows in India before it enters PoK is such that a large dam cannot be constructed. Certainly, its waters cannot be diverted meaningfully in Ladakh or elsewhere. Large dams cannot be constructed on the Jhelum too. But its waters can be used for navigation, and limited irrigation possibilities exist.

Pakistan prevented the construction of the Tulbul Navigation Project for decades. Now it can be completed. The IWT has always been unpopular in J&K because it circumscribes the use of the erstwhile state's rivers. The Chenab can be utilized for power generation and perhaps its water can be diverted for irrigation, but dams with large pondages cannot be constructed because of the terrain. And, the eastern rivers are with India in any case.

All in all, it is difficult to foresee how India can utilize the waters of the western rivers in large measure beyond what is already provided in the IWT. Hence, can India really trouble Pakistan through restricting the flow of river

Pakistan's water management has been terrible, but it does not wish to acknowledge this fact. Second: Pakistan does not want India to ever disrupt the flow of water, especially during the agricultural season, because that may negatively impact crop yields.

Pakistan has agreed to discuss the IWT modification, although under the Indus Waters Commission, because it may feel that India would not agree to use the mechanism for these discussions.

However, there is a section in Pakistan which wants to engage India in sub-surface water management. This section believes that India and Pakistan share aquifers and that their joint management would benefit Pakistan. They would like the IWT to extend to sub-surface waters too. India should never agree to expand the scope of cooperation to sub-soil water in view of Pakistan's obstructionism in IWT management.

India is both an upper riparian state and a lower one, as in the case of the Brahmaputra. This reinforces the need for the government to provide greater clarity to the comments Modi and Jaishankar have made on sharing of waters. People deserve not to be confused on vital issues such as water.

(Vivek Katju is a retired Indian Foreign Service officer.)

Overseas Friends of India Canada urges Canadian government to expedite CEPA

JANUARY 15, 2026

TORONTO (TIP): As mutual exchange of visits between trade missions of India and Canada has been set in motion with an official delegation of British Columbia arriving in India on Manday, January 12, the Overseas Friends of India Canada - Ottawa (OFIC) has written a letter to strongly urge the Government of Canada to advance negotiations toward the conclusion of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the two long-time trade partner nations.

Talks and negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement have been pending for more than a decade. Hopes of the two countries signing the CEPA got a boost with the recent exchange of ministerial and trade delegations between India and Canada.

"We welcome and commend Global Affairs Canada's recent positive re-engagement with India at this strategically important moment," say Shiv Bhasker, President and Hemant Shah, President and Trade Director of Overseas Friends of India Canada - Ottawa (OFIC), respectively.

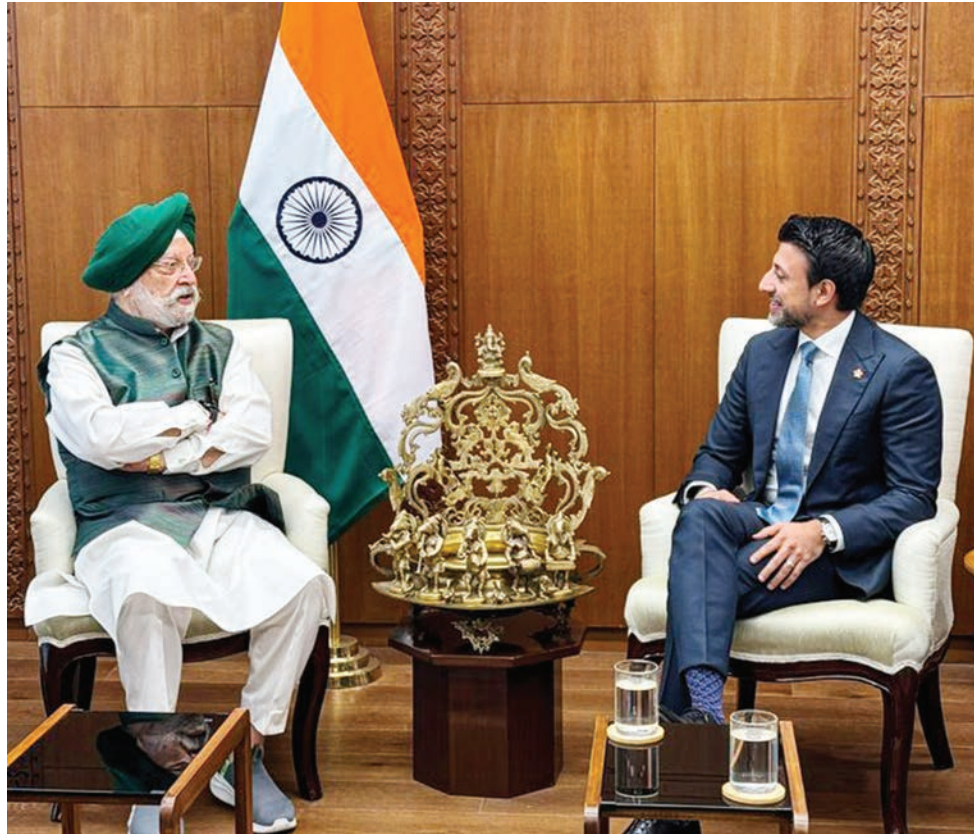
A trade delegation of the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce has completed its 11-day visit to India by visiting Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi and Chandigarh.

The Canadian Prime Minister, Mark Carney, is also expected to lead a strong delegation to India early next month. In an endeavor to strengthen trade links with Asia, Mark Carney is also leaving for China this week. After China, he will visit Qatar before returning to the continent next month on his first official visit to India.

The mood is upbeat as Indian industry, trade and business houses await the arrival of the first official trade delegation from Canada. Led by the Premier of British Columbia, David Eby, and Jobs Minister and Olympian Ravi Kahlon, this is the first official trade commission from any Canadian province to visit Chandigarh, New Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru to showcase its leadership and capabilities in sustainable forestry, clean energy and responsible mining. The Premier-led mission builds on the province's Look West industrial and economic plan.

The mission will arrive on Monday and stay in India till January 17. Both Premier David Eby and Ravi Kahlon will meet with government and business leaders in major centers of commerce and technology, as it will promote British Columbia's businesses, critical minerals and sustainable wood products, supporting work to build a more independent economy and creating more good jobs for people in British Columbia.

"With unjustified tariffs from the U.S. impacting B.C. workers and businesses, it's more important than ever to deepen strategic relationships with international partners to attract new investment and support good-



Canadian Minister for International Trade, Maninder Sidhu with India's Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri in New Delhi on November 12, 2025. -Photo: PTI

paying jobs in British Columbia," Premier Eby said. India is a key market for B.C. with enormous trade opportunities. This trade mission is about deepening our relationships, supporting good jobs in B.C. and strengthening our position as the economic engine of the new Canadian economy."

As India moves toward becoming the world's third-largest economy, the Premier will highlight opportunities for sustainable forestry, clean energy and responsible mining through new partnerships that are available only in B.C.

India is the world's third-highest energy consumer and has a growing demand for clean technology and clean energy. British Columbia has both to offer.

The mission is part of Look West: Jobs and Prosperity for BC and Canada and aligns with the Look West goal of doubling exports to non-U.S. markets over 10 years.

"British Columbia has the highest share of exports to India of any province," Kahlon said. "Building on our Look West plan, the trade mission to India will showcase B.C.'s strengths in clean energy, sustainable forestry, responsible mining and clean technology. By attracting investment and reducing our reliance on U.S. markets through diversified trade partnerships, we will create good jobs and prosperity for all British Columbians."

"Diversifying trade and investment, securing supply chains, retaining customers and opening new markets have always been important, but are now more urgent due to the chaotic and unjustified tariffs from the U.S.," Premier Eby said. "As we move forward, our government will

continue to leverage B.C.'s strengths to create more opportunities for our businesses to export and attract investment, which means jobs, opportunity and prosperity for British Columbians."

In 2024, B.C.-origin exports of goods to India amounted to \$1.3 billion. In early 2023, the B.C. government launched the Trade Diversification Strategy to strengthen and expand the province's trading base. The province benefits from a network of more than 50 trade and investment representatives across 14 key markets in North America, Europe and Asia. This network includes trade and investment representatives in India in Chandigarh, New Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru (Bangalore). With 18 operating mines and two smelters, B.C. produces or has the potential to produce at least 19 of the critical minerals on Canada's list and the U.S. 2025 draft critical minerals list, including copper, germanium, nickel and rare-earth elements.

Within Canada, British Columbia is the second-largest producer of natural gas. If viewed independently, B.C. is the world's 12th-largest natural gas producer, with substantial reserves that could allow the industry to expand further. Forestry Innovation Investment, B.C.'s market development agency for forest products, has been promoting B.C. wood species in India through the Canadian Wood brand.

Meanwhile, Overseas Friends of India and Canada said in a letter to the Canadian Minister for International Trade, Maninder Sidhu, that Canada and India share a deep and enduring economic relationship founded on trust, mutual respect, and long-term cooperation. Canada has consistently supported India's

PRABHJOT
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development-beginning with CIDA-led initiatives in the late 1970s that promoted Canadian mining, drilling, and engineering expertise, and extending to landmark collaborations such as the Canadian feasibility study for the New Mumbai Sea Port (Nhava Sheva). Canada remained an active and reliable partner even during India's pre-liberalization period, as demonstrated by the 1985-86 Canadian trade mission and the widely recognized "Canada Week" trade fair in New Delhi.

Shiv Bhasker and Hemant Shah said in their letter to Maninder Sidhu that the Canadian strengths continue to add value across priority sectors, including mining, agricultural storage, grains and pulses, aerospace, helicopters, and aviation maintenance. These sectors align closely with India's development priorities and present significant opportunities for Canadian firms.

Education remains a cornerstone of the bilateral relationship, dating back to Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri's visit to Ottawa in the late 1960s and the establishment of the Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute. Since 2006, flight schools in Western Canada, including Winnipeg, have trained Indian commercial pilots who now serve India's rapidly expanding aviation sector—an example of people-to-people ties translating into tangible economic benefit, Bhasker and Shah said in their letter.

"CEPA is more than a trade agreement; it is a strategic instrument to expand market access, strengthen supply-chain resilience, and secure Canada's long-term economic presence in one of the world's fastest-growing major economies. The Indo-Canadian business community has played a critical role in sustaining bilateral trade for decades and will continue to serve as a vital bridge and driving force in this renewed partnership.

"OFIC therefore strongly recommends moving forward decisively with CEPA negotiations. We fully support the conclusion of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between Canada and India and firmly believe it will deliver lasting economic and strategic benefits for both nations.

"OFIC stands ready and willing to assist the Government of Canada, Global Affairs Canada, and your office in any manner necessary to help make CEPA a reality," they said while concluding the letter.

(Toronto based Prabhjot Singh is an award-winning journalist recognized for investigative journalism, environment and business reporting, sports and feature writing. A Media Consultant, he has remained associated with various news agencies, including Reuters, and media houses like PTC News (India/Canada), Parvasi Media (Canada) the Liberal World (India), and The Indian Panorama, New York. He is interested in Indian Diaspora and the Sikh Diaspora in particular. His work has appeared in various international and national newspapers, magazines and journals.)

Embassy of India Hosts Successful Hybrid B2B Meeting on Medical Devices and Equipment



B2B on Medical Devices & Equipment

**JANUARY 15, 2026
BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (TIP)**

The Embassy of India in Bucharest successfully organized a Hybrid Business-to-Business (B2B) Meeting on Medical Devices and Equipment, fostering robust engagement between leading Indian and Romanian companies. Held on January 15, 2026, the event drew active and enthusiastic participation from both sides, underscoring the deepening economic ties between India and Romania. It was coordinated in close partnership with Mr. Rajiv Nath, Forum Coordinator of the Association of Indian Medical Device Industry (AiMeD), and Mr. Praveen Mittal, Managing Director of the Export Promotion Council for Medical Devices (EPCMD). This collaboration highlighted the Embassy's proactive role in bridging bilateral trade opportunities in high-priority sectors.

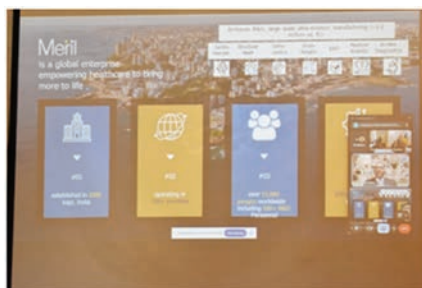
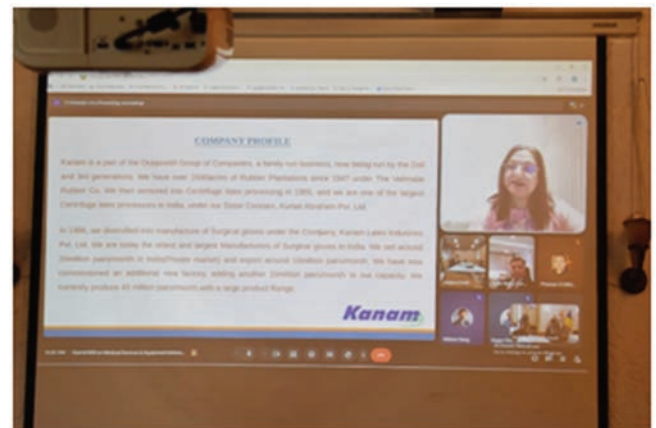
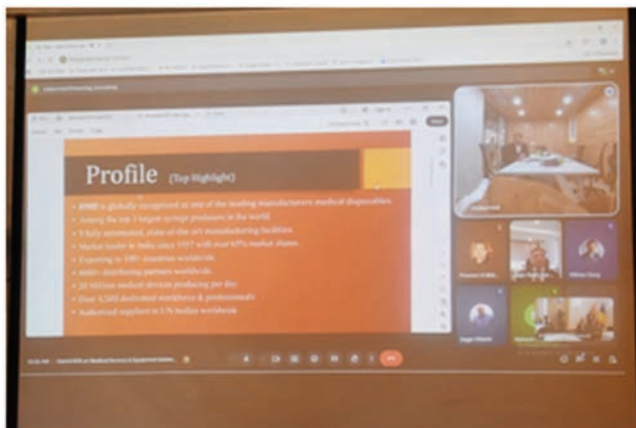


Remarks by Mr. Praveen Mittal, MD, EPCMD

Several prominent and emerging companies from the medical devices and equipment sector participated, signaling strong mutual interest. Indian firms expressed keen eagerness to export innovative products to Romania, showcasing their advanced manufacturing capabilities, diverse product portfolios, and proven track record in international markets. These included diagnostics tools, surgical instruments, imaging equipment, and consumables, positioning India as a reliable partner amid global supply chain shifts. Romanian companies reciprocated with equal enthusiasm, recognizing India's rapid ascent as a global



In-person Romanian participation in the B2B



Leading Indian companies presented their presentations

manufacturing powerhouse in healthcare. With India's medical devices industry projected to reach \$50 billion by 2030, driven by initiatives like Make in India and Production Linked Incentives (PLI), Romanian participants saw immense potential for cost-effective sourcing, technology transfers, and joint ventures.

The hybrid format maximized accessibility and reach: over 35 Romanian companies attended in person at the Embassy premises, while approximately 20 Indian companies joined virtually from across India. This innovative setup ensured seamless interactions

The meeting commenced with insightful opening remarks from Mr. Rajiv Nath and Mr. Praveen Mittal. They positioned India as a premier global hub for high-quality, affordable medical devices, emphasizing the sector's resilience post-COVID and government support through schemes like Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission. They urged Romanian firms to explore sourcing partnerships, R&D collaborations, and co-development opportunities to address Romania's growing healthcare demands.



Romanian companies interacted with their counterparts from India



despite geographical distances, enabling real-time discussions on regulatory alignments, certification standards (such as EU MDR compliance), and logistics for exports to the European market. Indian participants presented detailed overviews of their offerings, including quality certifications like ISO 13485 and CE marking, and shared case studies of successful exports to Europe.

Throughout the sessions, Romanian participants voiced specific interests in areas like orthopedic implants, cardiology devices, and digital health solutions. Productive one-on-one meetings followed, leading to promising leads for trials, MOUs, and sample shipments. The Embassy of India reaffirmed its steadfast commitment to bolstering economic and commercial relations between the two nations, with a special focus on healthcare and medical technology as pillars of bilateral cooperation. This aligns with ongoing initiatives under the India-Romania Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation and efforts to enhance trade, which reached 1.2 billion in 2025.

The event concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks from the Embassy, acknowledging all participants and coordinators. It marked a highly successful and productive B2B engagement, paving the way for sustained partnerships that will benefit both economies. Follow-up actions, including virtual follow-ups and trade delegations, are already in motion to convert discussions into tangible outcomes.

(Based on a Press Release issue by the Embassy of India in Romania)



A photograph of participants taken during the event

Seattle University hosts pre-Summit briefing session on India AI Impact Summit 2026

**JANUARY 12, 2026
SEATTLE (TIP)**

In partnership with Seattle University (SU), Consulate General of India in Seattle co-hosted a briefing session on the upcoming AI India Impact Summit 2026 today at the Casey Commons Conference Hall at SU. The session focused on the theme "People, Planet, and Progress", highlighting India's AI strategy for social good, sustainable development, and inclusive economic growth. A large number of students and senior faculty from Seattle University attended the event which provided them an overview of India's expanding AI ecosystem and its evolution.



Panelists of India AI-Summit pre-summit briefing by Consul General at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing at Seattle University, 12 January 2026



Participants at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Participants at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Participants at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Panelists at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing (12 January 2026, Seattle University)



CEO of Remitly, Matt Oppenheimer presenting on Remitly's experience of investing in India's AI ecosystem at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Dr. Onur Bakiner, Professor of Political Science and Director of Technical Ethics Initiative, Seattle University addressing participants at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Participants at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Consul General Prakash Gupta providing an overview of India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



Participants signing up at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing



India AI Impact Summit Pre-summit briefing organized at Seattle University



Panelists addressing queries of participants in an interactive session at India AI Impact Summit pre-summit briefing

The keynote remarks were delivered by CEO of the popular remittance app REMITLY, Mr. Matt Oppenheimer, who shared Remitly's experience of investing in India's AI-driven future and highlighted how Remitly's Bengaluru office has benefited from reforms in Ease of Doing Business in India. In addition, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Technology Ethics Initiative at Seattle University Prof. Onur Bakiner addressed SU students and scholars on navigating challenges and seizing opportunities in the AI age. Delivering the inaugural address, Consul

General of India in Seattle provided an overall overview of the preparations for AI Impact Summit 2026 and profile of the high-level delegation expected to participate from the Greater Seattle area.

Today's briefing on the AI India Impact Summit 2026 was the second in a series of such events hosted in the Greater Seattle Area. It may be noted that CGI Seattle had earlier hosted an AI INDIA Impact Summit 2026: Pre Event Briefing Session for US Congressmen and Tech CEOs on 07 November 2025 at the Consulate premises wherein, U.S. Rep. Adam Smith and Michael Baumgartner had special briefing sessions from senior tech industry representatives from Microsoft, Salesforce and Anicca Data Science Solutions.

(Based on a Press Release issued by Soumith Raju, Consul, CGI Seattle)

Consulate General of India in Seattle Organizes World Hindi Day 2026

JANUARY 12, 2025
SEATTLE, (TIP)

On the occasion of World Hindi Day, the Consulate General of India, Seattle, organized a special "Kavi Sammelan" (Poetry Recital) on 10 January 2026 at the Multipurpose Hall of the Consulate premises in Seattle. The event was organized in collaboration with Mahila Kavya Manch (MKM), Seattle, with the objective of further strengthening awareness and appreciation of the Hindi language and India's rich cultural heritage in the Pacific Northwest region.

The programme commenced with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp by the Hon'ble Consul General Mr. Prakash Gupta and the Chief Guest, Hon'ble Mr. P. P. Chaudhary, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and



Felicitations of poets from Seattle Mahila Kavya Manch (MKM) at World Hindi Diwas celebrations on January 10, 2026 in Seattle.



Participating poets



Consul General of India in Seattle Prakash Gupta delivering his remarks at World Hindi Diwas celebrations



Members of Seattle Mahila Kavya Manch (MKM) at World Hindi Diwas celebrations



Young poets participating in the World Hindi Diwas celebrations. Chairperson of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on "One Nation, One Election" followed by a graceful rendition of Saraswati Vandana. Thereafter, eminent poets from the community enthusiastically participated in the Hindi poetry recitation and



Participants watching snippets from World Hindi Diwas celebrated by young kids at Ardmore Elementary School, Bellevue

enthralled the audience with their compositions on a wide range of themes. A total of fifteen poets recited their poems, covering subjects related to Hindi literature, society, culture, India-US relations, and contemporary inspirational themes.

On this occasion, a cultural exhibition was also organized at the Consulate premises, showcasing the rich art and handicrafts of Indian states under the One



Lighting of the ceremonial lamp at World Hindi Diwas celebrations, 10 January 2026, Seattle



Hon'ble Chairperson of Joint Parliamentary Committee - One Nation, One Election, Shri Prem Prakash Singh delivering his remarks at World Hindi Diwas celebrations



Members of Rajasthani community in Seattle felicitating Shri Prem Prakash Singh, Chairperson of Joint Parliamentary Committee - One Nation, One Election



Participants savoring flavors of Indian cuisine at World Hindi Diwas celebrations

District-One Product (ODOP) initiative. The programme witnessed the participation of a large number of Hindi enthusiasts from the Indian diaspora, local dignitaries, and members of the Indian-origin community.



Poets from Seattle Mahila Kavya Manch (MKM) at World Hindi Diwas celebrations

Principal and teachers from Ardmore Elementary School, Bellevue (Washington State) were also present at the event. It is noteworthy that the Bellevue School District has introduced a Hindi Heritage Language Program at Ardmore Elementary School, providing students with an opportunity to learn the Hindi language and Indian culture. This is the first elementary school in the State of Washington where such a Hindi language programme has been formally introduced, marking a significant initiative towards promoting linguistic diversity, cultural inclusion, and multilingual education in the region.



A Poet from Seattle Mahila Kavya Manch (MKM) being felicitated by Consul General of India in Seattle, Prakash Gupta.

In the concluding session, the Hon'ble Consul General shared his views on the global significance of the Hindi language and appreciated the valuable contributions of all participating poets. The poets were also felicitated by the Hon'ble Consul General. The Consulate General of India, Seattle, remains committed to promoting the Hindi language and strengthening cultural and linguistic ties with the Indian-American community.

(Based on a Press Release issued by Soumith Raju, Consul, CGI Seattle)

Justice Yashwant Varma's plea against parliamentary probe into cash row dismissed

The Supreme Court has dismissed a plea filed by Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma challenging the validity of a Parliamentary Committee constituted by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha to probe corruption charges against him.

Justice Varma had questioned the committee's constitution on the ground that the motion seeking his removal was rejected by the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

A bench comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and SC Sharma had reserved its verdict on the plea on January 8, 2026. The court has now dismissed the challenge, allowing the parliamentary committee to proceed.

Last week, the Supreme Court of India reserved judgment on Justice Varma's writ petition challenging the legality of the parliamentary committee constituted under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in August 2025 announced a three-member panel to probe allegations against Justice Yashwant Varma, from whose residence a large cash stash was recovered, as the move to impeach him gained pace.

The three-member panel includes Justice Aravind Kumar of the Supreme Court, Justice Maninder Mohan, the Chief Justice of the Madras High Court, and senior advocate BV Acharaya.

Last year, in March, stacks of cash, some over 1.5 feet, were found at Justice Varma's official residence in Delhi following a massive fire.

SC stays FIRs against ED officials, puts Mamata Banerjee on notice

NEW DELHI (TIP)

In a setback to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, the Supreme Court on Thursday, Jan 15, issued a notice to her, state DGP Rajeev Kumar and others on the Enforcement Directorate's petition seeking a CBI probe against them for allegedly obstructing the agency's raids at the I-PAC office and the premises of its director Pratik Jain in Kolkata.

Terming the alleged obstruction in the ED probe "very serious", a Bench of Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and Justice Vipul M Pancholi agreed to examine if a state's law-enforcing agencies could interfere with a central agency's probe into any serious offence.

The Bench stayed the FIRs lodged by the West Bengal Police against ED officials who raided Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) — a political consultancy firm — on January 8 in connection with an alleged coal pilferage scam. It also directed the state police to protect the CCTV footage of the raids.

Asking Mamata, Rajeev Kumar, Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Kumar Verma and South Kolkata Deputy Commissioner Priyabatra Roy to respond to the ED petition in two weeks, the top court posted the matter for hearing on February 3.

"We are of the prima facie opinion that the present petition has raised a serious issue relating to the investigation by the ED or other central agencies, and interference by state agencies...For furtherance of the rule of law in the country, and to allow each organ to function independently, it's necessary to examine the issue so that the offenders are not allowed to be protected under the



shield of the law enforcement agencies of a particular state," the Bench said.

"Larger questions are involved in the present manner, which if allowed to remain undecided, would further worsen the situation and there will be a situation of lawlessness prevailing in one state or the other, considering that different outfits are governing different places. True that any central agency does not have any power to interfere with the election work of any party, but if the central agency is bona fide investigating any serious offence, the question arises whether in the guise of taking shield of party activities, agencies can be restricted from carrying out power," it wondered.

The order came after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted on behalf of the ED that in the past also, Mamata interfered in the probe of central agencies. "This case reflects a very shocking pattern emerging. In the past

also, whenever the statutory authorities exercised their power of investigation, the Chief Minister marched there. Officers, including the DGP and the Commissioner of Police, are accomplices and they accompany her. The uniformed police officers sit on dharna with political leaders," Mehta told the Bench.

"Here, there was evidence that some incriminating material was lying on the premises of a company. The officers, exercising powers under Section 17 of Prevention of Money Laundering Act, went there. The CM, along with the DGP and other police officials, barged into the house and took away material, including the mobile phone of an ED official. It's an offence of theft," the Solicitor General alleged.

She went to the media as if she had done some great thing, Mehta said, adding, "If we turn a blind eye to it, this kind of thing will continue, which will not only encourage officials not to discharge their duty but will also demoralise the central forces; the state forces will feel they can go with the CM. Let an example be set and the state officers concerned be suspended..."

The Bench said it was disturbed by the commotion at the Calcutta High Court during the hearing in the ED raids case as the High Court had to adjourn the hearing due to unmanageable chaos in the courtroom.

On behalf of the Chief Minister and West Bengal Government officials, senior counsel Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Manu Singhvi questioned the maintainability of the ED petition and contended that the matter should be heard by the Calcutta High Court first.

India, EU nearing conclusion on trade pact; top leaders to visit New Delhi from Jan 25-27

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India is expected to conclude the much-anticipated trade deal with the European Union by the end of January, Trade Secretary Rajesh Agarwal said on Thursday, Jan 15. The conclusion of the India-EU trade deal comes amid continued delays in talks with Washington. On January 9, India and the EU held talks in Brussels on the proposed free trade agreement (FTA).

The deal, which has been under discussion for years, is expected to boost bilateral trade relations and deepen market access, reducing dependence on China and Russia. Bilateral trade between India and the bloc totalled \$140 billion in 2024, making the EU India's largest trading partner. Agarwal added that the two sides were "very close" to finalising the pact and were exploring



whether it would be viable to wrap it up before top EU leaders visit New Delhi later this month. The European Commission, negotiating on behalf of the bloc's 27 member states, expressed cautious optimism in remarks to EU envoys, Reuters reported, citing sources.

One of the major points of dispute between the bloc and New Delhi has been automobiles and steel. The EU wants India to sharply cut import tariffs on EU

cars, while India is concerned that its steel exports to the EU will be constrained by the EU's carbon border levy and safeguard measures that lower overall steel imports. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has notified that some sensitive agricultural items have been excluded from negotiations. Trade ministry officials said India will not open its agriculture or dairy sectors under any trade pact, citing farmers' interests. Challenges also remain over regulatory alignment and the protection of sensitive sectors, reports said.

On the India-US trade deal, Agarwal said talks are continuing and that an agreement would be reached when both sides are ready. Negotiations between New Delhi and Washington paused briefly towards the end of 2025 due to a breakdown in communication.

Can call anyone: AI crash probe body on summoning late captain's nephew

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) has rejected objections raised by the Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP) over its summons of Captain Varun Anand, nephew of the late Captain Sumeet Sabharwal, in the ongoing Air India Flight 171 crash investigation.

The FIP had strongly protested the January 9 notice, calling it "wholly unwarranted" and an attempt to harass an individual connected by family to the deceased pilot. The federation argued that the summons provided no clarity on its statutory basis, purpose, or the capacity in which Captain Anand was required to appear.

EC extends schedule for special revision of electoral rolls in 5 states, UTs till January 19

The Election Commission on Thursday, Jan 15, night extended the date for filing of claims and objections to the draft electoral rolls published after Special Intensive Revision (SIR) in five states and Union territories, including West Bengal, by four days.

The filing of claims and objections in Goa, Lakshadweep, Rajasthan, Puducherry and West Bengal were to end on Thursday but it has been now extended till January 19.

The EC has written to the Chief Electoral Officers of the four states and one union territory where the draft rolls were published on December 16 last year. Initially, time was given till January 15 for filing claims and objections to include or exclude names in rolls.

In the letter, Under Secretary Sandeep Kumar said the CEOs are directed to ensure wide publicity about the extension of filing claims and objections during the period.



India's exports brave US tariffs, global churn to log rise

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Defying global headwinds and hefty US tariffs, India's merchandise exports increased 1.9% to \$38.51 billion in December from \$37.8 billion a year earlier, and 2.44% to \$330.29 billion in the first nine months of fiscal 2026, which was primarily driven by double-digit export growth in key markets such as China, the US and the UAE, according to data released on Thursday, Jan 15.

"Despite global trade turmoil, merchandise exports in December have grown by 1.86% from \$37.8 billion to \$38.51 billion," commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal said on Thursday while releasing trade data for December and the nine-month period.

Crucially, shipments to the US rose nearly 10% year-on-year to \$65.88 billion in April-December 2025 from \$60.03 billion in the corresponding period last year, although December exports logged a marginal drop to \$6.88 billion from \$7.01 billion a year earlier and edged down from \$6.92 billion in November. "US exports have grown on-year in the first nine months of the (fiscal) year," Agrawal said, adding that "as of now" exports to the US remain in positive territory.

The resilience comes despite the Trump administration imposing a 50% additional tariff on Indian goods from August, with exemptions for electronics and pharmaceuticals helping sustain momentum. Overall exports — merchandise and services combined — grew 4.33% to \$634.26 billion in the nine-month period, with services exports estimated to have jumped 6.46% to \$303.97 billion from \$285.53 billion.

"One thing very clear with this trajectory, we are going to cross \$850 billion of exports in the current financial year," Agrawal said. India's exports in 2024-25 stood at a record \$824.9 billion.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) president SC Ralhan said the performance was "particularly encouraging given the volatility in global trade flows, and reflects the effectiveness of government initiatives aimed at boosting exports and focused support to MSME exporters."

"The performance assumes greater significance against the



backdrop of ongoing geo-political tensions, supply-chain realignments, inflationary pressures and rising protectionism across major economies," he added.

China emerges as bright spot

India's exports to China surged 37% to \$14.25 billion in April-December 2025 from \$10.42 billion in the same period of the previous year. "We are also doing very well in China, where the growth has been very good," Agrawal said.

The growth accelerated sharply after the US tariff action, with December exports to China jumping 67.3% to \$2.05 billion from \$1.22 billion a year earlier. Indian exporters of marine products, hit by US tariffs, diversified significantly to China and other markets, the commerce secretary said.

Merchandise imports from China also rose just over 13% year-on-year to \$95.95 billion in the first nine months of 2025-26.

India has also raised energy imports from the US, with purchases growing 13% to \$39.43 billion in the nine-month period. December imports rose 7.57% to \$3.75 billion. Electronic goods exports increased 16.78% to \$4.17 billion in December 2025 from \$3.57 billion a year earlier.

'Vote chori an anti-national act': Rahul Gandhi on erasable ink row

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday, Jan 16, attacked the Election Commission over the "erasable ink" row, saying that the trust in democracy has "collapsed".

Sharing a media report on the ink used in the Maharashtra civic polls allegedly being erasable, the leader of the opposition said that "vote chori" is an anti-national act.

"Election commission gaslighting citizens is how trust has collapsed in our democracy. Vote Chori is an anti-national act," Gandhi wrote on X.

The Maharashtra State Election Commission (SEC) on Thursday ordered a probe into complaints of erasable electoral ink being used during the civic polls and warned of action against those "creating confusion" after Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray flagged the issue.

Thackeray accused the state election commissioner Dinesh Waghmare of "openly siding" with the ruling Bharatiya



Janata Party (BJP)-led alliance and demanded his suspension.

Waghmare announced an inquiry into complaints about erasable electoral ink and said that claims that acetone or nail polish can remove it are false. He warned that anyone attempting to remove the ink or spread confusion among voters would face legal action.

The SEC clarification on the 'erasable ink' issue

Before ordering the inquiry, the Maharashtra SEC issued a clarification

stating that attempts to remove the indelible ink applied to voters' fingers, thereby creating confusion, are illegal. The poll body warned that if a person is found trying to vote again after removing the ink mark, appropriate legal action will be taken.

"Attempts to remove the indelible ink applied on voters' fingers at polling stations and thereby create confusion in the voting process are illegal. The State Election Commission has clarified that if any person is found trying to vote again after removing the ink mark, appropriate legal action will be taken against them," the SEC said in the statement.

"If anyone attempts to illegally remove the ink applied at the polling station, the concerned voter will not be allowed to vote again. Instructions in this regard have already been given to the polling staff. After a voter casts their vote, a record of it is made. Therefore, even if the ink mark is removed, the voter cannot vote again. To increase awareness, these instructions have once again been issued to all concerned," the statement added.

BJP simply doesn't understand Tamils: DMK

Union home minister Amit Shah on Thursday, Jan 15, deleted a social media post extending greetings for Thiruvalluvar Day instead of Pongal, after the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam pointed out the error.

Responding to Shah's tweet, Tamil Nadu's minister for industries, investment promotion and commerce, TRB Rajaa wrote, "When people ask me about the BJP and Tamil Nadu, I often point out that the fundamental issue is that the BJP simply does not understand Tamils and Tamil Nadu and it doesn't even take the effort to understand what we need and who we are!"

Pongal, the state's biggest festival, is on Thursday while Thiruvalluvar Day is on Friday, based on the solar calculation and the Tamil calendar, and not the English calendar dates, said Raja. "Tamil does not need ceremonial praise. It asks for knowledge and understanding. And Delhi should try to start with that," he said. He also wondered if a similar mistake occurred when Union minister of state L Murugan hosted PM Modi at Pongal celebrations in his Delhi residence on Wednesday.

India in history this Week

JANUARY 16 TO JANUARY 22

16 JANUARY



2009 On this day, Kalpana Chawla filled the space shuttle Columbia, spent 372 hours in space

1761 Pondicherry was annexed by the British from the French.

1769 Pondicherry was annexed by the British from the French.

1681 The grand coronation of Sambhaji, son of Kshatrapati Shivaji, took place at Raigad Fort in Maharashtra.

1938 Death of noted Bengali litterateur Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay.

17 JANUARY

2008 The Central Government approved a scheme of Rs 1800 crore for providing jobs to the disabled.

2009 Randhir Singh, the general secretary of the Indian Olympic Association, resigned from his post.

2010 The Supreme Court of India has given a proactive definition of the right to self-defense in the event of unlawful assault, saying that people who follow the law do not have to be cowardly. Its two-member bench set a 10-point directive on the right to self-defense, stating that a person cannot be criminalized under these circumstances, even if he had caused the attacker's death.

18 JANUARY



1996 Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister NT Rama Rao died on 18 January 1996.

1955 On this day in 1955, the famous Urdu writer and poet Sadat Hasan Manto said goodbye to this world.

1991 After 62 years of business, in 1991, today the Eastern airline was closed for economic reasons.

2003 Famous Hindi writer and poet Harivansh Rai Bachchan died in 2003.

1896 The first demonstration of the 'X-ray machine' was done in 1896.



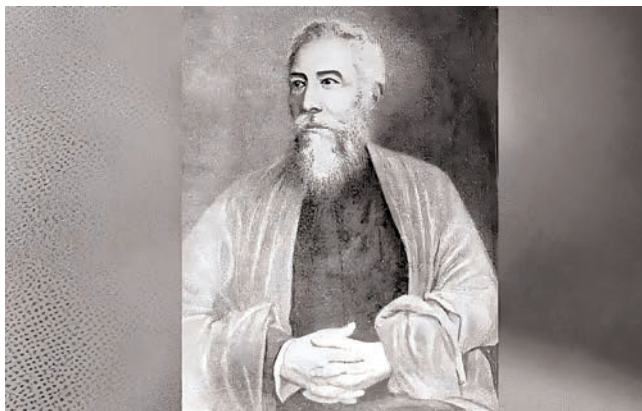
1930 In 1930 Rabindranath Tagore visited the Sabarmati Ashram.

1997 In 1997, Nafisa Joseph became Miss India.



1995 In 1995, the domain of Yahoo.com was created on this day.

19 JANUARY



1905 Devendranath Tagore Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore's father and Indian thinker, died.

1990 Rajneesh, popularly known as Osho, died in Pune.



1966 On this day, the Congress Party chose Indira Gandhi as its leader for the post of Prime Minister of India. Indira Gandhi was the only daughter of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.

20 JANUARY



Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the greatest activist of Pashtun independence and called Frontier Gandhi, passed away.

1817 Hindu college was established in Calcutta (now Kolkata).

1945 National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, who is considered the master mind of surgical strike, was born.

21 JANUARY

2008 India successfully launched an spy satellite of Israel and installed it in Polar Orbit.

1958 Copyright Act enacted.

1945 Renowned lawyer and freedom fighter Ras Bihari Bose died.

22 JANUARY

1965 Steel factory started in Durgapur, West Bengal.

1966 Mughal emperor Shah Jahan died.

1963 The National Library for the Blind was established in 1963 in Dehradun.

Embassy of India Celebrates World Hindi Day with Vibrant Community Participation in Romania and Moldova



Celebration of World Hindi Day at Indian Embassy

**JANUARY 13, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

The Embassy of India celebrated World Hindi Day on 10th January with active and enthusiastic participation from members of the Indian diaspora and friends of India, highlighting the global relevance of the Hindi language and India's rich cultural heritage. The programme commenced with the message of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi,

by the Indian diaspora in promoting and preserving the Hindi language across the world. He noted that the diaspora serves as an important bridge in spreading India's linguistic and cultural values globally. As part of the celebrations, participants took part enthusiastically in Sulekhan and poetry recitation sessions, showcasing the creativity, beauty, and emotional depth of the Hindi language. The performances reflected the richness of Hindi literature and its expressive power.



Ambassador interacted with Indian diaspora at the Open House held in Embassy

tradition, offering an immersive and enriching cultural experience. On the occasion, the Ambassador announced that the next film screening will feature "Dhurandhar", which will be showcased in cinema halls in both Romania and Moldova, further expanding the Embassy's cultural outreach initiatives.



Poetry recitation by the members of Indian Community and friends of India

underscoring the significance of Hindi as a global language and a powerful medium for cultural connection and people-to-people engagement.

On the occasion, Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra shared his thoughts on the importance of Hindi in daily life and emphasized the vital role played

The Embassy also hosted a special movie night featuring the screening of the film "Chhaava", which brought together members of the Indian community and friends of India for an engaging evening of Indian cinema and storytelling. The screening highlighted India's rich historical narratives and vibrant film



Ambassador sharing his thoughts on the importance of Hindi in daily life



Embassy hosted movie night - screening of the film "Chhaava"

In addition, the Embassy organized an Open House event, providing an open platform for members of the community to interact directly with Ambassador Mohapatra. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions, shared their views, and sought clarifications on a wide range of topics, further

CONTD ON PAGE 19

CONTD FROM PAGE 18



Cultural event "Rhythm India" was organized at USMF, Chisinau(Moldova)

strengthening dialogue, mutual understanding, and community engagement.

In addition, the Embassy of India in collaboration

members of the Indian diaspora and friends of India. The programme featured mesmerizing Indian dance performances by artists from the Sitara Dance Group

depth of Indian classical and folk-dance forms. Ambassador appreciated the artists for their valuable contribution to the propagation of Indian culture abroad. He congratulated the performers and distributed prizes in recognition of their artistic excellence and dedication.

As part of the celebrations to mark World Hindi Day, students enthusiastically participated in Sulekhan (Hindi calligraphy) activities, celebrating the beauty, elegance, and cultural richness of the Devanagari



Students of ASRM enthusiastically took part in Sulekhan (Hindi calligraphy) activity

with the Indo Moldova Business and Cultural Organization (IMBCO) and ASRM, organized a vibrant cultural event titled "Rhythm India" at USMF, Chisinau on 11 January, with enthusiastic participation from

and Varenya Kala Kshetra, beautifully showcasing India's rich cultural heritage, artistic diversity, and rhythmic traditions. The performances were warmly received by the audience and reflected the vibrancy and



Cultural performances presented during the celebrations of World Hindi Day at Chisinau



script. The event provided a wonderful expression of language, learning, and cultural harmony, highlighting Hindi's enduring appeal among younger generations.

On 12 January, the Embassy of India, in collaboration with IMBCO, also celebrated World Hindi Day in Chisinau. Members of the Indian diaspora and friends of India actively participated by reciting Hindi poetry, making the celebration a meaningful and engaging literary gathering. Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra commended the participants for their enthusiasm and commitment to promoting the Hindi language and presented prizes to encourage their continued engagement.

The cultural presentations and literary activities together made the celebrations colorful, memorable, and reflective of India's rich linguistic and cultural traditions, while further strengthening people-to-people ties between India and Moldova. During his visit, Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra also met with several important dignitaries in Moldova. A separate press release detailing these meetings will be issued.

The World Hindi Day celebrations reinforced the Embassy's commitment to promoting the Hindi language, fostering cultural exchange, and deepening people-to-people ties between India and Romania.

(Based on a Press Release issued by the Embassy of India in Bucharest)



Celebrations of World Hindi Day at Chisinau with participation of members of Indian diaspora and friends of India

Martin Luther King Jr.: The voice of nonviolence that changed America

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY IS A NATIONAL HOLIDAY, WHICH TAKES PLACE ON THE THIRD MONDAY OF JANUARY EACH YEAR, SERVES AS A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, WHO DIED ON APRIL 4, 1968, IN MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE, AFTER BEING ASSASSINATED BY A SNIPER'S BULLET. THIS YEAR, THE DAY WILL BE OBSERVED ON MONDAY, JANUARY 19

Martin Luther King Jr. Day (MLK Day) is a U.S. federal holiday observed on the third Monday in January, honoring the life and legacy of the iconic civil rights leader known for his advocacy of nonviolent resistance against racial segregation. Established as a federal holiday in 1986, it serves as a day for reflection, community service, and celebrating Dr. King's contributions to civil rights through peaceful protest, with many businesses, schools, and government offices closed.

Martin Luther King Jr., born Michael King Jr. on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, rose to become the most prominent voice of the American civil rights movement during the mid-20th century. A Baptist minister and tireless social reformer, King provided moral leadership to a nationwide struggle that sought to dismantle racial segregation and discrimination through nonviolent means. From the mid-1950s until his assassination in 1968, King stood at the forefront of efforts that transformed the legal and social landscape of the United States. His strategic vision and moral authority played a decisive role in ending legally sanctioned segregation across the South and beyond. In recognition of his commitment to peace and justice, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.

Family Background and Early Influences

King was born into a financially stable, educated African American family deeply embedded in the traditions of the Southern Black church. His father and maternal grandfather were both Baptist ministers, and his father served as the pastor of Atlanta's influential Ebenezer Baptist Church. The King family lived on Auburn Avenue, widely known as "Sweet Auburn," a flourishing centre of Black economic, cultural and religious life that symbolized African American resilience and achievement in the era before civil rights reform.

Although King grew up in a nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment, he was not shielded from the realities of racial discrimination. At the age of six, he experienced a formative moment when a white childhood friend informed him that their friendship could no longer continue because segregated schooling forbade it. This early encounter with racism left a deep impression. A more personal tragedy followed in 1941 when King's beloved maternal grandmother died



King addresses a crowd during the March on Washington on August 28, 1963. It was here, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, that he delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech. "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.'" CNP/Getty Images

suddenly of a heart attack. The loss deeply unsettled the young King, who struggled emotionally in its aftermath.

Education, Awakening and Commitment to Service

King's academic promise was evident early. At just 15 years old, he enrolled at Morehouse College under a special wartime admissions programme designed to identify gifted students. Initially uncertain about his future, King considered careers in medicine or law before gradually embracing the ministry—a path strongly encouraged by his father.

A central influence during his college years was Benjamin E. Mays, the president of Morehouse and a leading proponent of the Social Gospel. Mays argued that Christianity must actively confront injustice rather than focus solely on spiritual salvation. His powerful sermons and intellectual rigor deeply shaped King's understanding of religion as a tool for social transformation. King graduated from Morehouse in 1948.

He continued his theological education at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, where he excelled academically and emerged as a gifted orator. During this period, King encountered the philosophy of Mahatma

King pats a youngster on the back as he pickets in St. Augustine on June 10, 1964. AP



Gandhi, whose principles of nonviolent resistance profoundly influenced his developing worldview. King earned his Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1951 and later pursued doctoral studies at Boston University, where he completed his PhD in 1955 with a dissertation examining differing theological conceptions of God.

Marriage and Early Ministry

While studying in Boston, King met Coretta Scott, a talented music student from Alabama. The two married in 1953 and would go on to have four children. Shortly thereafter, King accepted the position of pastor at the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama—a role that would soon propel him into national prominence.

From Page 20

The Montgomery Bus Boycott

King had served as pastor in Montgomery for just over a year when the civil rights movement entered a decisive phase. On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger on a city bus. In response, local activists formed the Montgomery Improvement Association and selected King as its president.

Though relatively new to the city, King was respected for his education, composure and moral authority. In his first address to the association, he made clear that continued patience in the face of injustice was no longer acceptable. His words introduced the nation to a powerful new leader whose rhetoric combined moral clarity with disciplined resolve.

Despite facing intimidation, arrests and the bombing of his home, King maintained his commitment to nonviolence. After more than a year of sustained protest, the boycott succeeded, and Montgomery's buses were officially desegregated.

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference

Following the Montgomery victory, King recognized the need for a broader organizational structure to coordinate civil rights efforts across the South. He helped establish the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), which provided both a strategic base and a national platform for the movement.

King travelled extensively, addressing audiences across the United States and abroad. A pivotal moment came in 1959, when he visited India and met with followers of Gandhi. These interactions reinforced his belief that nonviolent resistance was the most powerful weapon available to oppressed communities. King also drew inspiration from anti-colonial movements in Africa, viewing them as part of a global struggle for human dignity.

Atlanta, Arrests and Rising National Influence

In 1960, King returned to Atlanta to serve alongside his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church while dedicating most of his energy to the civil rights movement. He supported student-led sit-ins protesting segregation and was arrested during demonstrations at an Atlanta department store. Although charges were later dropped, King was controversially sentenced to a Georgia prison for an alleged probation violation, sparking national outrage.

The episode gained political significance when presidential candidate John F. Kennedy intervened, a move widely credited with helping him secure crucial Black voter support in the 1960 election.

Birmingham, the March on Washington and Landmark Legislation

King's leadership reached its height between 1960 and 1965. The Birmingham campaign of 1963 became a defining chapter when images of peaceful protesters—many of them children—being attacked by police dogs and fire hoses

King speaks near the Reflecting Pool in Washington as part of the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom in May 1957. It was the first time King addressed a national audience, and his "Give Us the Ballot" speech called for equal voting rights. Hulton Archive/Getty Images



shocked the world. While imprisoned, King wrote his seminal "Letter from Birmingham Jail," articulating a powerful moral argument for direct action and rejecting calls for gradual reform.

Later that year, King helped organize the historic March on Washington, where more than 200,000 people gathered peacefully. Standing before the Lincoln Memorial, King delivered his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech, a defining moment in American history.

Public pressure generated by these events led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and later the Voting Rights Act of 1965, both of which transformed American law and society.

Final Years, Opposition and Broader Vision

Despite legislative successes, King faced growing criticism. Younger activists questioned his emphasis on nonviolence, while urban unrest highlighted unresolved economic and social inequalities. King expanded his focus to include housing discrimination, poverty and opposition to the Vietnam War—stances that alienated political allies and divided public opinion.

In his final years, King sought to build a multiracial coalition of the poor, believing economic justice to be inseparable from racial equality. The strain of constant conflict and mounting threats weighed heavily on him, though his commitment never wavered.

Assassination and Aftermath

In April 1968, King travelled to Memphis to support striking sanitation workers. On April 3, he delivered a speech that many later viewed as prophetic. The following evening, while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, King was assassinated.

His death sparked unrest in more than 100 American cities. James Earl Ray later pleaded guilty to the crime and was sentenced to 99 years in prison.

Legacy

US President Lyndon B. Johnson talks with King and other civil rights leaders at the White House in January 1964. On July 2, 1964, Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law. Yoichi Okamoto/LBJ Presidential Library.



King and his wife lead the final stretch of a march from Selma, Alabama, to the state capital of Montgomery on March 25, 1965. About 25,000 people had marched to protest discriminatory practices, such as poll taxes and literacy tests, that prevented many black people from voting in the South. It was the last of three marches that month. The first ended in clashes with police and is now known as "Bloody Sunday." AP



Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy endures as a testament to the power of moral leadership and nonviolent resistance. His life reshaped the United States and inspired global movements for

justice, equality and human rights. Though he did not live to see the full realization of his dream, his vision continues to guide struggles for freedom around the world.

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY WITH THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE OF NJ EXPLORE MUSIC INSPIRED BY ‘ROMEO AND JULIET’

BY MABEL PAIS

The New Jersey Symphony will perform four concerts celebrating the timeless tale of star-crossed lovers in a unique pairing of music from Russian masters. The program opens with Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s ‘Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture,’ then actors from The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey (STNJ) join the stage for selections from Sergei Prokofiev’s ‘Romeo and Juliet.’

On the podium will be Music Director Xian Zhang, now in her 10th season with New Jersey Symphony, who shares, “I am thrilled to lead this program which showcases The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, adding an exciting new dimension to the experience of this dramatic score. The New Jersey Symphony greatly values its work with partner organizations throughout the state, which creates a powerful connection to art that is unique to New Jersey.”

Artistic Director of STNJ Brian B. Crowe adds, “Simultaneously epic and profoundly intimate, the tale of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ has moved audiences and inspired artists for centuries. We are so proud to partner with the New Jersey Symphony in this imaginative exploration of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ uniting the power of Shakespeare’s beautiful language with the swelling grandeur of Prokofiev’s stunning music.”

PROGRAM & SCHEDULE

Romeo & Juliet

Featuring The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey
Xian Zhang conductor

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey | Brian B. Crowe, director

Isaac Hickox-Young Romeo

Billie Wyatt Juliet

Jason Flamos lighting designer

New Jersey Symphony

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture

Sergei Prokofiev Selections from Romeo and Juliet, Suites Nos. 1, 2, and 3

Newark - Thursday, Jan 29, 2026, 1:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Newark - Friday, Jan 30, 2026, 7:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

Red Bank - Saturday, Jan 31, 2026, 7:30 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

Newark - Sunday, Feb 1, 2026, 2 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

The Thursday, January 29 concert at NJPAC in Newark will be a Relaxed Performance (www.njsymphony.org/visit/accessibility-1/what-is-a-relaxed-performance), designed to accommodate the differing needs of patrons of all abilities, including individuals with autism, sensory sensitivities, or cognitive and physical differences. This concert supports New Jersey Symphony’s mission to make orchestral music accessible to all by removing barriers often found in traditional concert settings.

Event page -

<https://njsymphony.org/events/detail/romeo-and-juliet>

TICKETS

Tickets are available at njsymphony.org.

XIAN ZHANG

2025-26 marks the GRAMMY and Emmy Award-winning conductor Xian Zhang’s 10th season as Music Director of New Jersey Symphony, and her inaugural season as the Music Director of Seattle Symphony with whom she has been a long-term collaborator since her debut in 2008. Zhang has also been appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the NCPA Orchestra in Beijing, beginning this season. Following her tenure as Music Director of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano between 2009–16, she continues as their Conductor Emeritus.

With New Jersey Symphony, Zhang has commissioned composers such as Wynton Marsalis, Jessie Montgomery, Qigang Chen, Chen Yi, Steven Mackey, Thomas Adès, Daniel Bernard Roumain,



Romeo & Juliet with NJ Symphony.

Credit: njsymphony.org.

Christopher Rouse, Vivian Li, Gary Morgan, Christian McBride, Paquito D’Rivera, and Allison Loggins-Hull. She is also responsible for introducing its annual Lunar New Year celebration. Under her artistic leadership, New Jersey Symphony won two awards at the mid-Atlantic Emmy Awards in 2022 for their concert films, including ‘EMERGE’ which was conducted by Xian Zhang, directed by Yuri Alves, and co-produced with DreamPlay Films.

As a guest conductor, Zhang appears regularly with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestra. Her Deutsche Grammophon recording with the latter (‘Letters for The Future’ with Time for Three, released 2022) won GRAMMY awards for Best Contemporary Classical Composition (Kevin Puts’ ‘Contact’) and Best Classical Instrumental Solo.

2025-26 highlights include returns to Philadelphia Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, St. Louis Symphony, and National Arts Centre Ottawa. In Europe, she returns to Netherlands Radio Philharmonic with a performance at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and makes her debut at Finnish National Opera conducting Tosca. This follows her huge success at The Metropolitan Opera in New York, where she recently conducted Madama Butterfly and Tosca to great acclaim.

Zhang previously served as Principal Guest Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra and BBC National Orchestra & Chorus of Wales, the first female conductor to hold a titled role with a BBC orchestra. In 2002, she won first prize in the Maazel-Vilar Conductor’s Competition. She was appointed New York Philharmonic’s Assistant Conductor in 2002, subsequently becoming their Associate Conductor and the first holder of the Arturo Toscanini Chair. Learn more at www.xianzhang.com.

BRIAN B. CROWE

In his 30th season with The Shakespeare Theatre, Artistic Director Brian B. Crowe’s directing credits include Main Stage performances of ‘Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein,’ ‘The Importance of Being Earnest,’ ‘A Midwinter Night’s Dream,’ ‘The Metromaniacs,’ Charles Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol’ (2019), ‘Titus Andronicus,’ ‘The Bungler,’ ‘Coriolanus,’ ‘Pericles’ (2013), ‘Oliver Twist,’ ‘Timon of Athens,’ ‘The School for Wives,’ ‘The Winter’s Tale’ (2008), ‘Henry VI: Blood & Roses,’ ‘Julius Caesar,’ ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ (2004), ‘The Tempest’ (2002), and ‘The Comedy of Errors’ (2001). On the Outdoor Stage, Mr. Crowe directed ‘The Comedy of Errors’ (2021), ‘William Shakespeare’s Long Lost First Play,’ ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’ (2015), ‘The Learned Ladies,’ ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ (2007), and ‘The Taming of the Shrew’ (2006). He has directed dozens of productions for the Theatre’s education department. Other directing credits include Rutgers University, 12 Miles West, The Human Race Theatre Company, Dayton Playhouse, and the Act-Up Theatre Festival. He received BFA degrees in Directing and Acting from Wright State University and served on the Executive Committee of

The Shakespeare Theatre Association.

ISAAC HICKOX-YOUNG

Isaac Hickox-Young is in his eighth season with The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. Company credits include ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ ‘The Book of Will,’ ‘A Midwinter Night’s Dream,’ ‘The Rose Tattoo,’ ‘The Caretaker,’ ‘A Child’s Christmas in Wales,’ ‘The Comedy of Errors,’ ‘SNUG,’ ‘The Rainmaker,’ and ‘Charley’s Aunt.’ For the company’s educational touring program, Shakespeare LIVE!, his credits include productions of ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream,’ and ‘Julius Caesar.’ Regional credits include Murder on the ‘Orient Express’ (Fireside Theatre); ‘The Wickhams: Christmas at Pemberley’ (Shaker Bridge Theatre); ‘Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story’ (The Argyle Theatre); ‘Hamlet,’ ‘Twelfth Night,’ and ‘Peter and the Starcatcher’ (Illinois Shakespeare Festival); ‘Romeo and Juliet’ (Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival); and ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ (Merry War Theatre Group). He is a proud graduate of the Acting Program at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. He is a member of the Actor’s Equity Association.

BILLIE WYATT

Billie Wyatt is in her seventh season with The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. Her company credits include ‘Romeo and Juliet,’ ‘Jane Austen’s Sense and Sensibility,’ ‘As You Like It,’ ‘A Midwinter Night’s Dream,’ ‘The Rose Tattoo,’ ‘Twelfth Night,’ ‘Florence and Mojo,’ ‘The Metromaniacs,’ ‘A Child’s Christmas in Wales,’ ‘The Comedy of Errors,’ ‘SNUG,’ ‘Ken Ludwig’s The Three Musketeers,’ Charles Dickens’ ‘A Christmas Carol,’ and multiple productions for Shakespeare LIVE!, the theatre’s touring educational program. Her Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival credits include ‘A Raisin in the Sun,’ ‘The Tempest,’ and ‘Sense and Sensibility.’ Additional appearances include ‘Camille and Flyin’ West’ (Quintessence Theatre Group); ‘Julius Caesar’ (Hamlet Isn’t Dead); and ‘All’s Well That Ends Well’ (Oxford Shakespeare Workshop). He is a member of the Actor’s Equity Association.

THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE OF NEW JERSEY

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is one of the leading Shakespeare theatres in the nation, serving approximately 75,000 adults and children annually. It is New Jersey’s largest professional theatre company dedicated to Shakespeare’s canon and other classic masterworks. Through its productions and education programs, the company strives to illuminate the universal and lasting relevance of the classics for contemporary audiences.

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

New Jersey Symphony is a GRAMMY and Emmy Award-winning orchestra. Under the direction of Music Director Xian Zhang, the Symphony performs more than 55 mainstage concerts across the state at venues in Newark, Princeton, New Brunswick, Red Bank, and Morristown, as well as at schools and public spaces statewide.

Programming at the Symphony reflects an unwavering commitment to diverse communities throughout the state, while providing students unparalleled opportunities to achieve musical excellence through its Youth Orchestra and other education programs.

In 2024, the Symphony announced it would continue to deliver its statewide activities from a new, permanent office, rehearsal, and concert space in Jersey City, set to open in 2027. For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit njsymphony.org.

CONNECT WITH NJ SYMPHONY

Follow NJ Symphony on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, and YouTube

Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Spirituality, Social Issues, Education, Business, Health and Wellness, and Cuisine.

CELEBRATE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA'S 80TH ANNIVERSARY WITH VIOLIN VIRTUOSO RAY CHEN



Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with Ray Chen in inset.

-Credit: njpac.org.

BY MABEL PAIS

The Washington Post raves: “Ray Chen can do pretty much anything he wants on the violin.”

THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (RPO) celebrates its 80th anniversary returning to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) on Sunday, January 25 at 3 PM.

Virtuoso dynamo RAY CHEN is the soloist in Tchaikovsky's blazing Violin Concerto. Under the baton of the brilliant conductor Vasily Petrenko, hear this legendary ensemble also perform the bracing Second Symphony of Sibelius.

“The flourishing partnership between Vasily Petrenko and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is vital in both senses of the word. Together they are making indispensable music in performances that are invariably alive, deeply considered and anything but routine...a shattering performance of volcanic power.” - Bachtrack

“Vasily Petrenko leads an orchestra who play with palpable hunger for him.” The Times, May 2025

Under the baton of the brilliant Vasily Petrenko, hear the UK's most in-demand orchestra perform Nielsen's 'Helios' Overture, Sibelius's Symphony No. 2, and Tchaikovsky's blazing Violin Concerto featuring guest soloist Ray Chen. The Washington Post raves: “Ray Chen can do pretty much anything he wants on the violin.”

PROGRAM

Helios Overture, Op.17
Carl Nielsen
Violin Concerto in D major, Op.35
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Symphony No.2 in D major, Op.43
Jean Sibelius
Vasily Petrenko, Conductor
Ray Chen, Violin
Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
PRE-SHOW TALK - 2 PM

Join the team for the Classical Overtures, held an hour prior to the classical concert. This interactive presentation is hosted by Maestro George Marriner Maull of New Jersey's Discovery Orchestra and is free to ticket holders.

THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA (RPO)

As well as a busy schedule of national and international performances, the Orchestra enjoys an annual season of concerts in London's Royal Albert Hall (where the RPO is Associate Orchestra), the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall and Cadogan Hall, where it recently celebrated its 20th Season as Resident Orchestra. The RPO was the first UK

orchestra to launch its own record label achieving well over 50 million streams of its recorded music each year. The RPO is recognized as one of the world's most open-minded, forward-thinking and accessible symphony orchestras. Learn more at <https://rpo.co.uk>.

Patron: HM King Charles III
President: Aline Foriel-Destezet
Music Director: Vasily Petrenko
Artist Laureate: Sir John Rutter CBE
Associate Conductor: Emilia Hoving
Composer-in-Association: Joe Hisaishi

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO), with Music Director Vasily Petrenko, is on a mission to bring the thrill of live orchestral music to the widest possible audience. The RPO's musicians believe that music can – and should – be a part of everyone's life, and they aim to deliver on that belief through every note. Based in London and performing around 200 concerts per year worldwide, the RPO brings the same energy, commitment and excellence to everything it plays, be that the great symphonic repertoire, collaborations with pop stars, or TV, video game and movie soundtracks. Proud of its rich heritage yet always evolving, the RPO is regarded as the world's most versatile symphony orchestra, reaching a live and online audience of more than 70 million people each year.

Innovation is in the RPO's genes. Sir Thomas Beecham, who founded the RPO in 1946, was a force of musical nature: an entrepreneur, a wit and a conductor of great integrity, and he believed that great music-making belonged to everyone and that Britain needed an orchestra that was as adaptable as it was brilliant. This vision has remained integral to the RPO's approach. The RPO was one of the first orchestras to set up a community and education programme, RPO Resound, and the first orchestra to create its own record label, as well as the first to travel to America post-COVID-19.

Throughout its history, the RPO has performed with the world's most inspiring musicians, including André Previn, Yehudi Menuhin, Yuri Temirkanov and Vladimir Ashkenazy, as well as icons such as Kylie Minogue, Shirley Bassey, Deep Purple, Def Leppard and Rod Stewart. And not just musicians, either. From British movie classics such as 'The Red Shoes' and 'The Bridge on the River Kwai' to the anthem for the UEFA Champions League, the RPO has been part of the soundtrack to millions of lives, sometimes without people knowing it. The Orchestra has continued to embrace advances in digital technology and attracts a growing global audience for its streamed performances, artist interviews, 'behind-the-scenes' insights and other digital output. Each year, the RPO's recorded music is streamed over 50 million times, has 17 million views on YouTube, and the Orchestra welcomes around 200,000 audience

members to its live performances.

But live performance has always been at the heart of what the RPO does, and through its thriving artistic partnership with Vasily Petrenko, the RPO has reaffirmed its status as one of the world's most respected and in-demand orchestras. In London, that means flagship concert series at Cadogan Hall (where the RPO's residency is 21 years young this season), the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, and the iconic Royal Albert Hall, where the RPO is proud to be an Associate Orchestra. The Orchestra is also thrilled to be resident in four areas of the UK, performing at The Hawth in Crawley, Hull City Hall, Northampton's Royal & Derngate and The Hexagon in Reading.

Recent concert highlights have included performances of all three of Mahler's epic choral symphonies at the Royal Albert Hall, appearances at the BBC Proms and Edinburgh International Festival, and concerts within leading European festivals, such as the George Enescu, Lucerne, Merano and Grafenegg festivals. Artistic partners have included Joe Hisaishi (RPO Composer-in-Association), Anne-Sophie Mutter, Yunchan Lim, Julia Fischer, Eric Lu, Maxim Vengerov, Roderick Williams OBE and the RPO's 2024–25 Cadogan Hall Artist-in-Residence Johan Dalene, among many others. During the 2025–26 Season, the Orchestra looks forward to welcoming Ray Chen, Midori, Benjamin Grosvenor, Boris Giltburg, Artist Laureate Sir John Rutter, Associate Conductor Emilia Hoving and Cadogan Hall Conductor-in-Residence Kevin John Edusei. And around the world, the RPO will be flying the flag for the best of British music-making, with tours to Japan and South Korea, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and the USA.

The RPO remains true to its pioneering, accessible roots. Now in its fourth decade, the RPO Resound community and education programme continues to thrive as one of the UK's – and the world's – most innovative and respected initiatives of its kind. And in 2025, the RPO moved its headquarters to Wembley Park in the London Borough of Brent – the realisation of a long-held ambition to become part of the everyday life of a diverse community and audience that the Orchestra is seeking to serve.

Passionate, versatile and uncompromising in its pursuit of musical excellence, and with the patronage of His Majesty King Charles III and the artistic leadership of Vasily Petrenko, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra continues to build on an enviable heritage to scale new heights. The Orchestra looks to the future with a determination to explore, to share and to reaffirm its reputation as an orchestra with a difference: open-minded, forward-thinking and accessible to all. Sir Thomas Beecham would have approved.

Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Spirituality, Social Issues, Education, Business, Health and Wellness, and Cuisine.

THE CULTURE TREE INVITES YOU TO LEARN HOW TO LAUNCH YOUR FOOD BUSINESS

BY MABEL PAIS

Who is interested in launching a food business — whether a restaurant, packaged product, catering concept, or spirits brand?

Join the Culture Tree team on January 20, 2026 for an in-depth event designed for aspiring founders and early-stage entrepreneurs ready to take the next step.

This session brings together industry professionals who will walk you through the essentials of building a sustainable and successful food venture.

TOPICS

- Developing a launch plan that sets you up for long-term success
- Understanding P&L fundamentals and financial viability
- Legal structures and protections you need before you open your doors
- Regulatory requirements for restaurants, consumer packaged goods, and alcohol brands
- Branding, marketing, and positioning in a competitive marketplace

- Real-world lessons from entrepreneurs who have launched and scaled food businesses
- Role Social Media can play in marketing and launching

FEATURED EXPERTS

Mona Panjwani, Restaurateur One40 Rooftop and Lokal

Chitra Agrawal, Founder Brooklyn Delhi

Mehak Abrol, Founder Meximodo Tequila

Kartik Das, Founder Doosra

Tehmina Haider, Partner, L Catterton

Shaunak Kulkarni, The Vada Pav Project

Anu Sehgal, Moderator

Whether you're dreaming of a restaurant, exploring packaged foods, or developing a new beverage or spirits idea, this event will give you the clarity, tools, and insider guidance to move forward with confidence.

SCHEDULE

WHAT: LAUNCHING A FOOD BUSINESS

WHEN: January 20, 2026, 6 - 8:30 PM

WHERE: 140 Washington Street New York, NY 10006

TICKETS

Purchase tickets @ <https://www.handstamp.com/theculturetree>

THE CULTURE TREE

The Culture Tree promotes cultural literacy about South Asia using languages, performing arts, literature, food and art.

Its goal is to create empathy, respect and understanding to children and adults towards all different cultures and further inclusivity, while still helping address questions about Identity with heritage cultures.

Anu Sehgal is the Founder and President of The Culture Tree. She lives in New York with her family. She is a marketer by profession. She holds an MBA from Yale University and has worked in the corporate sector for almost 15 years. She has worked with NYU's bilingual STARTALK program to



Food Business Workshop.

Credit: theculturetree.com

develop the program and curriculum at The Culture Tree. Anu grew up in India and is a native Hindi speaker. She is also a children's book author. Learn more at theculturetree.com.

EVA'S VILLAGE IN PATERSON, N.J. PROVIDES FOOD, HOUSING AND SUPPORT FOR THOSE IN NEED

BY MABEL PAIS

"When you take someone's hand, you should never let go of it until they can stand on their own two feet."

Msgr. Vincent Puma

EVA'S VILLAGE 'VISIONS OF HOPE,' last November, honored BART G. MONGELLI for his leadership, generosity and commitment to those in need. Eva's Village is a cornerstone nonprofit in Passaic County, NJ. Emmy Award-winning journalist Lori Stokes was emcee for the organization's annual Gala, held at The Grove in Cedar Grove, New Jersey (6:00-10:00 p.m.).

MOTTO

Eva's Village provides meals to the community, offers housing, and assists individuals with addiction issues. Their motto is to treat everyone who enters their doors with dignity and respect, regardless of their challenges.

This annual celebration brings together hundreds of community leaders, philanthropists, and advocates united in their commitment to help those who are hungry, homeless, or struggling with substance use and mental health challenges. Proceeds from the evening directly sustain Eva's Village's comprehensive programs, which provide meals, shelter, housing, recovery services, and pathways to independence for thousands of individuals and families every year.

LORI STOKES

Eight-time Emmy Award-winning journalist Lori Stokes is well known to Tri-State viewers from her years anchoring FOX 5's evening newscasts



Eva's Village food recipients

and 'Good Day New York,' as well as 17 years with WABC's 'Eyewitness News This Morning.' Stokes has been a trusted voice in broadcast journalism for more than four decades. She earned a Peabody Award for her coverage of the September 11th attacks and was recently recognized by the New York City Mayor's Office to Combat Domestic Violence for her lifetime of civic engagement. Since retiring in 2022, she has continued her public service as a board member of the Cleveland Clinic and the International Spy Museum.

BART G. MONGELLI

This year's Gala honors Bart G. Mongelli, Partner at Mandelbaum Barrett PC, whose distinguished legal career and decades of community leadership have made a lasting impact across New Jersey. A trusted advisor to both businesses and nonprofits, Bart embodies the spirit of service and compassion that defines Eva's Village.



Eva's Village permanent affordable housing. -Credit: evasvillage.org.

JIM WALSH

The event will also recognize Jim Walsh, a former Eva's Village client and now Director of Community Engagement and Social Worker at Oasis – A Haven for Women and Children, whose journey of recovery and resilience is a powerful testament to the life-changing impact of Eva's Village. Finally, the Eva's Village community will pay tribute to Melvin G. Ross, whose courage, faith, and compassion continue to inspire all who knew him, reminding us that with community and hope, transformation is always possible.

"Lori Stokes has spent her career amplifying stories that inspire, and Bart Mongelli has spent his life leading with empathy and service," said Howard Haughton, CEO of Eva's Village. "Together, they reflect the very best of what community means — standing with others to create lasting change."

Watch the video from Howard Haughton and others - <https://youtu.be/CIOFVAE1fOs>

EVA'S VILLAGE

Since 1982, Eva's Village has provided essential support and life-changing resources to individuals facing hunger, homelessness, substance use disorders, and mental health challenges. From its beginnings as a humble soup kitchen, Eva's Village has grown into one of New Jersey's largest and most comprehensive anti-poverty organizations. Through integrated care, Eva's Village provides food, shelter, substance use and mental health treatment, and workforce development opportunities. Located in the heart of downtown Paterson, NJ, Eva's holistic social services and behavioral health programs empower individuals to lead healthy, stable, and independent lives. Visit www.EvasVillage.org to learn more.

Mabel Pais writes on The Arts and Entertainment, Spirituality, Social Issues, Education, Business, Health and Wellness, and Cuisine.



Who is Nora Fatehi's rumored boyfriend Achraf Hakimi?

In the glitzy and glamorous world of Bollywood, celebrities are always under the public eye. Every move around them is diligently scrutinised and turns into a whirlwind of controversy in no time. One such case happened recently with Bollywood dancer-actor Nora Fatehi, who found herself at the center of speculation surrounding her relationship status after being linked to Moroccan football star Achraf Hakimi. While neither has confirmed the rumours, online chatter around their romantic relationship has been doing the rounds for some time now.

Rumors of the two dating first started when Nora Fatehi travelled to Morocco to watch the national football team play during the ongoing African Cup of Nations. Soon after her visit, fans and social media users quickly began connecting the dots after Reddit users noticed that Achraf Hakimi had liked one of Nora's Instagram posts from the match. This single interaction was enough to start theories of a possible romantic connection.

Adding to the intrigue, it resurfaced that Nora had previously admitted in an interview that Hakimi was her favourite footballer, further fueling the speculation.

Speaking of Achraf Hakimi's personal life. He was previously married to Spanish actress Hiba Abouk from 2020 to 2023. The couple also has two children together. During their separation, Abouk was accused of seeking half of Hakimi's assets and fortune. However, these claims were later turned out to be fake news.

The divorce came at a turbulent time in Hakimi's life, as he was simultaneously dealing with serious legal allegations.

In 2023, Hakimi was accused of rape in Paris. The footballer has strongly denied the allegations, with the investigation still ongoing. Hakimi also claimed that the accusations were made to blackmail him and were an extortion attempt.

Speaking about the darker side of fame, Hakimi was quoted as saying last year, "We're exposed to a lot of things; we're exposed to things like girls approaching us. Blackmail... I think there are a lot of people in the world of football who take advantage of us. And if you don't have people around you, these things happen to you."

Akshaye Khanna to return in Ranveer Singh's Dhurandhar 2? Actor set for brief shoot: Report

Bollywood actor Akshaye Khanna is riding high on success after his recent release, Dhurandhar. His portrayal of Rehman Dakait struck a chord with audiences, with many viewers even believing that he overshadowed the film's protagonist, Ranveer Singh. Ever since, fans have been eager to know whether Akshaye will return in the sequel, and if reports are to be believed, the actor is indeed set to be a part of it.

According to a report in Filmfare, the makers of Dhurandhar 2 already have the sequel in place and are currently fine-tuning it, with Akshaye set to return. Sources confirmed to the publication that Akshaye Khanna will be back on set for a short one-week shoot, aimed at expanding his character's backstory and adding more layers to his role in the next chapter of the franchise.

In Dhurandhar, Akshaye Khanna plays Pakistani gangster Rehman Dakait. His brief, impromptu dance to Flipperachi's Fa9La in the film went viral on social media, with fans and content creators enthusiastically recreating the moment. Several clips featuring Akshaye's performance also flooded the internet, earning him renewed popularity and widespread appreciation. Despite all the attention, the actor has remained unfazed by the spotlight. Although his character is killed by Ranveer Singh's Hamza in the first part, fans are still hoping to see Akshaye make an appearance in the sequel.

The spy action thriller, directed by Aditya Dhar, also stars R Madhavan, Sanjay Dutt and Arjun Rampal in lead roles, along with Sara Arjun and Rakesh Bedi in key parts. The film emerged as the fourth highest-grossing Indian film worldwide, collecting Rs 1,296 crore and surpassing blockbusters such as SS Rajamouli's RRR (Rs 1,230 crore), KGF: Chapter 2 (Rs 1,215 crore), Pathaan (Rs 1,050 crore) and



Jawan (Rs 1,100 crore).

The sequel will delve into the backstory of Ranveer Singh's character and explore the aftermath of Rehman Dakait's killing, as Hamza takes control of Lyari. The film's end-credit scene also hinted at a brutal face-off between Ranveer Singh and Arjun Rampal in Dhurandhar 2. The sequel is scheduled to release in theatres on March 19 and will clash with Yash's Toxic: A Fairytale for Grown-Ups, which also stars Nayanthara, Kiara Advani, Tara Sutaria and Huma Qureshi.

Kriti gets emotional after sister's wedding to Stebin Ben: 'House feels empty without you'

After wrapping up the wedding festivities of her younger sister Nupur Sanon and singer Stebin Ben, Kriti Sanon is finding herself overwhelmed with emotion. The actor has been reminiscing about the joyful moments from the festivities, admitting that the house now feels empty without Nupur's presence.

Amid the bittersweet feelings, Kriti said her heart is full knowing that her "little one" has stepped into the most beautiful chapter of her life with the best possible life partner.

On Thursday, Jan 14, Kriti took to Instagram to share a glimpse of the wedding celebrations along with an emotional note. She wrote about how the house now feels empty without her sister Nupur's laughter and warmly welcomed Stebin into the Sanon family. "Words can never be enough to explain what I'm feeling.. still hasn't sunk in... My little one is married," Kriti began her note. The Mimi actor continued, "From holding you in my arms for the first time when I was 5, to now holding your chaadar and seeing you all dressed up as the prettiest bride I've ever seen. My heart is so full seeing you so happy, in love and beginning the next and the most beautiful chapter of your life with the Best life partner we could ever ask for you."

In the note, Kriti shared that she has found a brother in Stebin and a bond she will cherish forever.

"@stebinben you've been a part of our family for more than 5yrs now and our bond has strengthened with each passing year.. I love you Stebu and I know I've gained a brother and a friend for life who's always gonna be there for me. Seeing you two tie the knot and say your vows has been one of the most emotionally beautiful moments of my life! What precious memories," she said.



What is Zoe Saldaña net worth?

Avatar actress becomes highest-grossing actor ever

Zoe Saldaña has officially secured the title of the highest-grossing actor of all time, surpassing her Marvel Cinematic Universe co-star Scarlett Johansson. This milestone is achieved as her latest blockbuster, James Cameron's *Avatar: Fire and Ash*, has propelled her career global box office total beyond the \$16.8 billion USD threshold.

This accomplishment solidifies Saldaña's position as Hollywood's most bankable star, primarily due to her pivotal roles in three major franchises: *Avatar*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, and *Star Trek*.

Saldaña's ascent to the pinnacle of the box office hierarchy is founded on an unparalleled streak of commercial success. With *Avatar: Fire and Ash* surpassing \$1.23 billion USD globally earlier this week, she has now featured in four films that have each grossed over \$2 billion USD — a milestone no other actor has achieved. Her portfolio includes leading roles in the highest-grossing film of all time (*Avatar*), the second-highest (*Avengers: Endgame*), and the third-highest (*Avatar: The Way of Water*).

Johansson, who previously held the record with approximately \$16.4 billion USD, had momentarily regained the top position last summer following the release of *Jurassic World Rebirth*. However, the consistent global performance of the third installment of *Avatar* enabled Saldaña to narrow the gap and ultimately seize the lead. The top five is completed by fellow MCU veterans Samuel L. Jackson, Robert Downey Jr., and Chris Pratt.

Avatar: Fire and Ash is presently playing in cinemas across the globe. Saldaña is anticipated to return as Neytiri in the fourth chapter of the franchise, which is scheduled for release in 2029.

Zoë Yadira Saldaña Nazario was born on June 19, 1978, in New Jersey. Her father was of Dominican descent, while her mother hails from Puerto Rico. Her full name embodies her heritage from both Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. She grew up in Jackson Heights, New York City, with her two sisters.

Zoe Saldaña has a net worth of \$60 million, as per Celebrity Net Worth.



Golden Globes viewership shrinks again

The number of people tuning in to watch the Golden Globe Awards shrank this year, organizers announced on Wednesday, Jan 14, as Hollywood's gala evenings continue to struggle with declining viewership.

Around 8.7 million people in the United States watched the star-studded ceremony in which Paul Thomas Anderson's conspiracy epic "*One Battle After Another*" dominated the prizes.

That figure is down from the 9.3 million who tuned in last year, according to numbers from the Nielsen Institute, and is around half the size of the audiences just before the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Globes, long billed as Hollywood's biggest party, and the raucous forerunner to the awards season finale Oscars, were beset by scandal and accusations of racism that led to the Globes not even being aired in 2022. The gala was ultimately dropped by long-time broadcaster NBC, but relaunched with CBS in 2024 under new ownership, and has undergone significant reforms aimed at stamping out perceptions of corruption and racism.

Sunday night's bash saw Hollywood's best and brightest out in force for an evening fronted by comedian Nikki Glaser, whose acerbic opening monologue was watched nearly 14 million times on social media over the first 36 hours, organizers said. Among her zingers was a jab at the US Department of Justice, which she said should be in line for the Best Editing Award for its handling of the heavily redacted files on President Donald Trump's one-time friend, sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. As well as significant victories for "*One Battle After Another*," key winners on the evening included William Shakespeare family tragedy "*Hamnet*," which won best drama film and a best female actor prize for Jessie Buckley as a distraught mother.

‘Hamnet’ and ‘One Battle After Another’ take top honors at Golden Globes

Paul Thomas Anderson's ragtag revolutionary saga "*One Battle After Another*" took top honors at Sunday's 83rd Golden Globes in the comedy category, while Chloé Zhao's Shakespeare drama "*Hamnet*" pulled off an upset over "*Sinners*" to win best film, drama.

"*One Battle After Another*" won best film, comedy, supporting female actor for Teyana Taylor and best director and best screenplay for Anderson. He became just the second filmmaker to sweep director, screenplay and film, as a producer, at the Globes. Only Oliver Stone, for "*Born on the Fourth of July*," managed the same feat.

In an awards ceremony that went almost entirely as expected, the night's final award was the most surprising. While "*One Battle After Another*" has been the clear front-runner this awards season, most have pegged Ryan Coogler's Jim Crow-era vampire thriller as its closest competition.

But "*Hamnet*," a speculative drama about William and Agnes Shakespeare based on Maggie O'Farrell's bestseller, won in the dramatic category shortly after

its star, Jessie Buckley, won best female actor in a drama.

It was a banner night for Warner Bros., the studio behind "*One Battle After Another*" and "*Sinners*." Warner Bros. Discovery has agreed to be sold to Netflix in an \$83 billion deal. Paramount Skydance has appealed to shareholders with its own rival offer. In his speech after winning best director, Anderson praised Warner co-chief Michael DeLuca.

"He said he wanted to run a studio one day and let filmmakers make whatever they want," said Anderson. "That's how you get '*Sinners*.' That's how you get a '*Weapons*.' That's how you get '*One Battle After Another*.'" The final awards brought to, or near, the stage a handful of the most talented filmmakers together in Anderson, Zhao and Coogler — plus Steven Spielberg, a producer of "*Hamnet*." Regardless of who won what, it was a heartening moment of solidarity between them, with a shared sense of purpose. Zhao fondly recalled being at Sundance Labs with Coogler when they were each starting out.



Joe Alwyn, from left, Noah Jupe, Chloé Zhao, Jessie Buckley, Paul Mescal, and Jacobi Jupe pose in the press room with the award for best motion picture - drama for "*Hamnet*" during the 83rd Golden Globes on Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026, at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, Calif. (AP Photo/Chris Pizzello)

Singapore PM strips Singh of Leader of Opposition post

Singapore Prime Minister Lawrence Wong stripped Pritam Singh of his post as Leader of the Opposition on Thursday, Jan 15, saying his position had become untenable after his conviction for lying to parliament.

The move, the first of its kind in Singapore, comes after parliament decided in a vote on Wednesday that Singh of the opposition Workers' Party was unsuitable to continue in the post given his "dishonourable and unbecoming" conduct after a lying conviction.

Wong in a statement said the decision was necessary to uphold the rule of law, as well as the dignity and integrity of parliament.

"Having considered the matter carefully, I have decided that Mr. Singh's criminal convictions, taken together with Parliament's considered view of his unsuitability, make it no longer tenable for him to continue... Mr. Singh's designation as the LO will therefore cease with immediate effect," Wong said.

The Leader of the Opposition is designated by the head of government and not provided for in the constitution or parliament's standing orders.

Despite the parliamentary vote, it was entirely up to Wong whether to remove Singh from the role.

The post comes with certain privileges and duties, such as staff support and an additional allowance, as well as access to confidential government briefings, especially in the event of a national crisis or emergency.

Iran averts US strikes for now with vow to avoid executions

TEHRAN (TIP)

Iran may have averted U.S. strikes for now by pledging not to execute protesters after pressure from President Donald Trump.

Trump told reporters that he had been informed the "killing in Iran is stopping," adding he would be "very upset" if the crackdown continued. That was a marked shift from earlier in the week, when he urged Iranians to keep demonstrating and vowed that "help is on the way."

Oil fell for the first time in six days as concerns eased over the likelihood of disruptions to supplies from Iran and Arab Gulf states. Brent dropped as much as 4.6% on Thursday — the most since November — paring gains of about 11% over the past week.

On Thursday, Jan 15, Trump said in a post on Truth Social that Iran's decision not to sentence protesters to death is "good news" and that he hopes it "will continue." Iran's judiciary ruled out on Wednesday a death sentence for 26-year-old Erfan Soltani, whom activists had said was at risk of imminent execution.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi gave an interview Wednesday to Fox News — one of the few U.S. outlets consistently favored by Trump — to rule out executions of protesters. That appeared to respond directly to the president's earlier warning that he could take "very strong action" if Iran went down that route.

"Hanging is out of the question," Araghchi said on Special Report with Bret Baier. "I haven't heard about that, and there's no hanging today, tomorrow, or whatever. I can tell you, I'm confident about that. There's no plan for hanging at all."

Turkey opposes military intervention against Iran, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Thursday, adding he hoped Tehran and Washington can resolve their differences through dialog. Instability in Iran, he said, would be beyond the region's capacity to manage.

Tracking data from FlightRadar24 showed flights resuming over Iran's airspace after a temporary closure. Iran's Civil Aviation Organization said both inbound and outbound flights are underway, according to the semi-official Tasnim news agency.

A series of developments earlier on Wednesday suggested Tehran and Washington were edging close to conflict. Iran temporarily closed its airspace amid reports of a partial



redeployment of U.S. troops from Qatar and other regional bases, while the U.K. announced it was temporarily closing its embassy in Iran. Tensions remain high across the region, with the prospects of a renewed flare up — including a U.S. intervention — still possible.

The protests in Iran appear to have receded since last week, when hundreds of thousands took to the streets nationwide to demonstrate against the regime of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Authorities say they have reasserted control, accusing the U.S. and Israel of fueling unrest and arming terrorists to kill civilians.

Pro-government rallies and state-planned public funerals have dominated state TV coverage, though an ongoing nationwide internet blackout continues to hamper reporting of events on the ground.

Rights groups continued to report a mounting death toll from the demonstrations that began in late December and escalated significantly last week. The Oslo-based Iran Human Rights group said at least 3,428 protesters have died, marking it Tehran's deadliest crackdown on dissidents in decades.

Araghchi reiterated the stance that "diplomacy is much better than war" and pushed back against additional U.S. strikes. "Do not repeat the same mistake that you did in June. If you try a failed experience, you will get the same result," he said.

Former South Korea President Yoon Suk Yeol gets 5 years in jail over martial law bid

SEOUL (TIP)

South Korea's impeached president Yoon Suk Yeol will be jailed for five years over abuse of power, obstructing justice and falsifying documents in relation to his failed martial law bid in 2024.

This is the first of the verdicts in four trials linked to his shock martial law decree. Although short-lived, the move triggered nationwide turmoil, sparking protests as MPs rushed to the national assembly to overturn Yoon's decision.

Yoon's actions "plunged the country into political crisis", a judge said on Friday, Jan 16, noting that Yoon had "consistently shown no remorse".

Friday's ruling offers clues as to how the rest of Yoon's trials could go. His string of charges range from abuse of power to campaign law violations.

The most serious charge is insurrection, for which prosecutors have demanded the death penalty. The verdict in that trial is expected in February.

About 100 supporters of Yoon had gathered outside the courthouse on Friday to watch the livestreamed proceedings projected on a large screen.

Some of them held red banners that read: "Yoon, again! Make Korea great again". Several could be heard yelling at the judge as he delivered the guilty verdicts,



while others looked solemn.

On Friday, Jan 16, Yoon was convicted of using presidential bodyguards to prevent his arrest; failing to consult his entire cabinet before declaring martial law; as well as drafting and then destroying a falsified document claiming the martial law bid had been endorsed by the prime minister and defence minister.

"The accused has the duty to safeguard the

constitution and law but turned his back on them," the judge said. Prosecutors had sought a 10-year jail term for the charges in Friday's ruling. Both sides have seven days to appeal.

Yoon denied the charges, arguing that the arrest warrant itself was invalid and that the letter of the law does not require him to consult every member of the cabinet before exercising emergency power.

He had claimed across his trials that investigators had no legal basis to probe and arrest him in the first place. Most of the accusations against him are invalid because there was no procedural lapse when he declared martial law, he argues.

South Korea's courts often grant leniency when the accused accepts guilt or responsibility. But prosecutors argue that Yoon's lack of remorse is grounds for an even more severe penalty.

Park Geun-hye, who was sentenced to 20 years in prison for abuse of power and bribery in 2021, was the last former president to be jailed for a criminal charge. But she was pardoned and released from prison shortly after.

Six months after Yoon's martial law attempt, voters elected opposition leader Lee Jae Myung in a decisive victory.

Japan and Philippines sign new defence pact as they face growing China aggression

Japan and the Philippines signed a defense pact on Thursday that would allow the tax-free provision of ammunition, fuel, food and other necessities when their forces stage joint training to boost deterrence against China's growing aggression in the region and to bolster their preparation for natural disasters.

Japan has faced increasing political, trade and security tensions with China, which was angered by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's remark that potential Chinese action against Taiwan could spark Japanese intervention.

Japan and the Philippines have also had separate territorial conflicts with Beijing in the East China Sea and South China Sea that have continued to flare and threaten to draw in the United States, a treaty ally of the two Asian nations.

Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi signed the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement with Philippine Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro in Manila. During the ceremony, Japan also announced new security and economic development assistance to the Philippines.

The military logistical agreement, which has to be ratified by Japanese legislators before it takes effect, is the latest key defense pact to be forged between Japan and the Philippines to deepen their security alliance.

Aside from facilitating joint combat drills, it would also help Japan and the Philippines jointly respond to natural disasters, a mutual concern, and participate in peacekeeping operations by the United Nations, according to Japanese and Philippine officials.

In mid-2024, both countries signed the Reciprocal Access Agreement, which allows the deployment of forces of either country to the other's territory for joint and larger combat exercises, including live-fire drills. The RAA took effect in September.

Japanese and Philippine officials are still negotiating another agreement that aims to boost the security of highly confidential defense and military information the countries could share. When Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and then-Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba jointly announced the start of negotiations for the Acquisition and Cross-servicing Agreement in Manila in April last year, Ishiba underscored the opposition by their countries of "any attempt to unilaterally change the status quo through force or coercion in the East and South China seas."

Trump says Zelenskiy, not Putin, is holding up a Ukraine peace deal

WASHINGTON (TIP)

U.S. President Donald Trump told Reuters that Ukraine - not Russia - is holding up a potential peace deal, rhetoric that stands in marked contrast to that of European allies, who have consistently argued Moscow has little interest in ending its war in Ukraine.

In an exclusive interview in the Oval Office, Trump said Russian President Vladimir Putin is ready to wrap up his nearly four-year-old invasion of Ukraine. Zelenskiy, the U.S. president said, was more reticent.

"I think he's ready to make a deal," Trump said of the Russian president. "I think Ukraine is less ready to make a deal."

Asked why U.S.-led negotiations had not yet resolved Europe's largest land conflict since World War Two, Trump responded: "Zelenskiy." Trump's comments suggested renewed frustration with the Ukrainian leader. The two presidents have long had a volatile relationship, though their interactions seem to have improved over Trump's first year back in office.

At times, Trump has been more willing to accept Putin's assurances at face value than the leaders of some U.S. allies, frustrating Kyiv, European capitals and U.S. lawmakers, including some Republicans.

In December, Reuters reported that U.S. intelligence reports continued to warn that Putin had not abandoned his aims of capturing all of Ukraine and reclaiming parts of Europe that belonged to the



former Soviet empire. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard disputed that report at the time.

After several fits and starts, U.S.-led negotiations have been centered in recent weeks on security guarantees for a post-war Ukraine to ensure that Russia does not invade it again after a potential peace deal. In broad terms, U.S. negotiators have pushed Ukraine to abandon its eastern Donbas region as part of any accord with Russia. Ukrainian officials have been deeply involved in recent talks, which have been led on the U.S. side by special envoy Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law. Some European officials have cast doubt on the likelihood of Putin agreeing to some

terms recently hashed out by Kyiv, Washington and European leaders.

Trump told Reuters he was not aware of a potential upcoming trip to Moscow by Witkoff and Kushner, which Bloomberg reported earlier on Wednesday.

Asked if he would meet Zelenskiy at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, next week, Trump said he would but implied no plans were set.

"I would - if he's there," Trump said. "I'm going to be there."

Asked why he believed Zelenskiy was holding back on negotiations, Trump did not elaborate, saying only: "I just think he's, you know, having a hard time getting there."

Source: Reuters

UK is watering down plans for mandatory digital ID cards after a backlash

LONDON (TIP)

The British government has watered down plans for mandatory digital identification cards, a contentious idea it had touted as a way to help control immigration.

It's the latest policy U-turn by Prime Minister Keir Starmer's embattled center-left government, which is under fire from both opposition politicians and governing Labour Party lawmakers.

Officials confirmed Wednesday that it won't be compulsory for citizens and residents to show a digital ID card in order to get a job, ditching a key plank of the policy announced in September.

"The digital ID could be one way you prove your eligibility to work," Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander told the BBC, alongside other documents such as biometric passports.

The government said detailed plans for digital ID cards will be "set out



following a full public consultation which will launch shortly."

Starmer announced in September that "you will not be able to work in the United Kingdom if you do not have digital ID. It's as simple as that."

He said the plan would help reduce unauthorized immigration by making it harder for people to work in the underground economy. He said it would also make it simpler for people to access health care, welfare, child care and other public services.

He faced an immediate backlash, with polls suggesting support for digital ID plummeted after Starmer backed the idea.

Britain has not had compulsory identity cards for ordinary citizens since shortly after World War II, and the idea has long been contentious. Civil rights campaigners argue it infringes personal liberty and puts people's information at risk.

Former Prime Minister Tony Blair tried to introduce biometric ID cards two decades ago as a way of fighting terrorism and fraud, but the plan was abandoned after strong opposition from the public and Parliament.

After the latest policy shift, opposition Conservative Party chairman Kevin Hollinrake said that "Labour's only consistent policy is retreat." Liberal Democrat spokeswoman Lisa Smart said Starmer's office "must be bulk-ordering motion sickness tablets at this rate to cope with all their U-turns."

Pak security forces kill 13 terrorists in overnight raids in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Pakistan's security forces said they struck twice during the night in the country's restive northwest, killing 13 terrorists in separate intelligence-led operations as Islamabad presses. In a statement issued on Thursday, Jan 15, the military's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations, said the operations were carried out in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the intervening night of January 13 and 14, according to a news agency PTL.

"Thirteen khawarij belonging to Fitna Al Khawarij were killed in two separate engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said, using the term employed by Pakistani authorities for militants of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. According to the statement, eight terrorists were killed in an intelligence-based operation in the Bannu district after security forces acted on reports of their presence. In a second operation in the Kurram district, five more terrorists were "neutralised." "Sanitisation operations are being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area," the ISPR said. The latest actions follow another operation earlier this week in Balochistan's Kalat district, where four militants were killed, underscoring the scale of Pakistan's ongoing counterterror campaign. Despite sustained military pressure, terrorist violence has surged.

Taliban rule faces threat of collapse in Afghanistan

The internal situation within Afghanistan's Taliban regime appears increasingly fragile, with signs that the government's unity is under serious strain. A leaked audio clip, cited in a recent BBC report, has brought long-suspected internal divisions into the open, raising concerns about the stability of the Taliban government. According to the report, the Taliban is now divided into two main factions. One is led by Supreme Leader Hibatullah Akhundzada, who operates largely from Kandahar and advocates a hardline, isolationist vision of an Islamic Emirate. The other faction, centered in Kabul and led by Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani, supports strict Islamic rule but also favors limited engagement with the international community, economic revival, and at least some access to education for girls and women. The leaked audio features Akhundzada warning Taliban fighters that internal clashes within the government could lead to the collapse of the Islamic Emirate.

'Hope processing of immigrant visas will resume soon': Pakistan as US visa suspension hits 75 nations

ISLAMABAD (TIP)

Pakistan on Thursday, Jan 15, said it expects the United States to resume immigrant visa processing "soon" for its citizens, framing Washington's move to pause applications as part of an internal policy review rather than a permanent clampdown.

The pause, announced by the Trump administration on Wednesday, affects immigrant visa processing for applicants from 75 countries, including Pakistan, as part of a broader effort targeting foreigners deemed likely to rely on public benefits in the US.

Responding to the decision, Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said Islamabad is seeking clarity from Washington and remains hopeful of an early restart. "We are in touch with the US authorities to ascertain further details. This is evolving news that we are following," he said at his weekly press briefing.

While no timeline has been given for restoring services, Andrabi reiterated Pakistan's expectation that the disruption would be temporary. "We understand that this is an internal ongoing process of review of US immigration policies and system, and hope that the routine processing of immigrant visas will resume soon," he said.

The suspension could upend travel, study and employment plans for thousands of Pakistanis who apply for US visas each year, officials said.

Andrabi also addressed wider regional developments, saying Pakistan is closely



monitoring rising tensions between Iran and the United States. He said Pakistan attaches "great importance" to Iran as a neighbouring country and a key member of the international community, and expressed hope that peace and stability would prevail.

Reaffirming Islamabad's support for diplomatic efforts, Andrabi said Pakistan backs "all efforts aimed at the peaceful resolution of the situation," adding that a stable Iran free from domestic unrest is in Pakistan's interest. He also voiced confidence that the Iranian nation would overcome current challenges and emerge stronger.

Separately, Andrabi urged India to refrain from what he called "baseless" allegations against Pakistan and instead focus on "growing extremism" within its own territory.

Pak used lobbying firms to get US govt's help to keep it out of FATF grey list

Pakistan sought support from the US government to avoid being placed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list through lobbying firms, as mentioned in disclosures under the US Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

FARA filing shows that Javelin Advisors LLC was registered in April to represent Pakistan under a formal consulting agreement two days after the Pahalgam terror attack. According to a report in The Economic Times, Javelin said its work included communicating Pakistan's positions on regional and global issues to the US executive branch, US Congress and the public. Jammu and Kashmir dispute as well as India-Pakistan relations were part of the issues on its list.

The Embassy of Pakistan in Washington entered into a contract with another firm, Ervin Graves Strategy Group LLC, for lobbying against keeping Pakistan out of the FATF grey list.

At a proposed FATF meeting next month, Pakistan will be under scrutiny on whether it aided terror financing or not. Pakistan was first placed on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey list in 2008 and remained there until 2015. It was re-listed in 2018 and stayed under monitoring until it was removed in October 2022 after reportedly addressing most of the action points.

India isolated, Bangladesh with us: Lashkar terrorist resurfaces, boasts on camera

ISLAMABAD (TIP)

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander Hafiz Abdur Rauf, who led funeral prayers for slain terrorists in Muridke in the presence of Pakistani Army officers following the destruction of hideouts during Operation Sindoor, has resurfaced and made sweeping claims that global alignments have shifted in Pakistan's favor.

A US-designated terrorist and close associate of LeT founder Hafiz Saeed, Rauf asserted that Turkey and Bangladesh are now backing Islamabad.

"Until yesterday, we were alone, and the whole world was with India. Today, the situation has changed. Turkey is with Pakistan, Bangladesh's army chief was in Islamabad. Now, the whole world is leaning towards Pakistan," he said, adding that a "new era of the Mujahideen" has



begun, in which Pakistan is winning.

Last year, when images of the LeT commander leading the funeral prayers went viral on social media, Pakistan Army dismissed he was a terrorist and instead described him as a "cleric" and "family man." In his new video, the terrorist also claimed that India had "learned its lesson

and would not dare to attack Pakistan for the next 50 years."

In an inflammatory statement, the Pakistan-based terrorist said events in Bahawalpur and Muridke on May 6 and 7 had run their course, but alleged that Pakistan delivered a decisive response on May 10 "with the help of Allah," leaving India unable to even "look at Pakistan."

Security analysts note that the statements appear aimed at propaganda and morale-building, coming from the same terrorist commander who was seen frightened and distressed in the immediate aftermath of Operation Sindoor. The Pakistan-based terrorist's fresh warning comes a month after he was seen in a video delivering an inflammatory speech in which he openly called for attacks on India, including a provocative threat that "Delhi will be made a bride."

Small drops, big impact: Why serum is essential for healthy skin

In a time when skincare has moved beyond basic cleansing and moisturizing, serums have emerged as a non-negotiable step for anyone serious about skin health. Light in texture yet powerful in performance, serums are designed to address specific skin concerns with precision. Whether you are dealing with dryness, dullness, acne or early signs of ageing, a well-chosen serum can significantly transform your skin's appearance and texture.

Unlike creams and lotions, serums are formulated with smaller molecules and a higher concentration of active ingredients, allowing them to penetrate deeper into the skin. While cleansers remove impurities and moisturisers create a protective barrier, serums work at a cellular level to repair, restore and rejuvenate the skin. Their lightweight nature ensures quick absorption without leaving a greasy residue, making them suitable for all skin types.

One of the biggest advantages of incorporating a serum is its targeted action. Hydrating serums replenish moisture and improve skin elasticity, while brightening serums help reduce pigmentation and uneven skin tone. Anti-ageing serums support collagen production, soften fine lines and improve firmness. For acne-prone or oily skin, serums regulate excess oil, calm inflammation and prevent breakouts-without clogging pores.

How Serums Improve Skin Over Time

Regular use of a serum strengthens the skin barrier and enhances its ability to repair itself. Ingredients such as vitamin C protect against environmental damage, while hyaluronic acid plumps the skin from within. Over time, this results in clearer, smoother and more radiant skin, proving that serums are not just quick fixes but long-term skincare investments.

How to Use a Serum the Right Way

For best results, a serum should be applied after cleansing and before moisturizing. A few drops are enough-gently press the product into the skin rather than rubbing it aggressively. This allows the actives to absorb fully and work effectively. During the daytime, always follow up with sunscreen, especially when using active ingredients.

Choosing the Right Serum for Your Skin Type

Selecting the right serum is essential. Dry skin benefits from hydrating ingredients, while oily or acne-



prone skin responds well to oil-balancing formulas. Ageing skin shows visible improvement with collagen-boosting serums, and sensitive skin requires soothing, barrier-repairing actives. Matching your serum to your skin concern ensures visible and lasting results.

Why a Serum Is More Than Just an Extra Step

Many people believe moisturizers alone are enough, but moisturizers mainly hydrate and protect the surface of the skin. Serums work deeper, correcting issues at the root. This makes them an essential, not optional, part of a modern skincare routine.

A Small Step with Powerful Results

Adding a serum to your skincare routine may seem like a minor change, but its impact is anything but small. With consistent use, serums help unlock healthier, brighter and more resilient skin. In a world where skin is constantly exposed to stress, pollution and ageing, a serum acts as your skin's strongest ally-delivering results, one drop at a time.

FOOD CORNER

Mixed sauce pasta

Ingredients

- 2 cups pasta (penne, fusilli or farfalle work best)
- Water (for boiling), Salt (to taste)
- 2 tablespoons butter or olive oil, 1 tablespoon oil (optional, for richness), 1 teaspoon garlic, finely chopped, 1 small onion, finely chopped (optional), 1 cup tomato puree or pasta sauce, ½ cup fresh cream, 2 tablespoons cheese spread or grated cheese, ½ teaspoon red chilli flakes (adjust to taste), ½ teaspoon dried oregano, ½ teaspoon dried basil or mixed herbs, Salt and black pepper to taste, Grated cheese, Fresh basil or parsley

Method

- Boil water in a large pot and add salt once it starts bubbling. Add the pasta and cook until al dente as per packet instructions. Drain and keep aside. Reserve some pasta water for adjusting the sauce later.
- Heat butter and oil in a pan over medium flame. Add chopped garlic and sauté until fragrant. If using onions, add them now and cook until soft and translucent.
- Lower the flame and add tomato puree. Cook for 2-3 minutes until the raw smell disappears. Stir in fresh cream and mix well. Add cheese spread or grated cheese and let it melt into the sauce, creating a smooth, creamy texture.
- Add red chilli flakes, oregano, basil, salt and black pepper. Mix well and adjust seasoning as needed. If the sauce feels too thick, add a little reserved pasta water. Add the cooked pasta to the sauce and toss gently until every piece is well coated. Let it cook for another 1-2 minutes so the flavours come together beautifully.



When being single feels right: Signs you're not ready to date yet

One of the clearest signs that you are single but not ready to mingle is that you genuinely enjoy spending time with yourself. Quiet evenings, solo plans and personal routines bring comfort rather than loneliness. You are not waiting for someone to fill a void because, at this stage, there is no void to fill.

When friends bring up dating apps, blind dates or "putting yourself out there," your first reaction is exhaustion rather than curiosity. The thought of small talk, emotional effort and starting from scratch feels overwhelming. This emotional fatigue often signals that you need more time to recharge before inviting someone new into your life.

If memories from a past relationship still surface-whether with unresolved emotions, lessons or lingering hurt-it may be a sign you're not fully healed yet. Being single becomes a space for reflection and growth, not a phase to rush through. Emotional closure matters more to you than moving on quickly.



You Value Peace Over Romance

Right now, inner peace ranks higher than butterflies or late-night conversations. You protect your mental and emotional space carefully and avoid anything that feels disruptive. If drama-free days feel more appealing than romantic possibilities, it's a sign you're prioritizing stability over attraction.

Your Personal Goals Come First

Career ambitions, personal growth, fitness, creativity or self-care routines take centre stage in your life. Relationships feel like a distraction rather than an enhancement. This doesn't mean you've given up on love-it simply means your focus is firmly on building yourself first.

You Have Strong Boundaries

You've become clear about what you want, what you won't tolerate and where your limits lie. The idea of adjusting your lifestyle, schedule or emotional energy for someone else feels unnecessary at the moment. Strong boundaries often signal self-awareness, not emotional unavailability. Compliments, attention or romantic interest no longer define your self-worth. You feel secure without external reassurance, which reduces the urgency to date. When you are content without validation, the desire to mingle naturally takes a back seat.

FROM PAGE 30

Injection turns sleeping tumour immune cells into cancer fighters

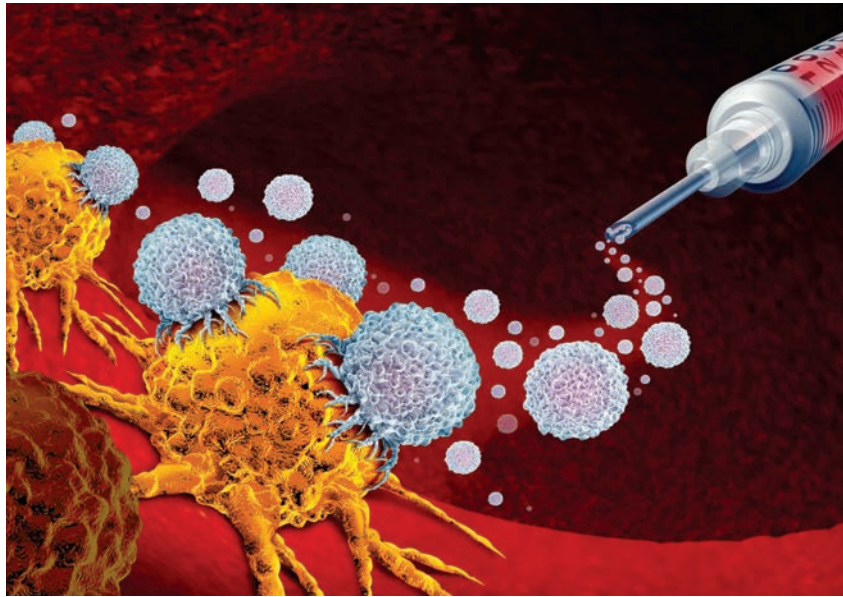
The Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST) researchers have developed a way to reprogram immune cells already inside tumours into cancer-killing machines. A drug injected directly into the tumour is absorbed by macrophages, prompting them to recognise and attack cancer cells while activating nearby immune defences.

This eliminates the need for lab-based cell extraction and modification. In animal models, the strategy significantly slowed tumour growth and sparked strong anticancer immune responses.

KAIST (President Kwang Hyung Lee) announced that a research team led by Professor Ji-Ho Park from the Department of Bio and Brain Engineering has developed a new treatment approach.

When a drug is injected directly into a tumour, macrophages already present in the body absorb the drug and begin producing CAR (a cancer-recognising device) proteins. This process converts them into anticancer immune cells known as "CAR-macrophages."

Solid tumours, including gastric, lung, and liver cancers, form dense structures that block immune cells from entering or functioning effectively because of this physical and biological barrier, many



existing immune cell therapies struggle to work well against these types of cancers.

CAR-macrophages have emerged as a promising next-generation immunotherapy. Unlike some immune cells, macrophages can directly engulf and destroy cancer cells. They also stimulate nearby immune cells, helping to amplify the body's overall anticancer response.

Despite their potential, current CAR-macrophage therapies rely on extracting immune cells from a patient's blood, growing them in the lab, and genetically modifying them before reinfusion. This

process is slow, expensive, and difficult to scale, which limits its practicality for many patients.

To bypass these challenges, the KAIST team focused on "tumour-associated macrophages" that naturally gather around tumours. The researchers developed a method to reprogram these cells directly inside the body rather than modifying them outside it.

Their approach uses lipid nanoparticles -- engineered to be easily taken up by macrophages -- loaded with both mRNA that carries cancer-recognition instructions and an immune-activating compound.



A brain region that controls breathing possibly responsible for high BP: Study

The lateral parafacial (pFL) region of the brain, responsible for controlling breathing, may also connect to nerves that tighten blood vessels, leading to a rise in blood pressure, according to a study, findings from which could present a new treatment target for hypertension.

The pFL region — located in the brainstem, which connects the cerebrum in the brain to the spinal cord — controls automatic functions, including digestion, breathing and heart rate.

Forced exhalations while laughing, exercising or coughing are driven by powerful abdominal muscles, which are not required during a normal exhalation, lead researcher Julian Paton, director of the centre for heart research at the University of Auckland in New Zealand, said.

"The lateral parafacial region is recruited into action, causing us to exhale during a laugh, exercise or coughing," Paton said.

In rats induced with hypertension, the study published in the journal *Circulation Research* found that the pFL region also connects to nerves that tighten blood vessels, a mechanism that raises blood pressure.

"Researchers discovered that, in conditions of high blood pressure, the lateral parafacial region is activated and, when our team inactivated this region, blood pressure fell to normal levels," Paton said.

Changes in breathing patterns, especially those involving strong abdominal muscle contractions, can therefore trigger high blood pressure in patients, the researchers said.

"The heightened sympathetic activity inducing hypertension triggered by chronic intermittent hypoxia is caused, in the most part, by the emergence of pFL expiratory oscillations driving rostral ventrolateral medulla and A5 sympathetic vasomotor neurons (both in the brainstem) and active expiration simultaneously," the authors wrote.

They "propose that suppressing pFL neurons would have therapeutic potential."

How much cooking oil is good for health daily, weekly, monthly?

Cooking oil is essential for our meals, but excessive intake can impact heart health over time. Dr. Gajinder Kumar Goyal, Program Clinical Director-Cardiology, Marengo Asia Hospitals, Faridabad, explains that moderation is key. "As per guidelines, one can consume up to 3 to 4 teaspoons of cooking oil per day, which is around 15–20 ml," he says. "That amounts to 500–600 ml of edible oil per person per month." For families of four, this works out to no more than 2 liters of edible oil per month.

TYPES OF HEART-FRIENDLY OILS

Dr. Goyal advises that mustard oil, sunflower oil, and olive oil are good choices for overall well-being. Mustard oil, especially cold-pressed (Kachi Ghani) or wood-pressed, is ideal due to its high smoke point of around 250°C. Sunflower oil is also acceptable. Olive oil is technically healthy but not ideal for Indian cooking due to its low smoke point.

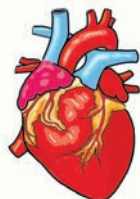
Refined oils should be avoided because they are processed at high temperatures and with chemicals, generating toxic products that can raise LDL ("bad cholesterol") over time.

OIL CONSUMPTION FOR HEART PATIENTS

For individuals with heart disease, stricter limits

apply. "A heart patient should not consume more than 750 ml of any oil per month," Dr. Goyal says. He recommends a mix of 80% mustard oil and 20% butter or ghee to balance taste and nutrition.

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SAFETY LIMITS AND WEEKLY INTAKE

■ Daily limit: 15–20 ml per person (3–4 teaspoons)

■ Weekly limit: Approximately 105–140 ml

■ Monthly limit: 500–600 ml for healthy adults

Exceeding these limits occasionally is not immediately harmful, but habitually consuming more oil can impact cholesterol and heart health over time.

Choosing the right type of oil and moderating quantity is crucial for long-term heart health. Dr. Goyal emphasizes:

"Focus on mustard or sunflower oil, avoid refined oils, and stick to recommended limits. Your heart health depends on these small, daily choices."

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OpenAI smart device could be a computer in shape of earphones, may challenge Apple AirPods

OpenAI has some big plans for 2026. Most important of them involves a smart computer, which will be tiny, without screen and will work with voice commands. It will be ChatGPT rolled into a very small device. That is the expectation and now rumours around the device have started to hint at some of its features. According to leaks, OpenAI has codenamed the device "Sweetpea" and it is going to be launched in 2026, which means this year.

The device has been in the works for couple of years now. It all started in 2023 when OpenAI partnered with Johnny Ive's company. Ive, if the name doesn't ring a bell, is the famed designer behind the iPhone and other iconic Apple devices. Now rumours hint that OpenAI and Ive are inching closer to the goal of creating a new type of computer that will entirely be voice-driven and will be powered by ChatGPT. The device is likely to be in shape of an earbud, similar to TWS buds, and is likely to challenge Apple AirPods.

According to an X post by well-known leaker Pikachu, OpenAI is working on a product internally codenamed "Sweetpea", a special audio gadget that would function like a tiny computer worn on the ears.

While it may look like a device that you can wear in ears, Sweetpea is rumoured



to be significantly more powerful than something like AirPods. "Hearing fresh detail on OpenAI to-go hardware project. Now confirmed it is a special audio product to replace AirPods, internal code name is Sweetpea... It is now front of the line due to priority of Johnny Ive team," Pikachu wrote on X.

According to reports, OpenAI has partnered with manufacturing giant Foxconn. The manufacturer has been asked to prepare for up to five different OpenAI hardware products by late 2028. The leak adds that Sweetpea may launch

around September, the same month when Apple is also likely to launch its iPhone 18 and iPhone Fold. The OpenAI goal for Sweetpea is likely to be ambitious with the company hoping to sell around 40 to 50 million units in first year.

Earbuds that work like a computer

If OpenAI is indeed working on this project, it is clearly not aiming for conventional earbuds. The leak suggests Sweetpea would be a "computer in the shape of earphones."

On the design front, Sweetpea is said to have a "unique, unseen before," look with the main body made of metal and shaped like an "egg stone." Inside it would be two capsule-like modules that users will be able to remove and wear behind the ear. This behind-the-ear design will allow the device to offer a more secure fit and also make space for advanced internal components.

Rumors suggest that a 2nm smartphone-class processor, most likely Samsung Exynos chip, will power the device. There is also a talk of OpenAI developing a custom chip to allow the device to "replace iPhone actions by commanding Siri," suggesting Sweetpea could act as an AI-powered control layer over Apple devices.

Astronomers spot white dwarf star creating a colourful shockwave

Astronomers have observed a white dwarf — a highly compact Earth-sized stellar ember — that is creating a colorful shockwave as it moves through space, leaving them searching for an explanation.

The highly magnetized white dwarf is gravitationally bound to another star in what is called a binary system. The white dwarf is siphoning gas from its companion as the two orbit close to each other. The system is located in the Milky Way about 730 light-years from Earth — relatively nearby in cosmic terms - in the constellation Auriga.

A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km).

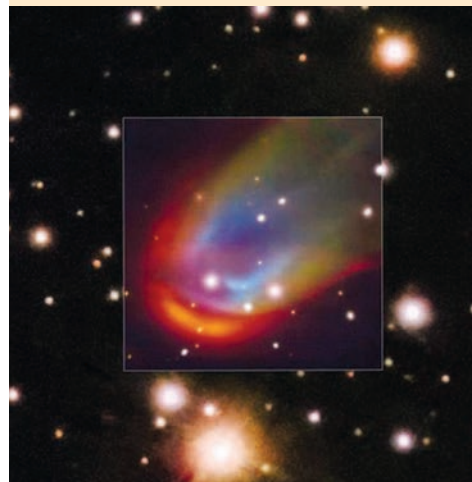
The shockwave - more specifically a bow shock - caused by the white dwarf was observed using the European Southern Observatory's Chile-based Very Large Telescope. The shockwave was seen in an image released by the scientists glowing in various colors produced when material flowing outward from the white dwarf collided with interstellar gas.

"A shockwave is created when fast-moving material plows into surrounding gas, suddenly compressing and heating it. A bow shock is the curved shock front that forms when an object moves rapidly through space, similar to the wave in front of a boat moving through water," said astrophysicist Simone Scaringi of Durham University in England, co-lead author of the study published on Monday in the journal *Nature Astronomy*.

"The colours come from interstellar gas that is being heated and excited by the shock. Different chemical elements glow at specific colors when this happens," Scaringi added.

In this shockwave, a red hue represented hydrogen, green represented nitrogen and blue represented oxygen residing in interstellar space.

A handful of other white dwarfs have been observed creating shockwaves. But all of those were surrounded by disks of gas siphoned from a binary partner. Although this white dwarf is siphoning gas from its companion, it lacks any such disk and is releasing gas into space for unknown reasons.



Humanoid robots or human connection? What Elon Musk's Optimus reveals about our AI ambitions

When Elon Musk talks about robotics, he rarely hides the ambition behind the dream. Tesla's Optimus is pitched as an all-purpose humanoid robot that can do the heavy lifting on factory floors and free us from drudgery at home. Tesla is targeting a million of these robots in the next decade. But is Musk likely to succeed? A few years ago, the thought of a friendly, capable household robot belonged in science fiction. We could imagine machines that danced, shifted boxes or played chess, but not ones that understood us well enough to be genuinely helpful. Then came generative artificial intelligence, or gen AI.

Whether your first encounter was with ChatGPT, Gemini or Copilot, many of us felt the same jolt of surprise. Here was a bot that seemed to understand us in a way we didn't expect. That has made Musk's dream of a robot companion feel if not close then certainly closer.

Imagine leafing through a catalogue of robots the way we browse for home appliances. If a personal robot still feels too expensive, perhaps we might hire one part time. Maybe a dance instructor that doubles as a therapist. Families could club together to buy a robot for an elderly relative. Some people might even buy one for themselves.

The future Musk describes isn't just mechanical, it's emotional.

Why the humanoid shape matters

The idea of robots that look like us can seem creepy and threatening. But there's also a practical explanation for the drive to make robots that look like us.

A dishwasher is essentially a robot but you have to load it



yourself. A humanoid robot with hands and fingers could clear the table, load the dishwasher and then feed the pets too. In other words, engineers create humanoid robots because the world is designed for human bodies.

But the humanoid form also carries an emotional charge. A machine with a face and limbs hints at something more than functionality.

It's a promise of intelligence, empathy or companionship. Optimus taps into that deep cultural imagery. It is part practical engineering, part theatre and part invitation to believe we are close to creating machines that can live alongside us. There are moments when a personal robot might be genuinely welcoming. Anyone who has been ill, or cared for someone who is, can imagine the appeal of a helper that preserves dignity and independence.

Trump's 10 percent cap on credit cards may hurt more than some imagine

WASHINGTON (TIP)

President Donald Trump's call for putting a one-year, 10 percent cap on credit card rates certainly catches the eye — and no surprise, has caught the wrath of bankers.

Consumers are fed up with the outrageously high interest rates being charged on their credit cards. Banking experts say 10 percent is way too low to keep lending to riskier consumers with weak credit histories.

In his speech to the Detroit Economic Club on Tuesday, Jan. 13, at the MotorCity Casino Hotel, Trump called "affordability" a fake word that Democrats like to use. He said many prices, such as gas prices, already have come down to help consumers.

At the same time, though, Trump noted in his Detroit speech that he soon will provide a slew of proposals to lower consumer costs, including his effort to drive credit card companies to cap interest rates at 10 percent for one year.

"The rates are way too high," Trump said at the Detroit Economic Club. Trump indicated that he would outline his agenda during a speech at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, next week.

Trump posted on Jan. 9 on Truth Social that "we will no longer let the American Public be 'ripped off' by Credit Card Companies that are charging Interest Rates of 20 to 30 percent, and even more." He stated that he wants the cap to start as of Jan. 20. Trump knows he has hit a sore spot.

The average rate being offered on credit cards now is 19.65 percent — which is down slightly from 20.18 percent a year ago and up sizably from 17.35% in early January in 2020, according to data from Bankrate.com.

Roughly 61 percent of cardholders with credit card balances have been in debt for at least a year, up from 53 percent in late 2024, according to a Bankrate survey.

And, according to the survey, 47 percent of credit cardholders report carrying a credit card balance and being charged interest. About 1 in 5 debtors don't think they'll ever pay it off.

The last thing you want to do is charge anything on your credit card — and not pay the bill in full each month — at these absurdly high rates. Reason: You're losing a ton of money to interest alone.

Take a charge of \$1,000 on a credit card with an annual rate of 20 percent.

You ultimately could be in debt for 40 months and pay nearly \$370 in interest with a 20 percent rate if you only make a minimum payment, assuming the credit card issuer requires that you pay at least \$35 a month.

If the rate drops to 10 percent on \$1,000 in credit card debt, you'd be in debt for 33 months and pay \$147 in total interest.



Yet, remember, the Trump proposal right now calls for the cap to last one year. Your interest rate likely would be higher once that cap is removed.

Either way, spending \$1,000 on an iPhone ultimately could end up costing you way more than you'd imagine if you only made the required minimum payment.

Either way, I'd argue credit card debt is a great way to waste of a lot of money.

Many items you buy on a credit card — think shirts, socks, shoes, sweaters, soup — decline in value over time. You're not investing for the long haul, as you might be when taking on a mortgage or student loan debt.

Ted Rossman, senior industry analyst for Bankrate.com, gave another example: If you make minimum payments toward the average credit card balance of \$6,523 at 20 percent, you're in debt for 219 months and your total interest expense is \$9,448.

At 10 percent, that's 196 months and \$4,492 in interest. Again, it is questionable how long you'd benefit from a 10 percent rate since the Trump proposal is calling for a one-year cap.

A 10 percent annual rate isn't something many consumers have seen for years on their credit cards. You'd have to go back to late January 2009 when the average rate that credit card issuers were marketing was 10.63 percent, according to Bankrate.com, which has been tracking credit card rates since 1985. The average rate was around 18.88 percent for much of December 1985.

As US tariff threat looms, officials say India-Iran trade 'minuscule'

India's trade with Iran is minuscule and primarily involves supplies of food and pharmaceuticals essential for inflation-ravaged Iranian citizens, people aware of the matter said, adding that any implication of new American tariffs for those who export to Iran will depend on the specifics of Washington's decisions.

US President Donald Trump said in a social media post on Monday that "effective immediately, any Country doing business with the Islamic Republic of Iran will pay a Tariff of 25% on any and all business being done with the United States of America. This Order is final and conclusive..."

His comments were in response to a crackdown on protests by the regime in Tehran, which has reportedly led to the deaths of 2,000 people.

India's external affairs minister S. Jaishankar separately said he discussed trade, critical minerals, nuclear cooperation, defence and energy with his US counterpart Marco Rubio during a phone call on Tuesday. "Just concluded a good conversation with @SecRubio. Discussed trade, critical minerals, nuclear cooperation, defence and energy. Agreed to remain in touch on these and other issues," Jaishankar wrote in a post on X.

People familiar with the matter, who asked not to be named, said the specifics of any US executive order over such a tariff would clarify the status of the bulk of India's exports to Iran, which overall make for a minuscule proportion of India's overall merchandise exports. If any additional levies are to kick in, they would apply on exports to America, where Indian goods are already subject to 50% duties, including a 25% punitive levy over Russian energy purchases.

India's exports to China rise 9.7%, trade deficit hits record high of \$116 bn

BEIJING (TIP)

India's exports to China posted a \$5.5 billion increase compared to last year bucking the declining trend even as the trade deficit hit a record \$116.12 billion, as per the annual trade data released by Chinese customs.

Bilateral trade, too, surged to an all-time high to \$155.62 billion in 2025, according to the data. Indian exports to China that over the years struggled to make headway climbed to \$19.75 billion between January and December last year, posting a 9.7 per cent increase, amounting to \$5.5 billion, according to the data.

At the same time, Chinese exports to India increased 12.8 per cent to \$135.87 billion last year. While trade is picking up from both countries, the total bilateral trade surged to a record high of \$155.62 billion in 2025, the year in which both countries faced US President Donald Trump's tariff



hikes. The trade deficit — a constant problem in India-China trade — touched a record high of \$116.12 billion, crossing the \$100-billion for the second time since 2023.

In 2024, the trade deficit was \$99.21 billion with

China's exports totalling to \$113.45 billion, and India's outbound shipments to China stagnating at \$14.25 billion. China's annual trade data covers from January to December while India releases its figures from March to April. Observers said the \$5.5 billion increase in Indian exports, though modest, is significant, pointing to a structural shift with items such as oil meals, marine products, telecom instruments and spices, making headway into the tough Chinese market, which is struggling to expand its domestic consumption.

Also, India over the years has been demanding China to open its IT, pharma, and agricultural produce, which are India's strong areas. China's overall global trade continues to grow, defying trade tensions with the US. Customs data showed that the surplus surged to a record of almost \$1.2 trillion in 2025 an increase of 20 per cent compared to 2024, with exports at \$3.77 trillion and imports at \$2.58 trillion.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

**ARIES**

Ganesha says this week is going to be full of positive energy. New possibilities are expected to open up for you in both your personal and professional life. Your efforts and dedication at the workplace will be appreciated by everyone, which may lead to a higher position or new responsibility. Positive changes can also be seen in your social life. Time spent with friends and family will rejuvenate your soul. A long-standing problem may find a solution, which will bring relief to your mind. Be cautious in matters of health. Regular exercise and focusing on a balanced diet will help you maintain your energy levels. This week is also great for self-love and self-care. Your enthusiastic and adventurous nature will inspire others. Do not hesitate to embrace new experiences, as it is essential for your growth. This week of your sensitivity and loyalty can be the key to your success. Maintain a positive attitude and face every challenge in the days to come.

**TAURUS**

Ganesha says this week you have a chance to experience new possibilities. You are moving towards progress in your professional life. This week, you will get the opportunity to complete challenging projects with increased teamwork and collaboration. A sense of independence and stability will fill you with enthusiasm. In financial matters, adopt a balanced approach. Planning and making timely decisions can benefit you. You will get some financial opportunities but be careful and avoid making investments without thinking. In personal life, take advantage of spending time with family and friends. Warmth and affection will increase in your close relationships. If there were any kind of concerns in your relationships, then this week is the time to resolve them. In terms of health, pay attention to your routine. A little exercise and proper diet will be beneficial for you. Include meditation and yoga in your habit to keep your mental health better. In general, this week symbolizes new beginnings and stability for you. Maintain a positive attitude and see whatever challenge comes as an opportunity for yourself.

**GEMINI**

Ganesha says this week the door to new possibilities is opening for you. Activity will increase in social life and new relationships can begin. It will be

necessary to coordinate with colleagues in a new project or work. Your ability to communicate will prove to be a great help to you at this time. It is important to maintain mutual understanding and harmony in personal relationships. Express your thoughts clearly and respect the opinions of others. This will be especially helpful in love relationships. It is important to be health conscious. Pay attention to diet and exercise regularly. Include meditation and yoga for mental health; it will make you introverted and provide new energy. It is necessary to be cautious in financial matters. Think well before making big investments. Control small expenses this week. Overall, this week is going to be positive for you in terms of self-knowledge and social relationships. Make full use of your enthusiastic nature and celebrate the little moments of life.

**CANCER**

Ganesha says for Cancer natives, this week is a sign of new possibilities for you. Your emotions will be strong at this time, which will enable you to have deep and meaningful conversations with people around you. Spending time together with family and friends will be especially beneficial. On the work front, focus on your projects, as your hard work is now at the chance to bear fruit. The efforts you have put in for months will now start yielding results. Use your creativity at this time; muster the courage to adopt new ideas. In terms of health, practice meditation and yoga to negate mental stress. Your emotional state may be affected, so it is important to keep yourself balanced. Spending some time with family will also give you a feeling of well-being. Maintain harmonious relations with people around you this week. Enjoying small joys and bringing ease into a routine will prove beneficial for you. Overall, this week will be pleasant and developmental for you.

**LEO**

Ganesha says Leo the doors of new possibilities seem to open for you this week. Your confidence will increase, which will enable you to proceed more efficiently in your tasks. This is the time to make the necessary strategies to achieve your goals. In terms of structure, it will be important to maintain harmonious relations with family members. Spending time with your loved ones will give you mental peace. Health needs attention. Do not ignore minor problems. Yoga and meditation will improve your energy level. Financial aspects also seem stable this week. Take investment decisions wisely. Ultimately, this week is about having faith in yourself and keeping your intentions firm. The results of your hard work will soon be visible.

**VIRGO**

Ganesha says this week you are likely to get the fruits of your hard work. New possibilities can also open up in the workplace, which will strengthen your position. Keep in mind that you understand your plans well and also listen to the opinions of others. You will also get some good opportunities in social life. Spending time with friends and family will boost your energy. You will get an opportunity to share your thoughts, which will strengthen your relationship even more. There is a need to be a little cautious in terms of health. You can resort to meditation and yoga to avoid mental stress. Finally, awaken the creativity within you, it will give you new energy. Move forward with positive thinking and ease, this week is going to be very fruitful for you.

**LIBRA**

Ganesha says this week is a time of balance and dedication for Libra people. Your creativity and social skills will provide you with new opportunities. This is the right time to strengthen mutual relations with friends and family. Conversation with someone special can deepen, which will bring new happiness in your life. Some challenging situations may arise in work life, but your rationality and diplomatic mind will help take things in a better direction. Pay attention to your health this week; regular exercise and a balanced diet will be beneficial for you. The situation in financial matters is likely to remain satisfactory, but it is important to control expenses. It may be time to plan a long trip, which will give you new experiences and knowledge. Your self-analysis will help you make important decisions this week, so pay attention to your inner voice.

**SCORPIO**

Ganesha says this week is a period of prosperity and self-introduction for Leo. You will find yourself full of new energy and enthusiasm. Your thoughts will be clear and you will be motivated to achieve your goals. At work, your efforts will be appreciated and relationships with colleagues will strengthen. This is the time to start new projects or carry forward old plans. You will work with a new approach, unleashing your creativity. In personal life, you will get a chance to spend time with family and friends. This will strengthen relationships and increase mutual understanding. In terms of health, try to stay away from stress. Spending some time in meditation and yoga will be beneficial for your mental health. Have faith in yourself this week and move forward with positive thinking. Your hard work, dedication, and perseverance will lead you to success.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Ganesha says this week, a sense of self-reliance and independence will prevail for you. Your energy will be at its peak, and you will keep moving towards your goals. This is the time when you can make new plans and start working on them. Spending time with friends and family will give you mental peace. In the field of business, you may get a new opportunity. Do not hesitate to express your ideas, as your suggestions will be appreciated. For physical health, focus on regular exercise and a balanced diet. Some good changes can come in your relationships. Spending time with someone special will bring sweetness to your relationship. This week is for self-renewal and positive thinking. Move forward by staying positive, as this time is going to give the fruits of your hard work and efforts.

**CAPRICORN**

Ganesha says this week the door to new opportunities is going to open for you. In professional life, you may get some good offers, which can take your career to new heights. Increasing coordination with the team will be beneficial for you. In personal life, you will get a chance to spend time with family. They will feel proud of your achievements, which will give you more positive energy. Try to strengthen your relationship with your loved ones. In terms of health, it is time to make some changes in your routine. Include exercise and yoga in your routine, which will improve mental and physical health. Focus on your goals this week and do not be afraid of difficulties. Your hard work will give you the desired results. Remember, patience and determination are the keys to success.

**AQUARIUS**

Ganesha says this week will be full of new challenges and opportunities for Capricorn natives. There will be no lack of novelty and creativity in your ideas, which will not only inspire the people around you but will also bring positive changes in your personal and professional life. This week your sociability will increase and you will meet new people. It is a good time for emotional depth in relationships; shared plans and ideas will bring you closer. At work, new projects or the scope of work may increase. Your hard work and strategy will enable you to overcome challenges. Keep in mind to cooperate in teamwork, your approach will become an inspiration for colleagues. In terms of health, it is necessary to pay attention to mental health. Include yoga or meditation in your daily routine. This week will be full of your creativity and unique ideas, just listen to your inner voice and move forward.

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JAN 19 - JAN 25, 2026
BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA****JANUARY 19**

Ganesha says that although you work hard and are honest, due to your sad, fearful, and jealous nature, you often have to face a lot of criticism. It can be very beneficial for those who are willing to take financial and business risks today. A wonderful but brief new romance may emerge. It can bring comfort and peace during travel or pilgrimage. There may be some exciting changes happening in the organization you work for. There are more likely to be multiple sources of financial gain. You will also benefit from investments in bonds and real estate.

JANUARY 20

Ganesha says your helpful nature makes you good at talking and helps you make friends quickly, but you need to control your tendency to be fussy, wasteful, and stubborn at times. Today, along with good financial gains, recognition, and many awards are expected. The formation of new alliances and partnerships seems to be supported by your stars. Some people may get a promotion and a transfer. Thoughtful estimation will be beneficial, so be extra careful not to lose your hard-earned money.

JANUARY 21

Ganesha says that although you are endowed with excellent imagination and intuition and have excellent leadership qualities, sometimes you need to control your temptation to act extravagantly, hypocritically, and stubbornly. Today, both your financial health and physical health may remain good. Entrepreneurs can finance more profitable projects. Promising contacts may increase with the help of social gatherings and travel. Despite your chaotic behavior with you, your spouse may be quite friendly and show you all his love and affection.

JANUARY 22

Ganesha says you have a great appreciation for good writing and music, and you like to hang out with people who share your interests. However, you have to learn to control your tendency to be irrational, impatient, and destructive from time to time. Today, you should be ready to handle new tasks and positions with important responsibilities. Your financial position becomes stable as previous investments start giving returns. Better finances bring prosperity and happiness to the home. It may be possible to travel frequently and earn more money for it.

JANUARY 23

Ganesha says you are enthusiastic and extremely helpful, but you should learn to control your tendency to sometimes act impatiently, rashly, and timidly. Today, your confidence may increase. Amazing company, entrepreneurial talent will be beneficial for you. There will be many new tasks and assignments to increase your prosperity. Receiving some exciting news from abroad in the latter part of the day can increase the emotions of the entire family. Concerns may arise regarding the health of a family member's child. The journey will be beneficial if new relationships are formed.

JANUARY 24

Ganesha says that today, new alliances and collaborations can lead to financial gains. You may be at the peak of your self-assurance and determination. Profit is recovered in the form of money in the form of bad debts and late payments. A long journey for any pilgrimage or any auspicious ritual cannot be ruled out. Real estate and stock speculation may prove profitable. Employed people may experience stressful times at the workplace due to their boss's erratic behavior. Your partner can understand

**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

your concerns and show you love and affection.

JANUARY 25

Ganesha says that today, your happiness and financial success are certain. You should not take any shortcuts to achieve your objectives. Entrepreneurs can explore new, exciting directions. Any property-related dispute may be resolved to your satisfaction. You may be worried about your spouse's health. You may be tired but happy at the end of the day. Spending time with friends can be beneficial as they can empathize with your problems.

Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at www.bejandaruwalla.com
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CONTD FROM PAGE 34**PISCES**

Ganesha says this week, a new door of possibilities is going to open for Pisces natives. You will be able to

listen to your inner voice, which will give you clarity in different areas of your life. In terms of work, your creativity and insight will help you make important decisions. There can be fun changes in your social life as well. Time spent with friends and family will make your mind light and happy. Closeness can also increase in love relationships, so try to spend more time with your partner. In terms of health, resorting to meditation and yoga will help maintain your mental balance. Stay away from negativity hold on to positive thinking and keep moving

AUTHOR BIO

Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website chiragdaruwalla.com. He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: info@chiragdaruwalla.com

towards your goals. Financially, this week can provide some new investment

opportunities. This is the right time to review the plans and move in the right

direction. Use this time and move forward towards realizing your dreams.

II SHREE GANESHAY NAMAII

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Sikh History This Week

JANUARY 16 TO JANUARY 22

16th January

1766: Sirdar Chadat Singh Sukarchakia killed Hameed Khan and captured Gujrawala.

1841: Chand Kaur defended Lahore against Sher Singh's attack with the help of Gulab Singh. Fort was well defended by Gulab Singh and Gardner. Dhian Singh returned to Lahore. Sher Singh lost about 5000 men. And Gulab Singh left fort and Lahore and carried away great wealth.



1923: First abortive attempt is made to kill Arjan Singh Patwari of Haripur. He was alledged to be responsible for Master Mota Singh's arrest.

17th January

1766: Jahan Khan, the Commander of Ahmed Shah Abdali's forces, attacked Amritsar. The united forces of the Sikh Misls, faced Jahan Khan and successfully defeated the enemy forces at Putlighar, on the outskirts of Amritsar. 1846 The Khalsa Army of Ranjit Singh ransacked a garrison of East India Company at Ludhiana.



1872: Baba Ram Singh, Naamdhari Leader, was arrested by the British government. He was subsequently exiled from India.

1872: 42 Naamdhari GurSikhs, accused of secessionist acts, were bown-up at Malaerkotla, after being tied with the cannons while one boy was cut to pieces. These executions were carried out under orders of Mr. L. Cowan, Deputy Commissioner Ludhiana, Malaerkotla.

1922: All Akalis arrested in connection with the Keys agitation are released.

1925: A jatha of 500 Akali Sikhs, led by Lakha Singh JahanShah (Gujran Wala), ready to lay down their lives was stooped from proceeding to Gangsar, Jaito – the place of Sikh agitation, and arrested.

19th January

1908: First Gurdwara Sahib in Canada 19th, 1908 the was officially opened at 1866 west 2nd Avenue Vancouver B.C., under the management of the Khalsa Diwan Society. This Gurdwara Sahib served the Greater Vancouver Sikh community until new Gurdwara Sahib

was occupied on April 25th, 1970. The 2nd Avenue property was sold for \$100,000 to build a bigger (present) Gurdwara Sahib. It was very unfortunate to lose this historical Sikh monument.

20th January



1706 Guru Gobind Singh Sahib reached Talwandi, where he set camp, outside the village, is the location of Gurduara Damdamaa Sahib. Dam damaa means breathing place. That is take a breather after the many battles he had been through.

1841 After Gulab Singh left Lahore, Sher Singh occupied the fort. Dhian Singh became the Wazir. The Sandalwalia Sardars, hostile to the ruling group, started entering into intrigues.

1926 The British Government announced the judgement in Babbar Akali case. As a result, 5 Babbar Akalis were ordered to the hanged, 11 were sentenced to life imprisonment, and 38 were imprisoned four years. Approximately 90 religious, high spirited, daring fighters formed the Babbar Akali group. They had promised freedom to the masses and vigorously fought the British, especially in the Duaba and Malwa regions.

1986 Sentences handed in the case of Indian Airline hijacking.

21st January



1831 The King of England sent valuable gifts to Maharaja Ranjit Singh as a gesture of friendship. The gifts were really meant to be a bate of friendship! The British had encroched into his territory and came all the way to the other side of river Satluj and finally attacked the Sikh kingdom as soon as he breatherd his last, after buying all the Dogras. What followed afterwards is a history!

1846 Budhowal battle was fought and won by the Sikh troops against the East India Company. Sikhs defeated Harry Smith at Budhowal and captured his baggage. Sikhs also attacked and burned down large part of Ludhiana cantonement. HARRY Smith fought a minor skirmish with Ranjodh Singh at Atwal.

22nd January



1848 Mool Raj, Governor of Multan, revolted against the British but was defeated.

MOOL RAJ: During Maharaja Ranjit Singh's reign, Mool Raj was an efficient and loyal Governor of Multan, He was the son of Diwan Sawanmal Chaupadhae and appointed Governor by the Lahore darbar. During his reign, two British officers were killed by the Lahore forces. As a result, the British Resident of Lahore, John Lawrence, wanted to dismiss Mool Raj. On account of his loyalty to the kingdom of Ranjit Singh, he revolted against the British East India Company who were forcibly annexing Ranjit Singh's Punjab. He put up a brave defense of the fort of Multan but was defeated on this day. The British arrested and imprisoned him in Calcutta jail, where he died in 1850.

1849 Multan fell to the British.

1986 The additional session judge announced his judgement in the case of Indira Gandhi's murder. Satwant Singh and Kehar Singh were to be hanged. The sentence was carried out on Jan. 6, 1989. Indira Gandhi was gunned down at her resident on Oct. 31, 1984, as a retribution for her role in operation Bluestar, during which the Indian Army attacked and desecrated Sri Harimandir Sahib, Amritsar.



Mauni Amavasya: The sacred confluence of silence, self-restraint & supreme awakening

Mauni Amavasya is not merely a date in the Hindu lunar calendar; it is a profound spiritual threshold where silence transforms into sadhana, restraint becomes revelation, and the human soul is gently guided toward self-realisation. Observed on the Amavasya (new moon) of Krishna Paksha in the sacred month of Magha, Mauni Amavasya is revered as one of the most spiritually charged days in Sanatan Dharma. On this day, the external world fades, and the inner cosmos begins to speak.

The very essence of Mauni Amavasya lies in Mauna-silence-not as absence of speech, but as mastery over the senses, thoughts and ego. It is a day when seekers consciously step away from noise, desire and distraction, choosing instead the subtle language of the soul.

Etymology and Philosophical Meaning

The term "Mauni" originates from Mauna, which in yogic philosophy signifies inner silence, not just verbal restraint. A Mauni is one who has subdued the turbulence of mind and speech. Hindu scriptures describe Mauna as a higher form of tapasya, superior even to ritualistic sacrifices, because it purifies consciousness itself.

Mauni Amavasya is also known as Manu Amavasya, connecting it to Manu, the primordial sage and progenitor of mankind. Manu is regarded as the first lawgiver who received divine knowledge through deep contemplation and silence, establishing the moral and social order (Manusmriti). His spiritual attainment through Mauna gives this day its timeless sanctity.

Mythological Origins and Scriptural References

Ancient Puranic literature accords Mauni Amavasya exceptional merit. According to the Padma Purana and Skanda Purana, Manu undertook intense penance on this Amavasya, observing complete silence and austerity to receive divine wisdom from Lord Vishnu. It was through this disciplined silence that the foundations of dharma were laid for humanity.

Another legend associates Mauni Amavasya with Lord Vishnu's cosmic rest, symbolising the withdrawal of divine energy from manifestation back into stillness. The new moon represents dissolution, introspection and renewal-making this Amavasya ideal for spiritual rebirth.

The Mahabharata and Dharma Shastras repeatedly emphasise that charity, fasting and holy baths performed on Mauni Amavasya yield inexhaustible spiritual merit, equivalent to performing Ashwamedha Yajnas.

Astrological and Cosmic Significance

From an astrological perspective,



Important information

Mauni Amavasya 2026

Sunday, 18 January 2026

Amavasya Tithi Begins - 18 January 2026 at 00:03 am

Amavasya Tithi Ends - 19 January 2026 at 01:21 am

Mauni Amavasya occurs during Magha month, considered one of the holiest periods in the Hindu calendar. The Sun remains in Capricorn (Makara Rashi), while the Moon merges with the Sun, symbolising the union of mind and soul.

Spiritual traditions believe that on this day, cosmic energies are inward-moving, aiding meditation, detachment and karmic cleansing. Silence harmonises the individual with these subtle vibrations, making spiritual efforts immensely fruitful.

The Profound Spiritual Significance

Mauni Amavasya represents the highest spiritual discipline of restraint. It teaches that silence is not emptiness but awareness, not withdrawal but refinement.

Mauna as Inner Yajna

Speech is considered a powerful force capable of both creation and destruction. Observing silence conserves spiritual energy (ojas) and channels it inward. Yogic texts describe Mauna as an internal yajna, where ego, anger and desire are symbolically offered into the

fire of awareness.

Liberation from Karmic Burdens

Fasting, charity and silence on this day are believed to neutralise accumulated karmas. The new moon symbolises a blank slate-an opportunity to release past impressions (samskaras).

Gateway to Moksha

Mauni Amavasya is regarded as especially auspicious for those seeking liberation. Scriptures affirm that sincere observance of Mauna with devotion brings the seeker closer to Vishnu, Shiva and the eternal truth (Brahman).

Rituals and Sacred Observances

Holy Bath (Mauni Amavasya Snan)

The most significant ritual is bathing in sacred rivers. A dip at dawn in rivers like the Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati (Triveni Sangam), Godavari, Narmada and Shipra is believed to cleanse sins accumulated over lifetimes. This snan holds special importance during the Magh Mela and Kumbh Mela, where Mauni Amavasya

marks one of the holiest bathing days.

Silence (Mauna Vrat)

Devotees observe silence from sunrise to sunset, and ascetics often maintain Mauna for several days. Silence is practiced not only verbally but mentally-avoiding negative thoughts and emotional turbulence.

Fasting and Self-Discipline

Fasting ranges from fruit-based diets to complete nirjala vrat. Food restraint symbolises control over cravings, reinforcing spiritual focus.

Charity and Compassion

Donations made on Mauni Amavasya are believed to yield eternal merit. Offering food, clothes, blankets, sesame seeds, ghee and money to the needy, saints and Brahmins is considered highly auspicious. Feeding cows, birds and the poor reflects the spirit of universal compassion.

Worship and Meditation

Devotees worship Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva and Pitrs (ancestors). Mantra japa, meditation, scriptural reading and contemplation form the spiritual core of the day. Gayatri Mantra, Vishnu Sahasranama and Om Namah Shivaya are commonly recited.

Mauni Amavasya and the Kumbh Tradition

Mauni Amavasya holds extraordinary significance during the Kumbh, Ardh Kumbh and Magh Mela, especially at Prayagraj. The Shahi Snan on this day witnesses the majestic procession of Naga sadhus, akharas and ascetics-symbolising renunciation, silence and supreme detachment. Millions of pilgrims gather, making Mauni Amavasya the largest spiritual congregation on Earth, united by faith, silence and sacred immersion.

The Inner Symbolism of Silence

Spiritually, Mauni Amavasya teaches that truth reveals itself only in silence. The Upanishads declare that ultimate reality cannot be spoken-it must be experienced. Silence dissolves ego, sharpens awareness and allows divine wisdom to emerge naturally.

In a world overwhelmed by noise, Mauni Amavasya serves as a reminder that inner stillness is the highest form of prayer. It encourages humanity to pause, purify and realign with cosmic order.

Mauni Amavasya transcends ritualistic observance. It is a spiritual reset, urging seekers to embrace silence, simplicity and self-restraint. By withdrawing from excess and noise, one rediscovers the sacred presence within. In essence, Mauni Amavasya is a sacred dialogue between the soul and the infinite-where silence becomes wisdom, restraint becomes liberation, and the human spirit moves closer to eternal truth.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

UN chief on 'erosion' of international...

comes to an end on December 31, 2026. He made the remarks in his traditional address to the General Assembly on his priorities for the year ahead.

Guterres has expressed deep alarm at the escalation between the United States and Venezuela culminating in the capture of the country's President Nicolas Maduro, and had said that the developments constitute a "dangerous precedent" and expressed concern that rules of international law have not been respected.

Guterres, who has also consistently spoken out against the Russian invasion of Ukraine, told the General Assembly that no effort must be spared to stop the fighting in Ukraine and achieve a just and lasting peace in line with the UN Charter, international law and UN resolutions.

He, however, strongly criticized nations for violating international law and not adhering to the UN Charter, which he said is a "compact" that "binds us all."

Underlining that the UN Charter is not an "à la carte menu" but is "prix fixe", Guterres said, "We must adhere to the UN Charter - fully and faithfully. No ifs ... no ands ... no buts."

"The Charter is the foundation of international relations - the bedrock of peace, sustainable development, and human rights," he said.

Emphasizing that while he is honored to serve as custodian of the Charter, Guterres told the 193 UN Member States and their leaders that "each one of you has signed up to be a custodian of the Charter, too."

"When leaders run roughshod over international law - when they pick and choose which rules to follow - they are not only undermining global order, they are setting a perilous precedent," he said.

Guterres expressed concern that the erosion of international law is not happening in the shadows but is "unfolding before the eyes of the world, on our screens, live in 4K."

He said people everywhere are witnessing, in real time, the consequences of impunity - "the illegal use and threat of force; attacks on civilians, humanitarian workers and UN personnel; unconstitutional changes of government; the trampling of human rights; the silencing of dissent; the plundering of resources."

The UN chief also lamented that the dangers do not stop with states or warring parties but are being amplified by "bottomless" greed and inequality in a world where the top one per cent holds 43 per cent of global financial assets and the richest 500 individuals added \$2.2 trillion to their fortunes in the last year alone.

"Increasingly, we see a world where the ultra-wealthiest and the companies they control are calling the shots like never before - wielding outsized influence over economies, information, and even the rules that govern us all.

"When a handful of individuals can bend global narratives, sway elections, or dictate the terms of public debate, we are not just facing inequality - we are facing the corruption of institutions and our shared values," he said.

US Ambassador Sergio Gor presents...

the partnership between the world's two largest democracies.

"It is an honor to serve in India at a time of such promise and opportunity in the US-India relationship," Gor said.

Before taking up his posting in New Delhi, Gor served as Assistant to US President Donald Trump and Director of Presidential Personnel at the White House.

Earlier this week, after arriving in India, the ambassador described India-US ties as a relationship where "real friends can have disagreements but can resolve them."

Gor assumes office at a challenging time, with bilateral ties under strain following the imposition of a 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods entering the US market, a move that has impacted trade relations between the two countries. (Source: Tribune)

Venezuela's Machado presented her...

Venezuela. He has signaled his willingness to work with acting President Delcy Rodríguez, who had been

Maduro's second in command.

"I presented the president of the United States the medal, the Nobel Peace Prize," Machado told reporters after leaving the White House and heading to Capitol Hill. She said she had done so "as a recognition for his unique commitment with our freedom." Trump confirmed later on social media that Machado had left the medal for him to keep, and he said it was an honor to meet her.

"She is a wonderful woman who has been through so much. María presented me with her Nobel Peace Prize for the work I have done," Trump said in his post. "Such a wonderful gesture of mutual respect. Thank you María!" Trump has raised doubts about his stated commitment to backing democratic rule in Venezuela, giving no timetable on when elections might be held. Machado indicated that he had provided few specifics on that front during their discussion.

After the closed-door meeting, Machado greeted dozens of cheering supporters waiting for her near the White House gates, stopping to hug many.

"We can count on President Trump," she told them without elaborating, prompting some to briefly chant, "Thank you, Trump." Before her visit to Washington, Machado had not been seen in public since she traveled last month to Norway, where her daughter received the peace prize on her behalf. She had spent 11 months in hiding in Venezuela before she appeared in Norway after the ceremony.

The jubilant scene after her meeting with Trump stood in contrast to political realities in Venezuela. Rodríguez remains in charge of day-to-day government operations, along with others in Maduro's inner circle. In her first state of the union speech Thursday, the interim president promoted the resumption of diplomatic ties between the historic adversaries and advocated for opening the state-run oil industry to more foreign investment after Trump pledged to seize control of Venezuelan crude sales.

Trump has said it would be difficult for Machado to lead because she "doesn't have the support within or the respect within the country." Her party is widely believed to have won 2024 elections rejected by Maduro.

White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt called Machado "a remarkable and brave voice" but also said the meeting didn't mean Trump's opinion of her changed, calling it "a realistic assessment." Leavitt told reporters that Trump supported new Venezuelan elections "when the time is right" but did not say when he thought that might be.

A frank and positive discussion' about Venezuela

Leavitt said Machado had sought the face-to-face meeting without setting expectations for what would occur. She spent about two and a half hours at the White House.

"I don't think he needs to hear anything from Ms. Machado," the press secretary said while the meeting was still going on, other than to have a "frank and positive discussion about what's taking place in Venezuela." After leaving the White House, Machado went on to a closed-door meeting with a bipartisan group of senators.

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said Machado told them that "if there's not some progress, real progress towards a transition in power, and/or elections in the next several months, we should all be worried." "She reminded us that Delcy Rodríguez is, in many ways, worse than Maduro," he added.

Asked if Machado had heard any commitment from the White House on holding elections in Venezuela, Murphy said, "No, I don't think she got any commitment from them." Sen. Bernie Moreno, an Ohio Republican, was exultant following the meeting, saying Machado "delivered a message that loud and clear: What President Trump did was the most important, significant event in Latin America. That getting rid of Maduro was absolutely essential." Machado's Washington stop coincided with US forces in the Caribbean Sea seizing another sanctioned oil tanker that the Trump administration says had ties to Venezuela. It is part of a broader US effort to take control of the South American country's oil after US forces captured Maduro and his wife less than two weeks ago at a heavily guarded compound in the Venezuelan capital of Caracas and brought them to New York to stand trial on drug trafficking charges.

Leavitt said Venezuela's interim authorities have been fully cooperating with the Trump administration and noted that Rodríguez's government said it planned to release more prisoners detained under Maduro. Among those released were five Americans this week.

Trump said Wednesday that he had a "great conversation" with Rodríguez, their first since Maduro was ousted.

Machado doesn't get the nod from Trump

Just hours after Maduro's capture, Trump said of Machado that "it would be very tough for her to be the leader." Machado had steered a careful course to avoid offending Trump, notably after winning the peace prize, and had sought to cultivate relationships with him and key administration voices like Secretary of State Marco Rubio.

The industrial engineer and daughter of a steel magnate, Machado began challenging the ruling party in 2004, when the nongovernmental organization she co-founded, Súmate, promoted a referendum to recall then-President Hugo Chávez. The initiative failed, and Machado and other Súmate executives were charged with conspiracy.

A year later, she drew the anger of Chávez and his allies again for traveling to Washington to meet President George W Bush, whom Chávez considered an adversary.

Almost two decades later, she marshaled millions of Venezuelans to reject Chávez's successor, Maduro, for another term in the 2024 election. But ruling party-loyal electoral authorities declared him the winner despite ample credible evidence to the contrary. Ensuing anti-government protests ended in a brutal crackdown

Greenland's defence is 'common...

'Are they going to bring their violence here?': Fear - but little preparation - as threat of invasion looms over Greenland

As well as providing a show of political support, the European troops were said to be on a short scoping mission, according to one country involved.

The aim was to establish what a more sustained ground deployment in Greenland could look like, partly to reassure the US that European Nato members were serious about Arctic security.

It comes after a difficult meeting in Washington on Wednesday between the foreign ministers of Greenland and Denmark, Vivian Motzfeldt and Lars Løkke Rasmussen, and the US vice-president, JD Vance, and secretary of state, Marco Rubio.

The visit was intended to smooth relations between Denmark and Greenland and the US, but it did not appear to have had the desired effect. Afterwards, Trump reiterated his previous comments that the US "needs" Greenland for national security, adding that Denmark could not be relied on to protect the island and that "something will work out".

In a statement released on Thursday, Frederiksen said it had not been an easy meeting and that a working group was being set up to discuss how Arctic security could be improved.

"However, that does not change the fact that there is a fundamental disagreement because the American ambition to take over Greenland is intact," she said. "This is obviously serious and therefore we continue our efforts to prevent that scenario from becoming a reality." There was, she said, agreement within Nato that "a strengthened presence in the Arctic is crucial for European and North American security".

She said Denmark had "invested significantly in new Arctic capabilities", while a number of allies were taking part in joint exercises in and around Greenland. "The defence and protection of Greenland is a common concern for the entire Nato alliance," she said.

Greenland's prime minister, Jens-Frederik Nielsen, said the first meeting marked an important step, but that dialogue with the US was dependent on "respect for our constitutional position, for international law, and for our right to our own country". Nielsen also reiterated several points including that Greenland was "not for sale", would not be owned by, governed by or be part of the US, and was a "democratic society with self-government", part of the kingdom of Denmark and, in turn, a member of Nato.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Vrindavan: Where devotion breathes in every street and eternity dances with time

Nestled on the banks of the sacred Yamuna in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura district, Vrindavan is not merely a destination—it is a living spiritual experience. Revered as the land of Lord Krishna's divine leelas, Vrindavan is one of Hinduism's most sacred pilgrimage centers and a place where mythology, bhakti, culture and everyday life flow seamlessly into one another. For devotees and travelers alike, Vrindavan offers a rare journey—one that is inward as much as it is outward.

Often described as the heartland of Krishna consciousness, Vrindavan attracts millions of pilgrims, saints, spiritual seekers and tourists from across India and the world. Its narrow lanes echo with the sound of kirtans, temple bells and chants of "Radhe Radhe", creating an atmosphere that feels timeless and transcendent.

Mythological and Spiritual Significance

Vrindavan holds unparalleled importance in Hindu tradition as the playground of Lord Krishna's childhood and youth. According to the Bhagavata Purana, Harivamsa and other Vaishnav scriptures, this is where Krishna spent his formative years, enchanting the world with his flute, divine mischief and boundless love.

The forests (vanas) of Vrindavan—once lush with kadamba, tamal and banyan trees—were witness to Krishna's Raas Leela, his playful stealing of butter (Makhan Leela), and his divine love with Radha, the eternal embodiment of devotion. Every corner of Vrindavan is believed to be sanctified by Krishna's presence, making the town itself a sacred living shrine.

Banke Bihari Temple

One of the most revered temples in Vrindavan, the Banke Bihari Temple is dedicated to Lord Krishna in his childlike form. The temple is unique for its intimate darshan style—there are no bells or loud aartis, as it is believed that the deity is a child who should not be disturbed. The curtain before the idol opens and closes repeatedly, creating a deeply emotional and personal experience for devotees.

ISKCON Temple (Krishna Balaram Mandir)

A global spiritual landmark, the ISKCON Temple attracts devotees from all over the world. With its serene architecture, melodious kirtans and well-maintained premises, it offers a tranquil space for meditation and spiritual learning. The temple complex also houses guesthouses, a museum and a Vedic study centre.

Prem Mandir

A relatively modern marvel, Prem Mandir is a grand white marble temple dedicated to Radha-Krishna and Sita-



Ram. Famous for its intricate carvings and illuminated evening displays, the temple narrates Krishna's leelas through beautifully sculpted tableaux, making it a major attraction for tourists.

Radha Raman Temple

This ancient temple holds special significance as the deity here manifested self-manifestedly (Swayambhu). The temple follows traditional Vaishnav

rituals and is revered for its spiritual authenticity.

Nidhivan

Among the most mysterious places in Vrindavan, Nidhivan is believed to be the site where Krishna and Radha perform the Raas Leela every night. Locals firmly believe that divine activities continue here after dusk, and no one is allowed to stay inside at night. The aura of Nidhivan

is deeply mystical and awe-inspiring.

Sacred Ghats and the Yamuna

The Yamuna River is inseparable from Vrindavan's spiritual identity. Ghats like Keshi Ghat, Chir Ghat and Kaliya Ghat are associated with legendary episodes from Krishna's life. Evening aartis on the Yamuna, with oil lamps floating on the river, create a spellbinding spiritual spectacle that leaves a lasting impression on visitors.

Festivals and Cultural Experiences

Vrindavan comes alive most vibrantly during its festivals, which are celebrated with unmatched devotion and colour.

- **Holi:** Vrindavan's Holi is world-famous. The Phoolon Ki Holi (Holi with flowers) and Lathmar Holi nearby in Barsana attract global tourists.
- **Janmashtami:** The birth of Lord Krishna is celebrated with midnight rituals, dramatic enactments of Krishna's life and all-night bhajans.
- **Radhashtami:** Celebrating the birth of Radha, this festival highlights the philosophy of divine love.
- **Kartik Month:** The entire town glows with lamps, devotional singing and spiritual observances during this sacred month.
- Vrindavan is home to numerous ashrams and spiritual centres, offering yoga, meditation, bhajan sessions and scriptural discourses. These ashrams attract seekers who wish to stay longer and immerse themselves in a disciplined spiritual routine. The town has also become a hub for Bhakti Yoga, attracting international followers of Vaishnav traditions.

Local Culture, Food and Markets

Vrindavan's culture is deeply devotional. Simple living, vegetarian food and spiritual music dominate daily life. Popular local delicacies include kachori-sabzi, peda, lassi and makhan mishri. The markets around temples sell devotional items, tulsi malas, incense, paintings of Radha-Krishna and traditional attire.

Best Time to Visit and Travel Tips

- **Best Time:** October to March is ideal due to pleasant weather. Festivals offer rich cultural experiences but also draw heavy crowds.
- **How to Reach:** Vrindavan is well connected by road and rail, with Mathura Junction as the nearest major railway station. Agra and Delhi airports serve as convenient air gateways.
- **Travel Tip:** Visitors are encouraged to dress modestly, respect temple customs and be mindful of the town's spiritual atmosphere.

TRUMP THREATENS TO USE INSURRECTION ACT IN MINNESOTA IN RESPONSE TO ICE PROTESTS

Protests continue across state as governor urges peace a week after ICE agent shot and killed Renee Good

JANUARY 15, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

Donald Trump has threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act in Minnesota in response to protests in Minneapolis against federal immigration enforcement operations, as Minnesota's governor, Tim Walz, overnight urged demonstrators in Minneapolis to be peaceful amid escalating tensions.



Protests continue for Good.

In a post on Truth Social, Trump said he would use the Insurrection Act and "quickly put an end to the travesty that is taking place" if the "corrupt politicians of Minnesota don't obey the law and stop the professional agitators and insurrectionists from attacking the Patriots of ICE".

Later, on Thursday morning, Walz put out a statement that said: "I am making a direct appeal to the president: let's turn the temperature down. Stop this campaign of retribution. This is not who we are. And an appeal to Minnesotans: I know this is scary. We can - we must - speak out loudly, urgently but also peacefully. We cannot fan the flames of chaos. That's what he wants."

Trump's warning that he might invoke the Insurrection Act came as, overnight, Walz urged people in Minneapolis to protest peacefully after it was reported on Wednesday evening that a federal officer had shot a man in the leg during an immigration enforcement operation on the north side of the city.

The incident sparked protests in Minneapolis. The city remains on edge just one week after a federal immigration officer there shot and killed Renee Nicole Good.

"State investigators have been on the scene in North Minneapolis," Walz wrote on X overnight. "I know you're angry. I'm angry. What Donald Trump wants is violence in the streets. But Minnesota will remain an island of decency, of justice, of community, and of peace. Don't give him what he wants."

The Guardian reported that several hundred protesters gathered at the scene of the shooting. At a news conference later, the Minneapolis police chief, Brian O'Hara, said protesters had been "engaging in unlawful behavior" and urged people to leave the area.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Trump administration ends temporary protected status for Somalis in US

Critics condemn 'bigoted attack' as Trump bids to revoke citizenship of naturalized immigrants convicted of fraud

JANUARY 15, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

The Trump administration is terminating temporary protected status (TPS) for Somalis living in the United States, giving hundreds of people two months to leave the country or face deportation.

The homeland security secretary, Kristi Noem, said in a statement that conditions in the east African country had improved sufficiently and that Somalis no longer qualified for the designation under federal law.

"Temporary means temporary," Noem wrote, adding that allowing Somali nationals to remain was "contrary to our national interests".

"We are putting Americans first," she added.

Then Donald Trump said his administration was going to revoke the US citizenship of any naturalized immigrant from Somalia or any other country who is convicted of defrauding what he referred to as "our citizens".

US president made the remarks in a wider speech at the Detroit Economic Club while on a trip to Michigan and did not go into further detail at the time. There is a high level of US citizenship by naturalization among Somali American communities in Minnesota.

The Trump administration had first announced its intention to end protection for Somali nationals in November, with Trump writing on his Truth Social platform about Minnesota, which is home to a large Somali community: "Somali gangs are terrorizing the people of that great State, and BILLIONS of Dollars are missing. Send them back to where they came



The homeland security secretary, Kristi Noem, speaks at a press conference in New York City on 8 January.

Photograph: David Dee Delgado/Reuters

from. It's OVER!"

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (Cair), which advocates for fair treatment of Muslims in the US, on Tuesday criticized the latest rollback of rights as a "bigoted attack" that will send some Somalis back to a war-torn, unstable nation.

"This decision does not reflect changed conditions in Somalia," Cair said in a statement released jointly with its Minnesota chapter. "By dismantling protections for one of the most vulnerable Black and Muslim communities, this decision exposes an agenda rooted in exclusion, not public safety."

The administration has used Minnesota's issues with fraud as a pretext to send a surge of immigration officers into the state. Trump has called Somalis "garbage" and referenced unverified reports, amplified by Republican lawmakers, suggesting the militant group al-Shabaab in Somalia benefited from fraud committed in Minnesota, though these claims have not been substantiated.

On Monday, Minneapolis and St Paul filed a lawsuit against the administration, alleging Minnesota was being targeted for its diversity and political differences with the federal government. "[Department of Homeland Security] agents have sown chaos and terror across the metropolitan area," said Keith Ellison, the state's attorney general. Last week, the American citizen Renee Good was fatally shot in the head by a federal immigration agent in south Minneapolis during an enforcement operation, sparking tens of thousands to march in protest across the US.

The decision to withdraw TPS for Somalis in the US, first reported by Fox News Digital, affects 705 Somali nationals currently holding TPS, according to official US Citizenship and Immigration Services data as of August 2025. They have until 17 March before their status expires. Anonymous immigration sources cited higher figures to Fox News of about 2,471 current beneficiaries and another 1,383 applications.

TPS is granted by the Department of Homeland Security to foreign nationals who cannot safely return to their home countries due to armed conflict, natural disasters or other extraordinary circumstances. The protection allows individuals to live and work legally in the US until conditions improve in their homeland.

Somalis were first granted TPS by the administration of George HW Bush in 1991 during Somalia's civil war. The status has been repeatedly renewed by successive administrations, most recently by Joe Biden in September 2024, who extended it through March 2026.

"Huge win for Trump Administration": US court ruling against 'pro-Hamas activist' Mahmoud Khalil

JANUARY 16, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

An appeals Court in the United States has struck down the decision made by an activist judge to release pro-Hamas activist Mahmoud Khalil and called it a "huge victory" for the Trump administration.

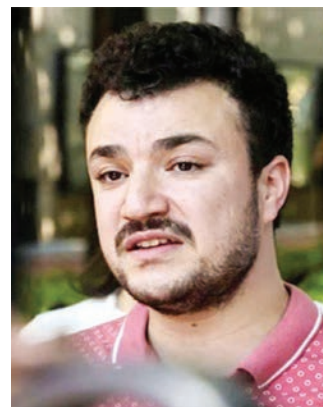
In a post shared on X, the Department of State wrote, "The Third Circuit Court of Appeals has struck down the decision made by an activist judge to release pro-Hamas activist Mahmoud Khalil. This is a huge win for the Trump Administration. We will not allow terrorist supporters to endanger the national security of the United States".

The Third Circuit Court of Appeals has struck down the decision made by an activist judge to release pro-Hamas activist Mahmoud Khalil.

This is a huge win for the Trump Administration. We will not allow terrorist supporters to endanger the national security of the United States.

- Department of State (@StateDept) January 15, 2026

An appeals court panel in the United States has moved to dismiss a petition filed by Palestinian activist Mahmoud Khalil challenging his detention and deportation, in a decision that strengthens the position of President Donald Trump's



Mahmoud Khalil

administration, Al Jazeera reported.

In a 2-1 ruling delivered on Thursday, the judges held that the federal court which had ordered Khalil's release last year did not have jurisdiction over the case. The decision could open the door for Khalil's re-arrest by immigration authorities, though the order will not take effect immediately and Khalil has indicated that he plans to appeal.

"Today's ruling is deeply disappointing, but it does not break our resolve," Khalil said in a statement. "The door may have been opened for potential re-detainment down the line, but it has not closed our commitment to Palestine and to justice and accountability. I will continue to fight, through every legal avenue and with every ounce of determination, until my rights, and the rights of others like me, are fully protected."

Khalil, who missed the birth of his first child while in detention last year, was born in Syria, holds Algerian citizenship and is a lawful permanent resident of the United States. He is married to a US citizen and was pursuing a graduate degree at Columbia University in New York when immigration authorities detained him, Al Jazeera reported.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

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History This Week

JAN 16 - JAN 22

JANUARY 16



January 16, 1979 - The Shah of Iran departed his country amid mass demonstrations and the revolt of Islamic fundamentalists led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The Shah had ruled Iran since 1941 and had unsuccessfully attempted to westernize its culture.

January 16, 1991 - The war against Iraq began as Allied aircraft conducted a major raid against Iraqi air defenses. The air raid on Baghdad was broadcast live to a global audience by CNN correspondents as operation Desert Shield became Desert Storm.

January 16, 1992 - The twelve-year civil war in El Salvador ended with the signing of a peace treaty in Mexico City. The conflict had claimed over 75,000 lives.

Birthday - French industrialist Andre Michelin (1853-1931) was born in Paris. He started the Michelin Tire Company in 1888, pioneering the use of pneumatic tires on autos.

JANUARY 17

January 17, 1945 - During World War II, Warsaw, Poland, was liberated by Soviet Russian troops.

January 17, 1966 - A Hydrogen bomb accident occurred over Palomares, Spain, as an American B-52 jet collided with its refueling plane. Eight crewmen were killed and the bomber then released its H-bomb into the Atlantic.



Birthday - Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. Considered the Elder Statesman of the American Revolution, he displayed multiple talents as a printer, author, publisher, philosopher, scientist, diplomat and philanthropist. He signed both the Declaration of Independence and the new U.S. Constitution.

Birthday - Muhammad Ali was born in Louisville, Kentucky, January 17, 1942 (as Cassius Clay). At age 22 in 1964, he knocked out Sonny Liston to win the world heavyweight boxing championship, shouting out "I shook up the world!" After converting to the Muslim religion, the boxing superstar became an outspoken conscientious objector (on religious grounds) to America's escalating involvement in the Vietnam War and refused military duty upon being drafted. As a result, he was stripped of his boxing title, banned from

boxing, and subsequently jailed. After a long legal battle, his conviction was reversed and he regained the championship in 1974 by defeating George Foreman. In the early 1980s, after retiring from boxing, Ali revealed his new struggle with Parkinson's disease. However, he has remained active, devoting himself to various philanthropic and humanitarian causes.

JANUARY 18



January 18, 1966 - Robert Clifton Weaver was sworn in as the first African American cabinet member in U.S. history, becoming President Lyndon B. Johnson's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Birthday - American orator and politician Daniel Webster (1782-1852) was born in Salisburry, New Hampshire. "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!" he stated in the U.S. Senate in 1830 in response to Southern Senators who contended that individual states had the right to refuse to obey Congress.

JANUARY 19



January 19, 1966 - Indira Gandhi was elected prime minister of India in succession to Lal Shastri who had died eight days earlier. She served until 1975 and later from 1980 to 1984, when she was assassinated by her own bodyguards as she walked to her office. Her only surviving son, Rajiv, became the next prime minister. In 1991, he was assassinated while campaigning for reelection

January 19, 1983 - Former Gestapo official Klaus Barbie, known as the "Butcher of Lyon," was arrested in Bolivia, South America. He was responsible for deporting Jewish children from Lyon to Auschwitz where they were gassed. He also murdered French Resistance leader Jean Moulin and tortured others. He was exposed by Nazi hunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, extradited in 1987, then convicted by the French and died while in prison.

Birthday - Robert E. Lee (1807-1870) military leader of the Confederacy during the American Civil War, was born in Westmoreland County, Virginia. He was the son of a Revolutionary War hero, a graduate of West Point and served in the U.S. Army for 25 years preceding the

Civil War. At the outbreak of hostilities, he was offered command of the Union Army, but declined and instead accepted command of the military and naval forces of Virginia.

Birthday - Edgar Allen Poe (1809-1849) poet and writer of mystery and suspense tales, was born in Boston, Massachusetts. His works include; The Fall of the House of Usher, Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque, The Murders in the Rue Morgue and his famous poem The Raven.

JANUARY 20



January 20, 1936 - King George V of England died at age 71. The grandson of Queen Victoria, he had reigned since 1910. He renamed his line as the House of Windsor, breaking his association with the family's German line of descent. He was succeeded by his son King Edward VIII who abdicated in December and was succeeded by George VI.

January 20, 1942 - During the Holocaust, Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's second in command of the SS, convened the Wannsee Conference in Berlin with 15 top Nazi bureaucrats to coordinate the Final Solution (Endlösung) in which the Nazis would attempt to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe, an estimated 11 million persons.

January 20, 1945 - Franklin Delano Roosevelt was inaugurated to an unprecedented fourth term as president of the United States. He had served since 1933.

January 20, 1981 - Ronald Reagan became president of the United States at the age of 69, the oldest president to take office. During his inauguration celebrations, he announced that 52 American hostages that had been seized in the U.S. embassy in Tehran, Iran, were being released after 444 days in captivity.

January 20, 1996 - Yasir Arafat became the first democratically-elected leader of the Palestinian people with 88.1 percent of the vote.

JANUARY 21



January 21, 1924 - Soviet Russian leader Vladimir Lenin died of a brain hemorrhage. He led the Bolsheviks to victory over the Czar in the October Revolution of 1917 and had then established the world's first Communist government. Lenin's body was placed in a tomb in Red Square in Moscow and was a much venerated national shrine until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

January 21, 1954 - The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.

January 21, 1976 - The Concorde supersonic jet began passenger service with flights from London to Bahrain and Paris to Rio de Janeiro, cruising at twice the speed of sound (Mach 2) at an altitude up to 60,000 feet.

Birthday - Ethan Allen (1738-1789) was born in Litchfield, Connecticut. He was a hero of the American Revolution who led the small force that captured Fort Ticonderoga in New York without bloodshed in 1775. The fort contained much needed supplies and ammunition.

Birthday - Confederate Army General "Stonewall" Jackson (1824-1863) was born in Clarksburg, Virginia (as Thomas Jonathan Jackson). He was a West Point graduate who served in the Mexican War then resigned to teach at the Virginia Military Institute. He sided with the South and became a Brigadier General, earning his nickname at the first battle of Bull Run as his troops held firm while others wavered. "There is Jackson standing like a stone wall," a fellow general commented. He was shot in 1863 by a Confederate lookout who had mistaken him in the dark. "I have lost my right arm," lamented General Lee upon his death.

JANUARY 22

January 22, 1905 - Five hundred protesting Russian workers were killed by the troops of Czar Nicholas II in St. Petersburg. The event became known as "Bloody Sunday" and marked the beginning of the violent revolutionary movement of 1905 which ultimately failed. A second revolutionary movement in 1917 succeeded and the Czar abdicated.

January 22, 1943 - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.

January 22, 1973 - Abortion became legal in the U.S. as the Supreme Court announced its decision in the case of Roe vs. Wade striking down local state laws restricting abortions in the first six months of pregnancy. In more recent rulings (1989 and 1992) the Court upheld the power of individual states to impose some restrictions.



Birthday - British essayist, philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was born in London. Best known for his philosophical works concerning the acquisition of knowledge; Novum Organum and The Advancement of Learning.

Mitchell, Young help New Zealand level ODI series with India

RAJKOT (TIP)

Indian spinners were out-bowled on home turf once again and KL Rahul's unbeaten ton was eclipsed by Daryl Mitchell's splendid 131 not out as New Zealand levelled the three-match series 1-1 with a seven-wicket win in the second ODI at Rajkot on Wednesday, January 14.

New Zealand not only adapted but also executed better than India on a sluggish wicket here at the Niranjan Shah Stadium to keep the hosts to 284/7 despite Rahul's 91-ball 112 not out (9 fours, 1 six), and overhauled the target in 47.3 overs to end at 286 for three.

The series-deciding third ODI will be played in Indore on Sunday, January 18.

Young and Mitchell, among the architects of New Zealand's 3-0 Test series win over India on their previous visit, batted with poise and control even as the asking rate hovered over six an over.

They cruised at a little above five during their second-wicket association which consumed 152 balls for 162 runs, and there wasn't any late hiccup to prevent a turnaround.

Young's (87 from 98 balls; 7 fours) solidity in the middle was complemented by the adroitness of Mitchell, who brought out almost all kinds of sweep shots to notch up his third ton against India and overall eighth, finishing at 131 not out from 117 balls (11 fours, 2 sixes).

New Zealand's triumph in a 50-overs match also took the spotlight back onto a problem which India have faced in Tests for about two years now, with the home team's spin attack being outmatched by that of the visitors, albeit that's been mostly in red-ball cricket.

Debutant left-arm spinner Jayden Lennox, summoned on this trip as a replacement for Mitchell Santner, kept a tight leash on Indian batters, returning 10-0-42-1 while Kuldeep Yadav (10-0-82-1) kept bowling short and failed to give the ball a flight despite repeated messages from Rahul behind the wickets.

And when Kuldeep did give it a flight and forced a mishit, Prasidh Krishna dropped a regulation chance at long-on in the 36th over to give Mitchell a lifeline on 80.

Kuldeep finally broke the third-wicket stand, dismissing



Young and Mohammed Siraj pinned Mitchell leg-before soon after, but the decision was overturned via DRS as there was an inside edge.

With Michael Bracewell also returning a tidy 1/34 from his 10 overs earlier, the collective return from visiting spinners was of 89 runs for two wickets in 23 overs, including Glenn Phillips' 3-0-13-0.

On their part, Kuldeep and Ravindra Jadeja (8-0-44-0) gave away 1/126 from their collective 18 overs.

New Zealand also held their ground firm when Harshit Rana (1/52) and Siraj steamed in with the new ball to create immense pressure, reaching 34/1 after the powerplay.

In particular, Rana asked the Kiwis a lot of questions and also dismantled Devon Conway, who had cracked three fours early on for a positive start.

Earlier, KL Rahul held a faltering innings together on a sluggish surface with a gutsy hundred.

Rahul produced a gritty unbeaten 112 off 92 balls, which included 11 fours and two sixes, forging vital partnerships in the second half and snatching control from the Kiwis who had run through India's formidable batting line-up earlier.

India Open: Sindhu knocked out in opening round

It was a result that no one saw coming. PV Sindhu was ousted by Vietnam's Nguyen Thuy Linh in the first round. The India Open was her second major tournament after returning from a toe injury. With the home crowd backing the two-time Olympics medal winner, Nguyen was expected to be a small hurdle. Instead, the 68-minute match-up showed how Sindhu has a lot to work on, if she has to sustain another year on the tour.

After a laborious first game, the errors started to pile up and she lost 22-20 12-21 15-21. She was very critical of her game on Wednesday, Jan 14.

"It was not my day; that much I can tell you. There were good rallies and she is not an easy player either despite the ranking. When you come to a top level tournament everybody does play well and you can't expect easy points or wins," she said.

She was complimentary of her opponent who made it very hard for her to make a comeback, despite starting the second game with a lead.

"She has good strokes and she has nothing to lose, but overall in terms of a tricky player she has good skills. There were long rallies, 10, 15, 20 shots or 30 shots so it's just that you know you have to keep the tempo going and keep the shuttle in the court. Sometimes you know small mistakes might be the most important point," she said.

While Sindhu exited, young Tanvi Sharma played out of her skin to stun the fans as she took China's world No. 2 Wang Zhi Yi to the third game before losing 20-22 21-18 13-21.

Clock's ticking on Jadeja's ODI career as Axar waits on sidelines

NEW DELHI (TIP)

India's defeat in the second ODI against New Zealand was more than just a routine loss. It was a reality check. Under the floodlights, on a surface that offered assistance to bowlers, the Men in Blue faltered – first with the bat and then with the ball – allowing the visitors to roar back into the series. What unfolded was not merely an off day at the office but a match that exposed deeper concerns within the Indian camp.

At the centre of all that scrutiny stood Ravindra Jadeja. For years, the left-handed all-rounder has been one of India's most reliable cricketers, a man capable of turning games with bat, ball and brilliance in the field.

But in recent months, that aura has begun to fade in the 50-over format. In the second ODI, Jadeja walked in with India in trouble at 118/4, a familiar situation that once would have suited him perfectly.

Instead, he laboured to 27 off 44 deliveries before falling to Michael Bracewell, leaving India without the late surge they desperately needed. His



struggles were not confined to batting. With the ball, Jadeja looked equally ineffective, going wicketless and conceding 44 runs from his eight overs.

It was a continuation of a worrying trend. In the first ODI, he had leaked 56 runs in nine overs and managed only four runs with the bat. Performances that were once out of character for Jadeja are now

becoming alarmingly frequent.

The numbers paint an even grimmer picture. In his last five ODIs, Jadeja has managed just one wicket, averaging a staggering 257 with the ball and conceding runs at an economy rate of 6.11.

With the bat, he has scored 87 runs from four innings at a modest strike rate of 90.62. These are hardly the returns

expected from a premier all-rounder who has long been considered indispensable to India's white-ball plans.

Such a dip in form would have gone relatively unnoticed in the past, but times have changed. Axar Patel, Jadeja's natural competitor, is no longer just a like-for-like replacement – he is fast becoming India's preferred option. Over the last two ICC events, the contrast between the two has been stark.

In the T20 World Cup 2024, Patel claimed nine wickets while Jadeja managed only one. With the bat, Axar played a defining knock of 47 off 31 in the final, an innings that helped rescue India from a precarious position and eventually end their 11-year ICC trophy drought.

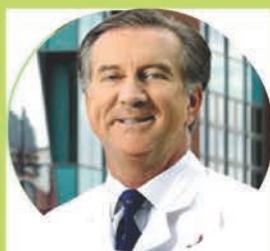
The Champions Trophy 2025 told a similar story. Patel once again outscored Jadeja; the latter didn't get many opportunities with the bat, while their bowling returns remained largely identical. Since then, the trajectory of both players has only diverged further. Jadeja has struggled to make an impact, whereas Patel has gone from strength to strength.



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Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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