



We Remember and Honor Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji on his 350th Martyrdom Anniversary

INSIDE

GURU TEGH BAHADUR: THE MARTYR WHO SHAPED HISTORY AND DEFINES MODERN FREEDOM PAGE 2

PUTIN'S UPCOMING INDIA VISIT: DELHI AND MOSCOW RECALIBRATE TIES AMID GLOBAL TURBULENCE PAGE 8

BIHAR ELECTIONS: INDIA'S DRIFT TOWARD ONE-PARTY HEGEMONY PAGE 9

TERRORISM ROOTED IN RANCOR, DISTRUST PAGE 10

Trump characterizes his meeting with Mamdani as "positive"; says "one thing in common: we want this city of ours that we love to do very well."



New York City Mayor -elect Zohran Kwame Mamdani with President Donald Trump at the White House on Friday, November 21, 2025

NOVEMBER 21, 2025 WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): US President Donald Trump extended a notably cordial welcome to New York City Mayor-elect Zohran Kwame Mamdani during their first face-to-face meeting at the White House on Friday, November 21, signaling a marked change in a relationship previously defined by public disagreements.

The Friday meeting, which Mamdani had requested, suggested that both sides were prepared to explore common ground.

Mamdani, a democratic socialist who gained national attention after his unexpected victory earlier this month, sought the meeting to raise concerns about affordability and public safety in New York City.

Their private discussion appeared to prompt a more favorable response from Trump than many had anticipated.

After the meeting, Trump told reporters he was "surprised" by how

CONTD ON PAGE 60

Indian Consulate in New York hosts an insightful fireside chat on "The India Story"

Celebrated Chef Vikas Khanna engages Iconic AAP Ki Adalat fame Rajat Sharma



Mr. Rajat Sharma (left) shares his experiences with the gathering. Mr. Vikas Khanna, the celebrated chef moderated the chat.

-Photo : Ashish Chandratreya

I.S. SALUJA

NOVEMBER 20, 2025

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): The Indian Consulate in New York hosted an insightful fireside chat on "The India

Story" on Thursday, November 20, 2025.

Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan in his eloquent address spoke about the iconic TV show Aap Ki Adalat

CONTD ON PAGE 7

GOP Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene announces she is resigning from House as of Jan. 5

NOVEMBER 21, 2025 WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Georgia) said late Friday, November 21, that she will resign from Congress as of Jan. 5, a surprise announcement that came days after a public spat between President Donald Trump in which he lobbed public insults at his longtime ally and said he would not endorse her next year, says Washington Post

In her announcement, the longtime supporter of the Make America Great Again movement celebrated her conservative voting record in Congress and close alignment with Trump's priorities. But she complained about how the shutdown and other issues have rendered Congress ineffective.

"I ran for Congress in 2020 and have fought every single day believing that Make America Great Again meant



Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Georgia) was first elected in 2020 and has been a longtime ally of the MAGA movement.

Photo credit : The Washington Post

America First," Greene said in a video and statement on X. "However, with almost one year into our majority, the legislature has been mostly sidelined."

CONTD ON PAGE 60

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COMMENT

Guru Tegh Bahadur: The Martyr Who Shaped History and Defines Modern Freedom

The martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Ninth Master of the Sikhs, remains one of the most exalted episodes in human history—an event that transcends the boundaries of time, geography, and community. It is not merely a moment recorded in annals; it is a moral force that continues to shape the world's understanding of conscience, human rights, and the sacred value of pluralism. Three and a half centuries after his execution in Delhi in 1675, his sacrifice commands not only reverence but deep reflection, for its relevance in the modern global context is as profound as it was in the India of Aurangzeb's reign.

To understand why, we must return to the historical landscape in which his martyrdom took place. In the late 17th century, Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb had intensified policies of religious coercion aimed at homogenizing the empire under Islamic law. Hindus, particularly the Kashmiri Pandits, faced aggressive pressure to convert. Their temples were destroyed, their scholars persecuted, and the dread of conversion hovered over the community like a dark cloud. In desperation, a delegation of Kashmiri Brahmins reached Anandpur Sahib and appealed to Guru Tegh Bahadur for protection. Their plea was not for political autonomy or economic relief but for the most fundamental of human entitlements: the right to practice their religion freely.

Guru Tegh Bahadur recognized instantly that the struggle was not merely the plight of one community; it was a defining test of whether the individual conscience could prevail against state power. His response was unequivocal. By deciding to stand against forced conversions and offering himself up as the moral challenger to Aurangzeb's policies, he affirmed a universal principle: faith must be an act of free will, not submission. This singular act of resistance would go on to transform the trajectory of Indian history.

Upon reaching Delhi and refusing to accept Islam, he faced months of imprisonment, torture, and threats. The executions of his companions—Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, and Bhai Dayala—were meant to break his resolve. Yet the Guru remained unshaken. His martyrdom on November 24, 1675, by beheading in Chandni Chowk, was a watershed moment. The Mughal Empire hoped to stifle dissent through this brutal spectacle. Instead, it ignited a fire of resistance and spiritual awakening across India.

Martyrs do not simply belong to history; they create and reshape it. Guru Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice undermined the moral legitimacy of Aurangzeb's coercive policies, inspired grassroots defiance against tyranny, and ultimately contributed to the weakening of Mughal authority. It also prepared the ground for the rise of Guru Gobind Singh and the formation of the Khalsa, a force that would challenge imperial aggression with spiritual strength and armed resistance.

But the significance of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom extends far beyond the boundaries of his time. It was, in essence, a declaration of religious freedom—a concept that modern constitutions and international human rights frameworks have now enshrined, but which was scarcely acknowledged in the political philosophies of the 17th century. Long before the world recognized the right to faith in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Guru Tegh Bahadur upheld it with the ultimate sacrifice of his life.



Thirty million Sikhs the world over will be honoring the supreme sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji on November 24-25.

His legacy anticipated a world order in which religious freedom, human dignity, and freedom of conscience are recognized as foundational values. In the modern global landscape, where intolerance, majoritarianism, and religious persecution continue to surface in various forms, his martyrdom holds a mirror to humanity. It compels societies to reflect: Are we living up to the ideals he died defending?

Today, nations around the world grapple with challenges that echo the dilemmas of his era. In certain regions, religious minorities still face threats to their identity and survival. Governments legislate matters of belief. Communities clash over ideologies. Extremist movements attempt to impose singular narratives. In such a world, Guru Tegh Bahadur's life and sacrifice assert a universal and timeless message: the conscience of an individual is sacred, and the right to faith cannot be dictated by rulers, mobs, or majorities.

This is why he came to be revered as Hind ki Chadar—the Shield of India. He did not fall defending his own religion but safeguarding the faith of another. His martyrdom was an expression of the highest moral courage—a level of ethical clarity that remains a benchmark for humanity. The modern world, with all its technological advancements and evolving political systems, still struggles to embody this ethos.

By Indrajit Saluja



The power of his example lies in its breadth. Guru Tegh Bahadur's message is not confined to Sikhs or Indians; it is universal. In an era where societies debate the limits of tolerance, free expression, and cultural diversity, his sacrifice underscores a fundamental truth: pluralism is not a burden but a civilizational strength. Upholding the rights of others—even when their beliefs differ from one's own—is not just moral duty but the foundation of peaceful coexistence.

Indeed, one of the most remarkable aspects of his martyrdom is that it defended a community whose faith, customs, and theology were distinct from his own. The Kashmiri Pandits practiced a faith different from Sikhism, yet their right to worship was sacred in Guru Tegh Bahadur's eyes. His sacrifice speaks directly to a contemporary world where polarization is increasing and empathy shrinking. He teaches us that humanity must rise above identity and serve the universal principles of justice.

The moral hierarchy expressed by the distinguished Sikh leader Master Tara Singh beautifully captures the spirit of Guru Tegh Bahadur's life:

Blessed is the one who gets to serve others.

More blessed is the one who serves their faith.

Even more blessed is the one who serves another's faith.

Greater still is the one who protects another's religion.

The greatest is the one who gives their life for another's religion.

It is in this final, most exalted ideal that Guru Tegh Bahadur stands alone in world history. He did not die for territory, power, or his community's privilege. He died for the right of others to retain their identity, their scriptures, their temples, and their conscience. His martyrdom represents the pinnacle of spiritual altruism.

As the global community confronts new forms of intolerance—whether digital manipulation of identities, persecution of minorities, cultural erasure, or ideological extremism—Guru Tegh Bahadur's example offers a path forward. It reminds nations that progress without values is hollow, and development without freedom is fragile. It urges individuals to stand for justice even when the cost is high, to defend the rights of others even when they are different, and to recognize that conscience is the greatest sovereign.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom is therefore not just a golden chapter in human history; it is a living beacon for the present and a guide for the future. It invites the world to rediscover the profound strength that lies in moral courage. It challenges humanity to uphold the right to faith, resist oppression, and cherish diversity. And above all, it teaches that the noblest expression of humanity is the willingness to stand for another's freedom—even at the cost of one's own life.

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Padma Bhushan
Sant Chatwal
New York

Message

The 350th Martyrdom Day of the Ninth Sikh Master, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, being observed on November 24 this year, offers us a profound moment to reflect on his unparalleled sacrifice for humanity.

I am glad that Prof. Indrajit S Saluja is bringing out a special edition of The Indian Panorama to commemorate the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur ji.

Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1469-1539), stands as the youngest and one of the most rational and compassionate religions of the world. Guru Nanak's principles-Kirt Karo, Vand Chhako, and Naam Jape-guide us to earn honestly, share selflessly, and remain spiritually grounded. His concepts of Sangat, Pangat, and Langar boldly established equality, fraternity, and social justice long before these became global ideals.

The Gurus who followed Guru Nanak continued to illuminate this path. Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the Fifth Master, became the first Sikh martyr defending the right to faith. In the same sacred tradition, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's supreme sacrifice stands as a beacon of courage and moral clarity. When a delegation of Kashmiri Pandits sought his protection against forced conversions to Islam by the Mughal rulers, the Guru chose to offer his own life so that others might enjoy religious freedom. This fearless defense of human rights earned him the revered title Hind Ki Chadar-the Shield of India.

As we commemorate this historic milestone, let us pay heartfelt homage to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji and reaffirm our commitment to his timeless message: to stand against injustice, uphold human dignity, and safeguard the right to faith for all people, everywhere.

(Sant Chatwal)



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Message

I congratulate The Indian Panorama for bringing out a special edition to honor the supreme sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji, the Ninth Guru of the Sikhs, who laid down his life to protect the right to faith, a right which we in America so much value and cherish.

As we commemorate the 350th Martyrdom Day of the Ninth Master, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, on November 24, we pay homage to one of the greatest defenders of human dignity and freedom of conscience.

Sikhism, founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji (1469-1539), is the youngest and one of the most rational and compassionate religions of the world. Guru Nanak's timeless principles-Kirt Karo, Vand Chhako, and Naam Japo-urge us to earn an honest living, share with others, and remain spiritually anchored. His revolutionary concepts of Sangat, Pangat, and Langar laid the foundation for modern ideals of equality, fraternity, and democratic living, insisting that all humans sit, dine, and live without discrimination.

The nine Gurus who followed Guru Nanak carried forward this luminous path. Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the Fifth Master, became the first Sikh martyr while defending the right to faith. Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's supreme sacrifice was a continuation of this divine mission. He stood firm against tyranny, opposed forced conversions, and gave his life to protect the religious freedom of others. It is for this unparalleled courage that he is revered as Hind Ki Chadar-the Shield of India.

As we observe this sacred milestone, let us honor Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji by renewing our commitment to justice, compassion, and the universal right to faith for all humanity.

(Harry Singh Bolla)



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Message

The Indian Panorama is doing well to publish an exclusive special edition to commemorate the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth of the ten Gurus. He was the spiritual leader of Sikhs from 1665 until his beheading in 1675. He was born in Amritsar, Punjab, India in 1621 and was the youngest son of Guru Hargobind, the sixth Sikh Guru.

He was considered a principled and fearless warrior. He was a learned, spiritual scholar, and a poet whose 115 hymns are included in the Guru Granth Sahib, which is the main text of Sikhism.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed on the order of Aurangzeb, the sixth Mughal emperor in Delhi. The Sikh holy premises gurdwara Sis Ganj, Sahib, and Gurudwara Rakab Ganj Sahib in Delhi mark the places of the Guru's execution and cremation.

Guru Tegh Bahadur once said -Hinduism may not be my faith, and I may not believe in various Hindu traditions like idol worship, pilgrimages, and other rituals, but I will fight for the rights of all Hindus and all other people of the world to live with honor and practice their faith according to their own beliefs.

Sikhism has core tenets like believing in one God, equality and service that are relatively easy to grasp but understanding the full philosophy and practices can be complex involving deep spiritual concepts, like the cycle of reincarnation and goal of merging with the divine. Its emphasis on living a moral, engaged and honest life through hard work, community service and daily remembrance of God provides a practical framework, but its symbolic aspects such as Five Ks can require more in-depth study.

A Western historian once said the Sikh Gurus founded a system superior to Hinduism and Islam preaching unity of God and fraternity of mankind, which was centuries ahead of its times.

I pay my respectful tribute to Guru Tegh Bahadur ji who came to be known as "Hind ki Chadar" for his supreme sacrifice to protect the rights of the Hindus to practice their faith.

(Dr. VK Raju)

INDIAN-ORIGIN MAN HONORED BY MCDONALD'S -\$40,000 FOR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE



Balbir Singh's coworkers and franchise leaders celebrated his four decades at McDonald with much pomp and splendor.

NOVEMBER 20, 2025

MASSACHUSETTS (TIP): An Indian-origin man who dedicated 40 years of his life to serving customers at a McDonald's outlet in Massachusetts received a red-carpet welcome on Monday, November 17. Coworkers and franchise leaders celebrated his four decades at the American fast-food chain with much pomp and splendor.

Balbir Singh, who began his career with the chain in Saugus shortly after moving to the United States in the 1980s, arrived at the McDonald's in a limousine to find cheering employees gathered for a surprise ceremony honoring his milestone.

As part of the celebration, Singh was presented with a service award, a commemorative "One in Eight" jacket, referencing the large number of Americans who have worked at McDonald's, and a \$40,000 check for his 40 years at the restaurant, news reported.

Franchise owner Lindsay Wallin, whose family has operated the restaurant for decades, praised Singh's impact on the business and the people who work there.

"Forty years of service for someone who has helped shape the heart and soul of our organization," Wallin said, as per news report.

Wallin said that her father and the original franchise owner, Bob King, worked closely with Singh for most of his journey with the company. She said King's legacy was about creating a "McFamily" built on hard work, opportunity and loyalty.

"Many of the people standing here were part of that original team, including Balbir," she said.

Now overseeing the business, Wallin said Singh's contribution remains invaluable.

"One of the things that I admire most about Balbir is that he has embraced our company motto of 'Why not?' Why not try something new? Why not grow? Why not push for better? That attitude has fueled our success and opened doors for so many of our employees," she said.

Singh began working at a McDonald's location in Somerville in 1985. "I first started as crew. I worked in the kitchen and helped in the back..."

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian American professor of medicine Rohit Loomba to hold new endowed chair at UC San Diego

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

SAN DIEGO, CA (TIP): Indian American professor of medicine Rohit Loomba will hold a new endowed chair established in honor of the late biotech leader John C. Martin to further liver disease research at the University of California San Diego.

Established with a gift from the John C. Martin Foundation, the chair was created to support innovative research and treatment in liver disease, with a focus on understanding and addressing population-based risk factors, according to a university release.

Endowed chairs are among the highest honors bestowed by UC San Diego, recognizing scholars whose work shapes their fields and transforms communities.

"It is an honor and privilege to support Rohit Loomba, a decades long colleague of John Martin, as the inaugural holder of the John C. Martin Endowed Chair," said Lillian Lou, president of the John C. Martin Foundation and life partner of Martin.

Martin, who passed away in 2021, served as chairman and CEO at Gilead Sciences, Inc., from 2008 to 2016, and as president and CEO from 1996 to 2008.

He joined Gilead in 1990 as vice president of Research and Development, and during his tenure there, the company revolutionized worldwide therapy for HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C.

"UC San Diego is recognized as the world's top institution for gastroenterology and hepatology research because of our outstanding faculty dedicated to innovative research and patient care," said Chancellor



Rohit Loomba will hold a new endowed chair established in honor of the late biotech leader John C. Martin to further liver disease research at the University of California San Diego.

Pradeep K. Khosla. "The appointment of Dr. Rohit Loomba to this chair named in honor of John Martin is fitting, as they shared the same goal of improving the quality of life for patients worldwide."

Loomba, the inaugural holder of the chair that bears Martin's name, is a professor of medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine, chief of the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and a gastroenterologist and hepatologist at UC San Diego Health.

U.S. News & World Report ranks UC San Diego No. 1 in the world for gastroenterology and hepatology (liver) research.

In addition to leading the Division of Gastroenterology and Hepatology at UC San Diego, Loomba is also the founding director of the UC San Diego metabolic-dysfunction associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) Research Center, where a multidisciplinary team is pioneering

noninvasive tests to evaluate liver disease and assess treatment response.

These methods are already transforming clinical practice by reducing the need for invasive liver biopsies and offering more precise ways to track disease progression.

"This endowed chair allows us to research and develop new cures and novel treatment options for the management of digestive diseases," said Loomba. "We work locally to impact globally and strive to be a beacon of excellence in all aspects of our clinical and academic endeavors."

An internationally recognized leader in liver disease research, Loomba has played a critical role in developing MRI-PDF as a noninvasive biomarker of treatment response in clinical trials for metabolic dysfunction-associated steatohepatitis (MASH).

This advanced type of MRI allows doctors to measure fat in the liver without a biopsy, offering a safer and more precise way to track how patients respond to new therapies.

The method, now adopted in more than 100 clinical trials worldwide, has already contributed to the FDA approval of new treatments and continues to guide large scale Phase 3 trials, the final global studies that confirm a therapy's safety and effectiveness before approval.

Loomba has published more than 600 manuscripts in leading journals and serves as co-editor of *Alimentary Pharmacology and Therapeutics*.

He is also the principal investigator on multiple NIH-funded projects and plays a leadership role in clinical research networks focused on advancing liver disease treatment.

Indian Origin Gurveen K. Chadha becomes the first Punjabi girl to be elected to the Westmount Council in Quebec

BY PRABHJOT SINGH

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

WESTMOUNT, QUEBEC (TIP): Gurveen K. Chadha of Westmount in Quebec has scripted history by becoming the first Punjabi girl to be elected a councillor to the Westmount City Council.



Gurveen K. Chadha

She defeated a sitting Councillor, Conrad Peart, in the just-concluded Quebec municipal elections.

"I know how policy gets built and how strategy is implemented. Now I'm ready to work for the community where I grew up," commented Gurveen K. Chadha after her election.

Gurveen K. Chadha was born and raised in Westmount-learning to swim at the YMCA, skating at the Rec Centre, and taking classes at Victoria Hall. She went on to study public policy at Harvard and Dartmouth. Her career bridges public policy and the private sector. In Ottawa, she was Director of Policy to Marc Garneau, Canada's Minister of Transport, leading policy development and managing complex issues at the national level. In business, she has led strategy and operations at companies like Shopify and Jobber, and she also co-founded the olive oil shop, Olives en folie, that was on Victoria Ave.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin woman, 8-month pregnant, killed after BMW slams into car in Sydney

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

SYDNEY (TIP): A 33-year-old pregnant Indian woman, just weeks away from delivering her second child, was killed in a devastating car crash in Sydney.

Samanvitha Dhareshwar, who was eight months' pregnant, had been out for an evening walk with her husband and three-year-old son when the incident occurred last Friday, police said.

According to investigators, a Kia Carnival had slowed down to allow the family to cross the footpath on George Street in Hornsby around 8 pm when a speeding BMW slammed into the back of it. The force of the collision pushed the Kia forward, striking Dhareshwar as she walked across the entrance to a car park.

She sustained serious injuries and was rushed to Westmead Hospital, but doctors were unable to save her or her unborn child.

Police identified the BMW driver as 19-year-old Aaron Papazoglu, a P-plate driver. Both he and the driver of the Kia escaped injury. Authorities have not confirmed whether Dhareshwar's husband or young son were hurt. Dhareshwar's LinkedIn profile shows she was an experienced IT systems analyst specializing in business application administration and support and was employed as a test analyst at Alisco Uniforms.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



Samanvitha Dhareshwar, who was eight months' pregnant, had been out for an evening walk with her husband and three-year-old son when she was killed in a devastating car crash in Sydney.



We Salute Hind Ki Chadar
Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji
for his Supreme Sacrifice to
Protect the Right to Faith.



*Harry Singh
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Diwali at Times Square Shines Bright in its 10th Anniversary Celebration in North America



NOVEMBER 9, 2025

NEW YORK CITY (TIP): Diwali at Times Square Presented by Procter and Gamble celebrated its landmark 10th Anniversary on Sunday, November 9, 2025, transforming the heart of New York City into a spectacular celebration of culture, community, and unity. This year's Sammaan For All - Diwali at Times Square Presented by Procter and Gamble festival brought together thousands from across

the globe to honor the Festival of Lights and its timeless message of hope, harmony, and the victory of light over darkness.

A DAY FILLED WITH CULTURE, COLOR, AND COMMUNITY

Throughout the day, Times Square came alive with the vivid sights and sounds of India. The Diwali Bazaar created a colorful hub for cultural activations, and family-friendly experiences, including a lively

Kids Zone.

The Colors of India Cultural Showcase brought a rich mix of classical, folk, contemporary, and fusion performances to the plaza, celebrating the vast cultural tapestry of India. Audiences of all ages and backgrounds gathered to enjoy the artistry, stories, and traditions that define Diwali.

At dusk, the iconic Diya Lighting Ceremony and Countdown illuminated the One Times Square Tower, creating a breathtaking moment of unity as thousands watched the symbolic light rise over the world's most recognized intersection.

LIGHT UP TIMES SQUARE CONCERT: A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

The evening concluded with the high-energy Light Up Times Square Concert,

philanthropy, medicine, entrepreneurship, arts, innovation, and community service.

HONOREES INCLUDED:

- Hemanth Paranji - Outstanding Achievement Award
 - Maneet Ahuja - Pinnacle Award
 - Akshaya Patra Foundation - Philanthropy Award
 - Sparsh Shah - Inspirational Award
 - Chef Hemant Mathur - Entrepreneurial Award
 - Dr. Sripad H. Dhawlikar - Excellence in Medicine & Community Service Award
- The distinguished Man and Woman of the Year Awards were presented live at Times Square during the November 9 celebration:
- Sanat Chattopadhyay, President of Merck & Co. - Man of the Year Award



featuring an outstanding lineup of renowned artists:

- Malkit Singh - The King of Bhangra, elevating the atmosphere with legendary hits and unmatched stage presence
- Anjana Padmanabhan - Indian Idol Junior winner, showcasing stunning vocal talent
- Ashish Kulkarni - Indian Idol finalist, captivating the audience with his powerful voice and dynamic performance
- Penn Masala - The world's first South Asian a cappella group, thrilling the crowd with their signature fusion of Bollywood and Western harmonies

The concert brought together families, students, tourists, and music lovers, filling Times Square with joy and celebration well into the night.

SAMMAAN FOR ALL AWARDS & GALA DINNER: HONORING EXCELLENCE

The 10th Anniversary festivities began earlier with the Sammaan For All Diwali at Times Square Awards & Gala Dinner, held at Tribeca Rooftop 360.

Leaders from across sectors - including representatives from the Consulate General of India in New York, elected officials, community icons, sponsors, and dignitaries - came together to honor extraordinary achievements in

- Dr. Anitha Srinivasan, Chief Medical Officer, NYC Metropolitan Hospitals - Woman of the Year Award
- Ruma Devi, Social Entrepreneur - Sammaan Award, recognized for empowering over 50,000 rural women

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

In her remarks, Founder and Producer Neeta Bhasin reflected on the ten-year journey of Diwali at Times Square, expressing deep gratitude to partners and supporters - especially title sponsor Procter & Gamble and the Office of Faith-Based and Community Partnerships of New York City. She reaffirmed Sammaan For All's continued commitment to youth empowerment through scholarships and expanded community initiatives.

"Lights Shine Brighter When We Shine Together"

The 10th Anniversary of Diwali at Times Square marked a historic cultural milestone and celebration for North America, uniting communities across Toronto, San Francisco, and New York in a shared celebration of light, culture, and identity. As thousands of diyas and lights illuminated Times Square, one message shone above all:

Lights shine brighter when we shine together.

(Based on a press release)

DIPLOMATIC CAR FOR SALE

Model: : Cadillac CT-6
Model Year: : 2019
Mileage: : 35,396 Miles
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Indian Consulate in New York hosts an insightful fireside chat on "The India Story"



Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan in his welcome address spoke highly of Mr. Rajat Sharma and Mr. Vikas Khanna --Photo : Ashish Chandratreya



Prof. Indrajit Saluja making a suggestion for bigger and better missions in view of the ten-fold growth of the Indian Diaspora since independence --Photo : Ashish Chandratreya



A view of the gathering --Photo : Ashish Chandratreya

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

and described Rajat Sharma as one of the best-known TV hosts of India. He also introduced Vikas Khanna, the moderator of the fireside chat, as a multifaceted and highly talented person.

Earlier, a video on the famous TV show AAP KI ADALAT hosted by Rajat Sharma was screened, and the gathering could easily see the enormous work done by Mr. Sharma

The guest, a famous television icon Rajat Sharma of the AAP KI ADALAT fame offered profound perspectives on the evolution of Indian media, its role in shaping public discourse, and the

narrative of a confident, rising India on the world stage.

A gathering of more than a hundred in the ornate ballroom of the Consulate enjoyed Rajat's experiences with the celebrities at his show. He has in 30 years of AAP KI ADALAT hosted tens of thousands of celebrities from every sphere of life. He narrated a few very interesting incidents, and commented on the idiosyncrasies of some of them, which received applause from the audience.

At a brief Q &A , The Indian Panorama editor Prof. Indrajit Saluja pointed out that the Indian missions

abroad needed expanded spaces and more and better facilities considering that the number of the Indian Diaspora has grown ten-fold since Independence. Again, the need for consular engagements with the local lawmakers and officials justifies the demand. Above all, the Indian missions should reflect the growing prosperity of India. He

requested Mr. Rajat Sharma who is quite close to Prime Minister Modi to convey the suggestion to him. Incidentally, the gathering unanimously supported the demand. The conversation was expertly moderated by renowned Chef and Restaurateur, Vikas Khanna , whose thoughtful engagement added depth and warmth to the dialogue.

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Putin's upcoming India visit: Delhi and Moscow recalibrate ties amid global turbulence



By Prabhu Dayal

This will be Russian President Vladimir Putin's first visit to India since the Ukraine invasion in February 2022, underscoring its importance

"PUTIN'S VISIT IS SEEN AS SIGNIFICANT FOR INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY AS IT BALANCES RELATIONS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON. IT IS A STRONG SIGNAL OF INDIA'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY AND ITS COMMITMENT TO A LONG-STANDING, TRUSTED RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA, EVEN AS THE US HAS IMPOSED TARIFFS ON INDIA OVER ITS CONTINUED PURCHASE OF RUSSIAN OIL. BOTH NATIONS COORDINATE REGULARLY ON INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ISSUES AND AIM TO BUILD A JUST, MULTIPOLAR WORLD ORDER. THE VISIT IS INTENDED TO DELIVER MAJOR OUTCOMES AND REINFORCE THE RELATIONSHIP AMID A CHANGING GLOBAL ORDER AND WESTERN PRESSURE ON INDIA REGARDING ITS TRADE WITH RUSSIA."

Russian President Vladimir Putin's forthcoming visit to India in early December 2025 is highly significant as it aims to reaffirm and strengthen the "special and privileged strategic partnership" amid a challenging global geopolitical landscape and increasing Western pressure on India. This visit, the 23rd annual summit, will be his first to India since the Ukraine invasion in February 2022, underscoring its importance. The visit is part of a long-standing tradition of annual summits between the two countries, which alternate locations between India and Russia.

Donald Trump's aggressive policies and rhetoric have inadvertently pushed India to reaffirm and strengthen its longstanding strategic ties with Russia. Ultimately, the pressure campaign by the United States has proved to be a "self-goal", reinforcing India's resolve to pursue strategic autonomy and potentially strengthen its alignment with Russia.



Russian President Vladimir Putin

Putin's visit is seen as significant for India's foreign policy as it balances relations between Moscow and Washington. It is a strong signal of India's strategic autonomy and its commitment to a long-standing, trusted relationship with Russia, even as the US has imposed tariffs on India over its continued purchase of Russian oil. Both nations coordinate regularly on international political issues and aim to build a just, multipolar world order. The visit is intended to deliver major outcomes and reinforce the relationship amid a changing global order and Western pressure on India regarding its trade with Russia.

The visit is the culmination of extensive preparatory meetings, including External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's recent visit to Moscow and discussions between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Putin's aide Nikolay Patrushev in New Delhi on November 18, in which they discussed strengthening collaboration in the maritime domain, including connectivity, port development, skill development, shipbuilding, the blue economy, and Arctic operations.

The leaders will discuss regional and global developments, including the Ukraine conflict and coordination within international bodies like the UN, BRICS, G20, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), where both countries are members. Russia supports India's demand for a permanent UN Security Council seat. A "vision" document is expected to be signed, laying out a roadmap for cooperation across various sectors including shipbuilding (such as "green

shipbuilding" and ice-class vessels), space, agriculture, and infrastructure.

Defense remains a central pillar of cooperation, with discussions expected on critical projects like the joint development of a fifth-generation fighter jet, further S-400 missile system deliveries, and potentially the joint production of S-500 systems. The leaders plan to move forward with defense projects, including potential deals for fighter jets and missile defense systems. Despite India's efforts to diversify its defense partners, Russia remains a critical supplier, accounting for a significant portion of India's military inventory.

Discussions will also focus on boosting trade and investment, particularly in energy (oil, nuclear power), and addressing logistics and payment challenges. India and Russia have committed to boosting bilateral trade to a target of \$100 billion by 2030 and exploring alternative payment solutions to circumvent Western sanctions. Key deals in oil exploration and supply, nuclear energy (e.g., increasing the number of reactors at the Kudankulam power station), and direct diamond sales are expected to be finalized.

The leaders will focus on resolving related issues such as logistics and payment mechanisms, potentially using local or third-country currencies. Both nations are looking to finalize new pacts and initiatives to boost economic ties, with a focus on diversifying trade beyond energy and addressing the existing trade deficit. Discussions are also underway for a Free Trade Agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union.

A bilateral mobility agreement is expected to be signed to facilitate legal migration and protect skilled Indian workers in Russia, which is experiencing a labor shortage. The agreement aims to establish a formal framework for legal migration, protect the rights of Indian workers in Russia, and facilitate the expansion of skilled Indian manpower in key Russian economic sectors. Russia is keen to attract skilled Indian workers in industries such as construction, textiles, engineering, electronics, and IT. The pact will offer new employment opportunities for skilled Indian professionals and ensure their legal protection and dignified employment in Russia.

In conclusion, Putin's visit is a continuation of regular high-level exchanges and is driven by mutual strategic interests, with the goal of fostering a multi-polar order. The visit reinforces a "special and privileged strategic partnership" that has been a consistent factor of stability in international relations, allowing India to pursue its national interests on the global stage.

Ultimately, the visit is a test of India's diplomatic skill in balancing its historic friendship with Russia and its evolving global partnerships, demonstrating its ability to engage with all major powers on its own pragmatic terms.

(Prabhu Dayal is a retired Indian diplomat and had previously served as Ambassador in Kuwait and Morocco and as Consul General in New York)

(First published in First Post)

Bihar Elections: India's Drift Toward One-Party Hegemony



By George Abraham

"It is a profound irony that a party's rise to power through a fair, transparent, and democratic process can ultimately weaken the very system that enabled its ascent. It raises questions about India's political trajectory rather than the outcome of a single election. When one party amasses overwhelming political, financial, and institutional power, it becomes a grave threat to a vibrant democracy. The weakening of institutional autonomy, the erosion of electoral transparency, and the shrinking space for dissent all point toward a structural imbalance that no democracy can afford for long. A diverse nation like India can sustain this democratic experience only if there is contestation of ideas, challenging authority, and keeping those in power truly accountable."

Oh yes, the BJP won again! And if not for the sheer scale of its victory, there would have been nothing novel or particularly intriguing about these election results. So, what now? Are we heading toward a one-party domination of Indian politics, a situation where a single party holds significant power and influence over the political landscape? Are Modi and his colleagues executing a long-term script envisioned by the RSS from behind the scenes? And has the Congress been reduced to a political non-entity, especially in northern India? These questions are not frivolous, and they demand the nation's serious attention.

Undoubtedly, the BJP's sweeping victory in Bihar will be viewed as a watershed moment for the INDIA coalition, a diverse mix of the Congress and regional parties formed precisely to counter the BJP hegemony. The coalition, which was a significant attempt to unite various political forces against the BJP, had potential, but it struggled to realize it, plagued by internal rivalries and constant jockeying for leadership. The idea of the coalition was based on a



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrate NDA victory in Bihar elections on November 14, 2025

sound argument: that the BJP often wins elections with only a plurality of votes. Yet the alliance failed to project a united front or a clear alternative.

Since the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the opposition has found itself confronted by a mammoth machinery, one that includes the full strength of the bureaucracy, an increasingly compliant Election Commission, supportive media ecosystems, and virtually unlimited resources from business magnates, electoral bonds, and vested interests. Combined with alleged voter-roll manipulation, which refers to the suspected tampering or removal of voter names from electoral rolls, accusations of EVM vulnerabilities, and selective enforcement of election rules, these forces appear to have contributed to sweeping victories in Haryana, Maharashtra, and now Bihar.

One wonders whether Nehru and Ambedkar, architects of India's democratic institutions, could have imagined how far the Election Commission would drift under the current regime. Rahul Gandhi's explosive revelations on electoral-roll irregularities were met not with alarm but with silence. Even though the data Gandhi cited came directly from the Commission itself, the EC chose not to meaningfully address the complaints or the threat they pose to electoral integrity. Such dismissiveness undermines the very fabric of India's democratic system.

According to The Economic Times, the Bihar government under Nitish Kumar credited ₹10,000 each to around 14 million women belonging to self-help groups under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana (MMRY). These payments reportedly came just before, or even after, the Model Code of Conduct came into effect. Many analysts and opposition leaders believe this direct cash transfer functioned as a voter-influencing tool targeting a crucial demographic. Sharad Pawar of the NCP even called the payout a "threat to democracy," arguing it unfairly tilted the electoral playing field toward the ruling coalition.

This raises another critical question: where did such a massive sum of money suddenly come from? Jan Suraj leaders allege that World Bank-financed project funds were diverted for this purpose, an accusation, if true, carrying serious

governance, legal, and international implications. Even setting that aside, the BJP's vast reservoir of financial resources or its access to billionaire networks, makes such electoral mobilizations easy to engineer. The result was a record-breaking turnout among women voters in Bihar. If misappropriation of multilateral funds is ultimately proven, it would demand a rigorous investigation.

Another deeply troubling issue concerns the large-scale removal of voters from the electoral rolls. Reliable reports indicate that around 65 lakh names were deleted prior to the election, potentially disenfranchising marginalized communities and altering outcomes in closely contested constituencies. While the ruling party defends this as a necessary "cleanup," the unprecedented scale raises serious questions about voter suppression and public trust in the electoral system's integrity.

Rahul Gandhi has further demonstrated, using official data, how "ghost voters" proliferate across roll-names with invalid or nonexistent addresses, large clusters registered at single locations, and even foreign nationals inexplicably listed as Indian voters. These anomalies suggest either a breach of the central voter database or the misuse of authorized access. The existence of such ghost entries conveniently paves the way for manipulating outcomes, especially if combined with EVM systems that the Election Commission refuses to make fully transparent. The software on these machines is not open source, and multi-phase elections often involve long periods during which EVMs are stored without clear public access to CCTV footage that is sometimes destroyed prematurely. These conditions naturally erode public confidence.

The opposition, for its part, has not helped its own cause. Beyond opposing the BJP, it rarely projected a cohesive ideological narrative. It lacked a compelling alternative vision for development, economic growth, or social welfare. Internal factionalism, weak grassroots organization, and inconsistent messaging have all contributed to its decline. Meanwhile, the NDA's disciplined focus on religious

nationalism and welfare delivery has resonated more effectively with voters.

In northern India, the Congress has indeed been performing poorly in election after election. Its repeated "introspection" exercises have yielded little. Rahul Gandhi often appears as a lone voice, while many in his party remain disconnected from grassroots realities. It is past time for Congress to adopt serious organizational reforms, demand stronger electoral safeguards, such as paper ballots, and articulate an agenda and engage in a more sustained on the ground campaigning. At the very least, candidate selection must be merit-based, with tickets finalized at least six months in advance to give them any realistic chance of success.

Meanwhile, the long-term ideological agenda of the RSS is coming increasingly into focus. It appears less interested in preserving the diversity of India's political ecosystem and more committed to reshaping the nation along lines of cultural and religious conformity. Weakening the independence of institutions such as the Election Commission, judiciary, and media seems central to that strategy, consolidating lasting political dominance.

It is a profound irony that a party's rise to power through a fair, transparent, and democratic process can ultimately weaken the very system that enabled its ascent. It raises questions about India's political trajectory rather than the outcome of a single election. When one party amasses overwhelming political, financial, and institutional power, it becomes a grave threat to a vibrant democracy. The weakening of institutional autonomy, the erosion of electoral transparency, and the shrinking space for dissent all point toward a structural imbalance that no democracy can afford for long. A diverse nation like India can sustain this democratic experience only if there is contestation of ideas, challenging authority, and keeping those in power truly accountable.

The nation will also need opposition parties not to be fragmented or intimidated, and institutions that safeguard fairness not to be compromised. Elections may continue to be held like in many authoritarian nations, but the spirit of democracy will slowly fade and die. A true democracy requires competition, scrutiny, debate, and accountability, without which the country will move toward conformity and centralized dominance. India now stands at a crossroads, where citizens and institutions must rethink and evaluate the political trajectory we are on, and take a vow to uphold constitutional values. Protecting democracy and the hard-fought freedom won by our great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru do not simply rest in the hands of the opposition, and the nation's future is shaped not by the will of one single entity, but by the voices and aspirations of all its people.

(George Abraham is a former Chief Technology Officer of the United Nations. He is vice chair of IOC USA. He can be reached at gta777@gmail.com)

Terrorism rooted in rancor, distrust

Probe into Delhi car blast shows that even doctors are not immune to radicalization



By Julio Ribeiro

"LEGENDARY STATESMAN ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE HAD APPROACHED THIS TICKLISH AND PERENNIAL HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM WITH MUCH THOUGHT AND FINESSE. HE PLACED HIS TRUST IN AS DULAT (R&AW CHIEF IN 1999-2000), WHO HAD CULTIVATED A LASTING FRIENDSHIP WITH FAROOQ ABDULLAH. THE ABDULLAHS HAVE BEEN LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KASHMIRI MUSLIM SIDING WITH INDIA IN ITS TERRITORIAL DISPUTE WITH ITS MUSLIM-MAJORITY NEIGHBOR PAKISTAN. BUT THE PRESENT BJP-LED GOVERNMENT HAD OTHER PLANS. IT DECIDED TO USE AGGRESSION TO SUBDUE THE NATIVE KASHMIRI MUSLIM AND PROVE TO ITS SUPPORTERS THAT IT WAS A STRONG GOVERNMENT, UNLIKE THE CONGRESS-LED UPA AND EVEN THE VAJPAYEE DISPENSATION."

The blast that killed 15 people near the Red Fort on November 10 came as a rude shock not only to our muscular government but also to citizens across the country. A terror module allied to the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed was unearthed. Most of those arrested so far are doctors.

What is so surprising? The common man can't imagine that those whose noble profession expects them to serve the public can play a part in terror activities. Among the accused are Muslim doctors from states/UTs such as J&K, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and West Bengal.

There is tough competition for seats in medical colleges. Studies continue for over five years, and if students wish to specialize in any branch of medicine, it entails another two years or more. Having spent the best years of their youth preparing for a profession that is all about curing patients and saving lives, why would they turn to killing or maiming innocent people?



Ominous: The terror module involved in the Delhi blast had planned attacks all over India. -Tribune photo

The answer lies in the motives of other terror modules that have been busted over the years. Abhinav Bharat was a lone module surprisingly embedded in the majority community; it was unearthed by Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorist Squad. Its members resorted to terrorism because they were dissatisfied with the steps taken by the ruling BJP against jihadi terrorists.

Deep anger drove even those who were advantageously placed in the political sphere. So, what about those who had already got a raw deal? The ground was prepared for rancor and hate to thrive when the Muslim-majority J&K was deprived of statehood and condemned to an inferior status by those who should have welcomed it into the ranks of the secular and the equal. It was a rude reminder to the people of the state-turned-UT that they could not be trusted.

The Modi-Shah duo could not stop boasting about the transformation it had engineered in J&K. The UT was flooded with more troops and paramilitary forces, expecting thereby that cross-border terrorism and separatism among the Kashmiris would be curbed. That happened initially because of the surprise factor. It took a few years for the disgruntled elements to regroup, but the inevitable rejection has surfaced and become a reality.

Legendary statesman Atal Bihari Vajpayee had approached this ticklish and perennial Hindu-Muslim problem with much thought and finesse. He placed his trust in AS Dulat (R&AW chief in 1999-2000), who had cultivated a lasting friendship with Farooq Abdullah. The Abdullahs have been largely responsible for the Kashmiri Muslim siding with India in its territorial dispute with its Muslim-majority neighbor Pakistan. But the

present BJP-led government had other plans. It decided to use aggression to subdue the native Kashmiri Muslim and prove to its supporters that it was a strong government, unlike the Congress-led UPA and even the Vajpayee dispensation.

Such an approach rarely works. If citizens do not welcome the prospect of brotherhood, there is no way that the Indian State - or any State, for that matter - can rule except by force. Terrorism sprouts in such settings. The Irish Republican Army kept the British Army on its toes for a century and more in Northern Ireland. It was an uneasy peace that was enforced till the British government decided to change tack and began to concentrate on winning hearts and minds instead.

Some of the main conspirators in the Red Fort blast case are from Pulwama, which had witnessed a suicide bombing in February 2019 that claimed the lives of 40 CRPF personnel. India retaliated with the Balakot airstrikes. Earlier this year, Operation Sindoor was our successfully executed reply to the Pahalgam terror attack. The Indian Air Force and the supporting ground forces carried out their jobs with precision by dismantling several terror hideouts in our neighbor's territory.

Unfortunately, our Prime Minister could not restrain his euphoria and threatened to repeat Op Sindoor if and when Pakistan dared to sponsor terror across the border again. Neither warring neighbors nor major world powers will be able to cope with the consequences of never-ending hostilities in the Indian subcontinent.

After the Delhi car blast, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio issued a statement praising India's "studied response" and success in identifying terror modules within the country. He voiced America's

support for stern action against terrorists according to the law of the land.

Reading between the lines, it can be guessed that he advised against another round of Op Sindoor. It would be foolhardy to enter into an armed conflict with our nuclear-armed neighbor. We may suffer some loss of ego and pride but that would be a small price to pay in the backdrop of the progress we have made through infrastructure development and economic advancement during PM Modi's reign.

The investigation into the Red Fort case has been entrusted to the National Investigation Agency, presently led by Sadanand Date, easily one of the best IPS officers I have come across in my years in the police and after my retirement. He is an officer with a conscience - fair, just and honest to the core. He will deliver the culprits to the courts and hope that justice is done.

The terror module had planned attacks all over India. Its tentacles had spread far beyond Haryana and the Al Falah University where it incubated. At least one major task has been achieved as several smaller modules have been neutralized, but the strife will continue in the foreseeable future.

Distrust between Hindus and Muslims has existed for centuries, and I dare say the animosity will not disappear in a hurry. But a modus vivendi has to be worked out for the simple reason that even a muscular regime cannot just wish away 15 per cent (Muslims) of India's population. Lynchings, bulldozer justice, allegations of love jihad - all this has to stop.

(Julio Ribeiro is a distinguished retired Indian Police Service officer, and a former governor)

Surati's First Diwali Gala 2025 Illuminates Jersey City with Culture, Music, and Community



NOVEMBER 14, 2025

JERSEY CITY, NJ (TIP): The historic Barrow Mansion glowed with festivity and elegance as Surati for Performing Arts hosted its first-ever Diwali Gala on Friday, November 7, 2025. While Surati has organized several Diwali celebrations in the past, this marked its inaugural formal Gala, uniting culture, artistry, and community in an evening that truly embodied the spirit of Diwali - the Festival of Lights. The evening brought together diverse artists, dignitaries, community members, and supporters for a celebration of Indian culture, music, dance, and tradition.



The evening began with a VIP cocktail reception with live jazz pianist Brook Mulugeta, vendor showcases, and a silent auction featuring community-donated items and cultural experiences. Guests were welcomed with live music, hors d'oeuvres, and drinks before the formal program, which celebrated 23 years of Surati's artistic excellence and community engagement through a highlight video presentation.

ARTISTIC HIGHLIGHTS

The Gala's performances were curated by Surati Founder and Executive Artistic Director Rimli Roy and showcased a vibrant range of Indian classical, folk, and contemporary art forms, including Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, Rajasthani Ghoomar, Bollywood, belly dance, and modern fusion pieces.

Surati's performance segment, presented under the artistic direction of Rimli Roy, featured Surati's dancers - Hitanshi Patel, Harsha Harikumar, Vidhya Dinesh, Alisha Desai, Avishi Jain, and Kijana Lewis - who captivated the audience with their versatility and expressive choreography through Indian classical - Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi, Rajasthani folk, Bellydance, Bollywood fusion, and contemporary dance forms.

The evening also featured a tabla and cajón fusion by



Abhinav Acharya and Kaleb Hassell, followed by a captivating Indian Raaga Jazz fusion by guest artist Sumit Roy from Kolkata, who played an Indian raga on the piano accompanied by Abhinav on the tablas in a mesmerizing collaboration.

The second act included excerpts from Ramaavan - A Musical, Surati's NEA award-winning original production, envisioned, re-imagined, and created by Rimli Roy, which also toured India in 2024 by a special invitation by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR - Govt of India), inspired by the Ramayana, performed by Jonathan Power, Andrew Leonforte, Paulina Yeung, Madison Halla, Harsha Harikumar, Hitanshi Patel, Kijana Lewis and Vidhya Dinesh,



earning a standing ovation. Ramaavan-A Musical is an original production with music composed by Sumit Roy and Rajesh Roy, and lyrics and verses written by Arati Roy.

The finale featured a live music performance by Jayanta Banerjee. Guest artist from India Sumit Roy, a celebrated singer, composer, and mentor from Kolkata, concluded the program with a vibrant medley of Calypso, retro, and Indian folk songs, bringing the audience to their feet before the night wrapped up with a lively DJ set that united guests, artists, and dignitaries on the dance floor.

GUESTS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Among the distinguished attendees were Mr. Piyush Singh, Consul (Political, Press, Information & Culture), Consulate General of India in New York; Councilwoman Mira Prinz-Arey; Brian Murray from Hudson County Cultural Affairs; Hudson County Commissioner Yraida Lipski, and Former Governor Jim McGreevey.



Surati's Diwali Gala sponsors were Albrich Academy of Excellence (AAE), represented by owner Dorota Mani, serving as the event's principal silent auction contributor and community sponsor; Hudson County Cultural & Heritage Affairs / Tourism Development, and LeFrak & Newport Associates Development Company.

"Surati and Rimli Roy have been doing excellent work for the last two decades, bringing cultures together and bridging gaps between people so that communities can better understand, collaborate, and grow," said Mr. Piyush Singh. "Rimli is putting so much together with her team, and their dedication truly reflects the spirit of Diwali."

"The Diwali Gala 2025 was more than just an evening of unique performances and partnerships - it was a



celebration of light in our communities through culture, food, interactive experiences, showcasing multicultural genres and diverse artists in Jersey City, rooted in the artistry and rich heritage of India," said Rimli Roy, Founder and Artistic Director. "Having my father, the legendary composer and performing artist from India, Sumit Roy, perform alongside our company artists in the presence of my mother, Arati Roy, also a very gifted writer and lyricist, was deeply personal and a reminder of Surati's roots and mission - connecting generations, cultures, and hearts through art."

The Gala drew a diverse audience from across New Jersey and New York, raising awareness and support for Surati's arts-in-education and community outreach initiatives.



ABOUT SURATI FOR PERFORMING ARTS

Surati for Performing Arts is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization based in Jersey City, dedicated to promoting Indian art and culture through performances, arts-in-education, and community engagement. Founded by Rimli Roy, Surati's acclaimed productions and festivals- including Holi Hai and Ramaavan - A Musical - have been showcased at the United Nations, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, and featured in CNN, NBC, and Vogue. Surati's year-round programming is made possible by Hudson County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, Jersey City Arts and Culture Trust Fund, Dance NYC, and New Jersey Arts and Culture Renewal Fund.



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(Based on a Press Release)

Trump dismisses US intelligence, defends Saudi prince over 2018 killing of Khashoggi

The US President derided journalist Jamal Khashoggi as "extremely controversial"

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): President Donald Trump on Tuesday, November 18, dismissed US intelligence findings that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman likely had some culpability in the 2018 killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi as Trump warmly welcomed the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia on his first White House visit in seven years.

The US-Saudi relationship had, for a time, been sent into a tailspin by the operation targeting Khashoggi, a fierce critic of the kingdom.

But seven years later, the dark clouds over the relationship have been cleared away. And Trump is tightening his embrace of the 40-year-old crown prince, who he said is an indispensable player in shaping the Middle East in the decades to come.

Trump in his defense of the crown prince derided Khashoggi as "extremely controversial" and said, "a lot of people didn't like that gentleman." Prince Mohammed denies involvement in the killing of Khashoggi, who was a Saudi citizen and Virginia resident.

"Whether you like him or didn't like him, things happen," Trump said of the international incident when asked about it by a reporter during an Oval Office appearance with Prince Mohammed. "But (Prince Mohammed) knew nothing about it. And we can leave it at that. You don't have to embarrass our guest by asking a question like that."

But US intelligence officials determined that the Saudi crown prince likely approved the killing by Saudi agents of US-based journalist inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, according to US findings declassified in 2021 at the start of the Biden administration. Trump officials, during his first administration, refused to release the report.

Prince Mohammed said Saudi Arabia "did all the right steps" to investigate Khashoggi's death.

"It's painful and it's a huge mistake," he said.

Trump, who said the two leaders have become "good friends," even commended the Saudi leader for strides made by the kingdom on human rights without providing



US President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman hold hands during a meeting in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington DC on Tuesday, November 18. - Photo credit : Reuters

any specific detail.

"What's he done is incredible in terms of human rights and everything else," Trump said.

NEW INVESTMENT FROM SAUDIS

The crown prince for his part announced Saudi Arabia was increasing its planned investments in the US to USD 1 trillion, up from USD 600 billion that the Saudis announced they would pour into the United States when Trump visited the kingdom in May.

Echoing rhetoric that Trump likes to use, the crown prince used the moment to flatter the Republican leader by calling the US the "hottest country on the planet" for foreign investment.

"What you're creating is not about an opportunity today. It's also about long term opportunity," Prince Mohammed said.

Trump's family has a strong personal interest in the kingdom. In September, London real estate developer Dar Global announced that it plans to launch Trump Plaza in the Red Sea city of Jeddah.

It's Dar Global's second collaboration with the Trump Organization, the collection of companies controlled by the US president's children, in Saudi Arabia.

Trump pushed back on suggestions that there could be a conflict of interest in his family's dealings with the Saudis.

"I have nothing to do with the family business," Trump said.

Trump's comments about Khashoggi's and defense of his family's business in Saudi Arabia were blasted by human rights and government oversight activists.

Human rights groups say Saudi authorities continue to harshly repress dissent, including by arresting human rights defenders, journalists, and political dissidents for criticism against the kingdom. They also note a surge in executions in Saudi Arabia that they connect to an effort to suppress internal dissent.

"President Trump has Jamal Khashoggi's blood on his hands," said Raed Jarrar, advocacy director for DAWN, a US-based group advocating for democracy and human rights in the Arab world that was founded by Khashoggi. Jarrar added, "Trump has made himself complicit in every execution and imprisonment MBS has ordered since."

ROLLING OUT THE RED CARPET

Trump warmly received Prince Mohammed when he arrived at the White House Tuesday morning for a pomp-filled arrival ceremony that included a military flyover and a thundering greeting from the US Marine band.

Technically, it's not a state visit, because the crown prince is not the head of state. But Prince Mohammed has taken charge of the day-to-day governing for his father, King Salman, 89, who has endured health problems in recent years.

Trump showed the prince the newly-installed Presidential Walk of Fame that features gold-framed images of past presidents along the West Wing colonnade and a photo of an autopen signing the name of Biden in place of the Democrat's official portrait.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

US sees India as trusted partner, trade ties remain strong: Piyush Goyal

NOVEMBER 19, 2025

NEW DELHI / NEW YORK (TIP): Asserting that the India-US relations remain on a solid upward trajectory, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said Washington views New Delhi as a "trusted partner" and that the strategic and economic cooperation between the two nations continues to broaden despite global volatility.

Addressing the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce here, Goyal dismissed concerns of any slowdown in bilateral engagement, emphasising that the partnership is anchored in "shared democratic values, diversity and a common vision for development".

He said trade negotiations with the US are a continuous process and progress across various sectors may move at different speeds, but India will always safeguard the interests of farmers, fishermen, small businesses and domestic industry.

DEAL CAN BE WORKED OUT 'SOON': US OFFICIAL

A senior Trump administration official has said a trade deal between India and the US can be worked out "soon". "Yeah, we were for sure very close. I've spoken to the ambassador...you know, we've had visits," National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett said in an interview with CNBC on Monday. On Tuesday, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said, "You will hear a good news" on the proposed trade pact.

BIPARTISAN RESOLUTION ON STRATEGIC TIES

Democratic US Representatives Ami Bera from



Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal meets the President of Microsoft Global Affairs, USA, Lisa Monaco, in New Delhi on Tuesday, November 18.

@PiyushGoyal X/ANI Photo

California, the longest-serving Indian American Member of Congress, and Republican Joe Wilson of South Carolina, have introduced a bipartisan resolution "recognising the strategic value of the historical partnership between the US and India". It also highlights India's vital role in promoting regional stability, economic growth and a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Highlighting India's economic transformation, Goyal said the country has risen from being counted among the "Fragile Five" to one of the world's top five economies in just over a decade. India, he projected, is

poised to become the world's third-largest economy by 2027, backed by strong banking systems, controlled inflation, improved fiscal indicators, robust consumer demand and large-scale infrastructure expansion.

Quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the minister said India is no longer just an "emerging market but an emerging model of development", with its journey towards a developed nation by 2047 guided by inclusive growth, welfare-driven governance and a young skilled population.

Goyal noted that India produces 2.4 million STEM graduates each year and is deepening its trade engagements with several developed economies through a series of free trade agreements either concluded or under negotiation.

Touting India's growth story as one of "resilience, reliability and security", he pointed to the transformation of Uttar Pradesh into a major investment hub and the delivery of over four crore houses to poor families in the last 10 years, with two crore more in the pipeline.

Even amid global economic turbulence, Goyal said India has emerged as an "oasis of stability". He cited the surge in the stock market -- up nearly four and a half times in 11 years - and the presence of more than 2,000 US-linked Global Capability Centres operating on Indian talent.

On innovation, the minister highlighted government support for startups including the second Fund of Funds worth Rs 10,000 crore and the Rs 1 lakh crore corpus for research and development.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

India's Minister of State for Commerce & Industry Visits Romania

Attends the 19th India-Romania Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation (JCEC) Meeting

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

BUCHAREST (TIP): Mr. Jitin Prasada, the Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce and Industry of India, visited Romania from 3-6 November 2025 at the invitation of Mr. Radu-Dinel Miru??, Hon'ble Minister of Economy, Government of Romania, to co-chair the 19th Session of the India-Romania Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation (JCEC). The visit formed an important component of India's ongoing engagement with Central and Eastern Europe and reaffirmed the shared commitment of both countries to strengthening bilateral economic cooperation across a broad spectrum of sectors.

During the visit, the Hon'ble Minister held wide-ranging discussions with senior members of the Romanian Government. His programme included meetings with the Ministers for Economy, Digitalization, Entrepreneurship and Tourism; Energy; Labour, Family, Youth and Social Solidarity; Investment and European Projects; and Foreign Affairs. He also interacted with Secretaries of State responsible for Transport, Finance and Agriculture. In addition, Shri Prasada met with the President, Prefect and Mayor of Bra?ov, underscoring the mutual interest in deepening cooperation not only at the central level but also with regional administrations.

The Minister was accompanied by a high-level business delegation comprising 20 prominent Indian companies led by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). Their participation added significant depth to the discussions on widening bilateral trade and investment linkages.

A key result of the visit was the signing of the Protocol for the 19th JCEC session, co-signed by Mr. Prasada and Mr. Miru??, Romanian Minister of Economy, Digitalization, Entrepreneurship and Tourism. This Protocol offers a broad plan to improve cooperation in trade, investment, industrial partnerships, and technology exchange. Both countries emphasized their strong support for quickly finalizing the India-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA), recognizing it as a game-changer for trade between India, Romania, and the wider region. Romania expressed its intention to hire skilled Indian workers to fill labor shortages in important sectors. It also showed eagerness to finalize the Mobility Partnership Agreement and Social Security Agreement soon. These agreements would help workers and professionals move between the two countries in a smooth and mutually beneficial way.

The talks during the JCEC and other meetings covered a wide range of cooperation areas. Both sides agreed to create a senior official-level group to keep regular talks on non-tariff barriers and to increase regulatory clarity for businesses, which is important for smoother trade. Romania showed interest in India's successful digital public infrastructure systems, including digital identity platforms, financial inclusion tools, and government service delivery models. Both sides pointed out opportunities for Indian companies to take part in Romanian and EU-backed projects in infrastructure, energy, and industry. Sectors targeted for closer cooperation included steel production, urban and transport infrastructure, renewable and conventional energy sources, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, information technology, and public-private partnership (PPP) development models. Romania welcomed the idea of India using it as a strategic gateway for entering the European Union market.

As part of his visit, Shri Prasada spoke at two business forums, held in Bucharest and Bra?ov, organized with FICCI and leading Romanian chambers of commerce. These forums created important platforms for business-to-business meetings where companies from both countries could explore new partnerships, joint ventures, and discuss market access, technology transfer, and investment challenges. The high level of participation showed that business communities in both countries are eager



Visit of Mr. Jitin Prasada, Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce and Industry to Romania from 3-6 November, 2025 for the 19th India-Romania Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation.

Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, H.E. Shri Jitin Prasada meeting with H.E. Mr. Petre-Florin Manole, Minister of Labour, Family, Youth and Social Solidarity of Romania



Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry interacted with H.E. Ms. Oana-Silvia Toiu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania.



Hon'ble Minister of State (C&I), Shri Jitin Prasada addressed the Business Round Table & matchmaking with Brasov Chamber of Commerce & Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)



Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry met with H.E. Mr. Bogdan Gruiu Ivan, Minister for Energy of Romania.



Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry had a productive meeting with Mr. Horatiu Lucian Cosma, State Secretary (IR), Ministry of Transport, Romania.



Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, H.E. Shri Jitin Prasada had Productive discussion with H.E. Mr. Dragos Nicolae Pislaru, Minister of Investments and European Projects, Romania. They also signed the Protocol.



Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry, H.E. Shri Jitin Prasada had Productive discussion with H.E. Mr. Dragos Nicolae Pislaru, Minister of Investments and European Projects, Romania

CONTD FROM PAGE 13



Hon'ble Minister of State for Commerce & Industry H.E. Shri Jitin Prasada at Romania-India Business Forum in Bucharest.



Hon'ble Minister of State(C&I) Shri Jitin Prasada engaged with the Board Members of the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC)



At India House, Bucharest - a delightful interaction over High-Tea with members of the Indian diaspora and industry leaders from both India & Romania.

to build long-term commercial relationships.

Hon'ble Minister also spent time with members of the Indian community and friends of India in Romania. He thanked them for helping to strengthen cultural ties and positively contributing to Romania's social and economic life.

Minister Prasada took part in a special event marking the 150th anniversary of "Vande Mataram", celebrating shared cultural values and the strong bonds of the Indian diaspora.

Overall, this visit gave new momentum to the friendly and long-standing relationship between India

and Romania. Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to broadening and deepening their cooperation in a steady and future-focused way. They agreed to keep high-level exchanges regular, set up organized follow-up systems, and ensure timely action on all initiatives

decided through the JCEC Protocol.

The successful visit is expected to pave the way for new opportunities in economic collaboration, foster greater business-to-business linkages, and contribute significantly to elevating the India-Romania partnership to a higher trajectory.

Canada survives Budget vote thanks to lone Green Party vote



By Prabhjot Singh

NOVEMBER 17, 2025

OTTAWA (TIP): Clouds of uncertainty over the future of the minority Liberal government led by Mark Carney faded away after Green Party Leader Elizabeth May offered the Treasury benches a critical "yes vote" on its first budget in a neck-and-neck fight that went 170-168 for a great reprieve of Canadians who did not want to go back to the polls for the second time in seven months.

The House of Commons passed Mark Carney's first budget in a crucial vote that propped up the minority Liberal government and kept Canadians from heading back to the polls this winter. It was the third time that the Liberals got a "yes" vote from the House since the presentation of the budget on November 5.

Earlier, Conservatives and Bloc Québécois had pressed for no-confidence motions that Mark Carney and his government managed to survive.

Incidentally, Canada did not have a majority government for a while. Though the Liberals have been running minority governments with the support of Opposition parties, minus the Conservatives, they had to succumb to the pressure tactics of the Opposition parties. The Jagmeet-led NDP had an agreement to support the last Liberal government led by Justin Trudeau in return for certain promises, including free dental care for the elderly and children, besides those with low income.

Carney was elected in the spring on a campaign to end U.S. President Donald Trump's tariff war, but only secured a minority government mandate, leaving the Liberals scrambling to secure support for the budget for weeks.



Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney and Minister of Finance Francois-Philippe Champagne applaud after a confidence vote on the federal budget passes in the House of Commons on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada November 17, 2025.

- Photo credit: REUTERS/Blair Gable

Several opposition MPs did not vote, which enabled the motion to pass in the House of Commons on Monday evening.

The Liberals presented their budget as a plan to spend less and invest more in the face of U.S. tariffs. While the Conservatives wanted the Liberals to minimize the deficit and keep it around Can \$47 billion, it actually touched Can \$90 billion.

After taking Ottawa's cost savings goals into account, the budget proposes nearly \$90 billion in new spending over five years, much of it focused on capital creation.

Green Party Leader Elizabeth May offered the Liberals a critical yes vote on Prime Minister Mark Carney's first budget Monday.

Following the question period on Monday and before

the vote, May told reporters she will support Carney's fiscal plan after the prime minister pledged his commitment to the Paris Agreement climate goals in the House of Commons.

A series of dramatic turns was witnessed after the presentation of the budget when Nova Scotia MP Chris d'Entremont, representing the main opposition party, the Conservatives, crossed the floor to join the Liberals caucus.

Unlike the previous Liberal regime led by Justin Trudeau, the NDP, led by Jagmeet Singh, bailed the government out of the embarrassment of repeated no-confidence motions brought in by the Conservatives. At times, even the Bloc Québécois opposed the Conservatives' no-confidence moves.

The situation, however, changed this time when the Liberals not only delayed the budget till the first week of November but also failed to earn the support of two of the three main opposition parties. Leading up to today's vote, opposition parties spoke out against the budget, saying it doesn't align with their priorities.

That changed for the Green Party when Carney pledged earlier in the day for the first time to meet Canada's Paris climate commitments in response to a question from the Green Party leader and lone MP, Elizabeth May, pressing him for environmental action.

"This budget puts us on the path for real results for climate, for nature, for reconciliation. I can confirm to this House that we will respect our Paris commitments for climate change, and we're determined to achieve them," Mark Carney said.

The time is ripe for taking India-Canada bilateral trade to new heights

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

TORONTO (TIP): Riding a wave of quick return to normalcy in bilateral relations following the successful exchange of recent ministerial visits, it is time for the business, trade, and industry of both India and Canada to work on new agreements, partnerships, and investments to carry this momentum forward for the overall benefit of the people of the two closely knit nations.

This was the gist of the message from the leaders of trade, industry, business, and diplomacy at an event here on Monday, November 17, to announce the launch of the second Trade Mission of the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce.

And when the second Trade Mission embarks on its visit to India in the first week of the New Year, it will have a plethora of avenues and opportunities in technology and innovation, education and skill development, energy, small business, and MSME ecosystems to explore.

When the first 33-member mission returned home after a successful sojourn in India, Nepal, and Bangladesh in 2023, during which it visited 16 cities, it had signed several memoranda of understanding in certain niche areas, including ayurveda, diamonds, and jewelry. The time is ripe now for the second mission to carry forward the good groundwork already done and explore further new areas.

The Chamber, which has established itself as one of Canada's most active business organizations, with over a thousand members, in advancing international and inter-provincial engagement, the 2026 mission will be led by its president, Kushagr Dutt Sharma; trade



Kushagr Dutt Sharma, President of the Second Trade Mission of the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce addresses the gathering

mission chair, Dr. Rakesh Kantaria; India-Canada Trade Committee chair, Hemant M. Shah; and the 2026 Trade Mission co-chair, Amit Chowdhary.

The current leadership team that has been guiding the Chamber's growing portfolio of global outreach has successfully executed multiple international trade missions, along with inter-provincial business delegations across Canada, connecting entrepreneurs, investors, and institutions across sectors and regions, says Kushagr Sharma.

The Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce also holds its annual Invest India-Invest Canada Business Summit, which has been acting as a bilateral forum uniting policymakers, industry leaders, and high-growth enterprises from both nations to accelerate trade and investment partnerships.

The launch event also saw the presence of senior officials of the ICICI Bank Canada, including its Chairman, Mr Himadari, who promised all support to the Mission. Also present was Deepak Anand, Member of Provincial Parliament, who divulged that though Ontario was celebrating Hindu Heritage Month, it was a unique land that was represented by more than 100 communities, ethnicities, and religious



Another official of the second Trade Mission of the Canadian Hindu Chamber of Commerce outlined the program

backgrounds working for a common motive of making Canada their home.

India's acting Consul-General in Toronto, Kapidhwaja Partap Singh, said that there was a tremendous potential for the bilateral trade to grow. He talked about health care, education, pharmaceuticals and resources, saying that with the changed immigration policy, India could be a source for supplying the skilled manpower that Canada wants to import now.

He said that three ministerial visits within a week reflect the huge potential. India will be working on a mechanism to capture knowledge for taking the initiatives in an executable way forward. He also talked about the Surat jewelry mission's Canadian visit. India, he said, could also benefit from the Canadian expertise in mining, besides realigning its student force to meet the skilled workforce requirement of Canada. The Consul-General was expecting many more exchanges of such visits. He also announced that India was almost giving 100 percent clearance to medical visas, provided the applicants are annexing a letter from the hospital and the medical authorities concerned.

The second mission will engage with prominent industry bodies, business



The launch event also saw the presence of senior officials of the ICICI Bank Canada, including its Chairman, Mr Himadari, who promised all support to the Mission

-Photos by Maninder K Chandhoke

chambers, and regional partners across Assam-which has great potential for energy in which Canada holds the expertise-Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh (Punjab and Haryana), Delhi, and Himachal Pradesh.

The objectives of the mission, according to Kushagr Dutt Sharma, are to strengthen Canada-India bilateral business cooperation; connect Canadian businesses with regional industry leaders and chambers; and explore sectoral opportunities in energy, electronics manufacturing, the information technology sector, and pharmaceuticals.

He even referred to how Canada was investing its huge pension fund in India.

A video message from Mr Hemant Shah, who, in recognition of his long services in promoting India-Canada trade, has been named Chair of the Free Trade Development Committee of the Chamber; also talked about the tremendous potential for furthering the bilateral trade.

Rakesh Kantaria, Maharishi Jani, and Rajan Sharda of ICICI Bank were among other speakers at the event.

(Prabhjot Singh is a Toronto-based senior journalist)

INR sinks to record low, breaks 89 per US dollar mark

The Indian rupee breached 89 level for the first time, hitting a record low on Friday, Nov 21, on account of delay in US-India trade deal. It closed at 89.41, down 70 paise – the biggest single day fall since May 8. Intra-day it hit a low of 89.48.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which has been defending the rupee at the 88.80 levels, also did not intervene on Friday, surprising traders.

“The market was anticipating the RBI to intervene at around the 89 level, but they chose not to step in, signalling its intent to avoid creating speculation about specific intervention levels,” said Anindya Banerjee, head of currency and commodity research at Kotak Securities, adding there is a clear risk-off sentiment weighing on emerging market currencies, including rupee, due to trade uncertainties.

According to Indranil Pan, chief economist, YES bank, once the RBI allowed the dollar/rupee to trade beyond the 88.80 levels, markets started covering short positions and this led to the currency to depreciate beyond 89.00 levels.

A dealer at a foreign bank said that while the RBI did not defend the rupee at the expected 88.80 levels, there are expectations that it will start selling again at around 89.50. However, the apex market may choose to surprise the market like it did in mid-October rather than make it clear that it will defend only at a certain level.

After Friday’s fall, the year-to-date (YTD) depreciation of the currency to 4.62%, highest in three years. In the current month, the rupee fell 64 paise or 0.72%. The rupee continues to be the worst performing currency among its Asian peers in FY26. This is followed by Japanese yen and Phillipine peso, falling 4.4% and 2.7%, respectively.

Speaking at an event in Delhi on Thursday, the RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra reiterated that they do not target any level for rupee and the recent pressure is due to high demand for dollars. He further said, “we are quite confident there will be a good trade deal going forward, and that should relieve the pressures on our current account.

“With the 90 mark considered to be a major psychological barrier, if the rupee breaks above 90, further weakness may follow. I expect rupee to likely trade within the 89–90 range in the near term, unless external shocks prompt renewed intervention,” added Banerjee.

The currency has been under pressure in the current financial year on worries over trade deal and consistent equity outflows, along with surging gold prices.

India gets new labour codes: Minimum wage guarantee, gratuity, social security for 400 mn workers

NEW DELHI (TIP)

The Union government on Friday, Nov 21, announced the implementation of four labour codes passed by Parliament in 2019-20 meant to replace a welter of complex, British-era legislation, kicking off a set of reforms aimed at attracting investment, spurring job creation and making it easier for firms to hire and fire employees.

The new employment rules mark a continuation of recent regulatory reforms such as the rationalisation of the Goods and Services Tax, and the Income Tax Act, 2025, which have simplified the burden of compliance for consumers and businesses. They also mark the beginning of a new labour-market regime that creates a statutory backing for a national minimum wage for the first time, provide social-security benefits to workers across sectors and allows women to work night shifts. The new laws also define gig workers.

“Today is a historic day for my worker brothers and sisters. Our government has implemented four labour codes. This is the biggest reform in the interest of workers since independence. It will greatly empower the workers of the country. While it will make compliance with rules much easier, it will also boost ‘Ease of Doing Business’,” Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on X.

The government notified the four laws and rules needed to make them operational effective November 21, Union labour minister Mansukh



Mandaviya said. The announcement closes the loop on years of tense negotiations on the sensitive sociopolitical and electoral issue of labour in a country long hobbled by a web of archaic and complex employment rules. “Through these reforms, a robust ecosystem will be created that will protect the rights of our workers in the future and give new strength to India’s economic growth. This will not only create new job opportunities but also increase productivity. Along with this, our journey towards a developed India will also gain momentum,” Modi added on X.

Even though successive governments and most economists agree that labour reforms in the world’s fifth-largest economy were overdue and updated laws are necessary to create employment for the nearly one million job-seekers entering the Indian labour market each month, fears of a political backlash and resistance by major trade unions had kept the government from implementing

the codes.

“From today, the new labour codes have been implemented in the country. With expanded social security, stronger protections and nationwide portability of entitlements, the codes place workers, especially women, youth, unorganised, gig and migrant workers, firmly at the centre of labour governance,” Mandaviya said. The Code on Wages, 2019, Industrial Relations Code, 2020, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code, 2020 and the Code on Social Security, 2020 will replace a set of 29 labyrinthine laws. New reforms include mandatory formal, written appointment letters to all workers, social security benefits, minimum wages, free annual health check-up for workers above the age of 40, and allowing women to work night shifts across sectors. The new codes also allow women entry into sectors considered hazardous and require special safety clearances, such as mining for the first time.

“Fixed-term employees become eligible for gratuity after one year of continuous service (earlier five years)...wages now include basic pay, dearness allowance, and retaining allowance; 50% of the total remuneration (or such percentage as may be notified) shall be added back to compute wages, ensuring consistency in calculating gratuity, pension, and social security benefits,” said a government statement.

Pilot killed as Tejas jet crashes at Dubai show

NEW DELHI (TIP)

An Indian Air Force (IAF) pilot was killed on Friday after a Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA Mk-1) crashed during a demonstration flight at the Dubai airshow, the IAF said.

The pilot was identified as Wing Commander Namansh Syal from Kangra in Himachal Pradesh. “An IAF Tejas aircraft met with an accident during an aerial display at the Dubai airshow. The pilot sustained fatal injuries in the accident. IAF deeply regrets the loss of life and stands firmly with the bereaved family in this time of grief. A court of inquiry is being constituted to ascertain the cause of the accident,” the IAF said in a statement, adding that a probe has been launched.

The crash was the second involving the India-built single-engine fighter jet since it was inducted by the IAF in July, 2016.

Images circulating on social media showed the fighter jet hitting the ground and exploding into a fireball. The pilot was performing low-level aerobatic



manoeuvres when the Tejas crashed on the concluding day of the five-day airshow, which began on November 17.

The development comes as the IAF is looking to induct an advanced variant of the plane, the LCA Mk-1A.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh expressed grief over the tragedy. “Deeply anguished at the loss of a brave and courageous IAF pilot during an aerial display in Dubai Air Show. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family. The nation stands firmly with the family in this tragic hour,” he said on X. “The nation has lost a brave, dutiful, and courageous pilot. I express my deepest condolences to the bereaved family members. I pay heartfelt tribute to the indomitable bravery,

dedication to duty, and commitment to national service of brave son Naman Syal Ji,” Himachal CM Sukvinder Singh Sukku wrote on social media platform X, where he first announced the identity of the pilot in the crashed Tejas. Syal, 37, is survived by his wife, who also serves in the Indian Air Force, their six-year-old daughter, and his parents. A Tejas fighter jet had earlier crashed near Jaisalmer in Rajasthan on March 12, 2024. The pilot ejected safely. The crash occurred minutes after the jet had taken part in the tri-services Bharat Shakti exercise at the Pokhran firing range near Jaisalmer, an event that sought to demonstrate the strides India has made towards self-reliance in the defence manufacturing sector.

The IAF operates two squadrons (a squadron has 16 to 18 planes). The two aircraft that crashed were part of the IAF’s Mk-1 fleet, which includes the initial operational clearance (IOC) and the more advanced final operational clearance (FOC) configurations, the first variants of LCA.

Al Falah's past terror ties surface, former student key figure in 2008 blasts

Investigations into the Delhi blast case has revealed that Al Falah University in Faridabad's Dhauj village has had a long-standing link with terrorism. In several earlier bomb blasts, from Gujarat to Delhi, the university appears to have a recurring connection.

Fugitive terrorist Mirza Shadab Baig, involved in five bombings in 2008, was also a student there. He completed his BTech in electronics and instrumentation in 2007 and disappeared soon after travelling on his genuine passport. He has been missing since September 19, 2008, the day of the Batla House encounter.

This is why multiple investigating and security agencies across the country, including the Delhi Police Special Cell, Gujarat ATS, UP ATS, J&K Police and Haryana Police, are now probing the case together. On Friday, a team of the Punjab Police also reached Al Falah University and questioned several staff members and students for hours. Information was also collected about a doctor recently detained from Pathankot.

The 45-year-old doctor had been teaching at a medical college in Pathankot for three years. Before that, he worked for four years at Al Falah. He remained in touch with several of his fellow students there. The Punjab Police team gathered details about his tenure at the university and his links with Dr Umer Un-Nabi and others. Sources said if the agencies had taken even a little longer to bust this "white-collar" terror module, its network could have expanded significantly.

Meanwhile, the NIA again detained a cab driver for questioning last night. Sources said the agency had taken Dr Muzammil from J&K on a production warrant and was interrogating him and the taxi driver face to face. The Nuh Police also inspected madrasa Jamia Madina Uloom at Jhimrawat village on Thursday, although no suspicious items or persons were found.

Mirza Shadab Baig -- still absconding and believed to be in Saudi Arabia -- was a native of Raja Ka Qila Mohalla in Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh. A key member of the Indian Mujahideen, he was involved in the 2008 Jaipur serial blasts. He had travelled to Udupi, Karnataka, to collect explosives for the attacks. Having studied instrumentation engineering at Al Falah University, Baig was well-versed in the technicalities of bomb-making. Officials said Baig carried a reward of Rs 1 lakh and was wanted in multiple bombings, including the 2008 Jaipur serial blasts, the Ahmedabad-Surat blasts and the 2007 Gorakhpur blast. The Jaipur attacks involved nine explosions within 15 minutes across several locations in the city, killing 63 persons and injuring 216.

Nitish Kumar gives up home department after 20 years as BJP gets portfolio

PATNA (TIP)

Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar on Friday, Nov 21, relinquished control of the crucial home portfolio for the first time in 20 years as his deputy and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Samrat Choudhary was assigned the ministry that oversees law and order, a key issue that propelled the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to victory in the recent state polls.

The announcement of portfolios came a day after Kumar, his two deputies Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha, both from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), were sworn in. Twenty-four other ministers — eight from the Janata Dal (United), 12 from the BJP, two from the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) and one each from the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) and Rashtriya Lok Morcha — also took oath in batches of six. Kumar — who earlier held charge of home, general administration, cabinet secretariat, and election in addition to being CM — has retained all but the home portfolio. This included the general administration department, which oversees transfer and posting of



IAS officers, including in the home department.

Choudhary emerged as the second-most influential after Kumar with the home berth. Last time, he handled finance and commercial taxes and the panchayati raj departments.

Deputy CM Sinha was given revenue and land reforms along with mines and geology. Last time, he handled agriculture and the mines and geology departments.

Among the JD(U), Bijendra Prasad Yadav retained energy, planning & development, excise & prohibition, as well as finance and commercial taxes, previously held by Samrat Choudhary.

Vijay Kumar Choudhary was allocated water resources,

parliamentary affairs, information and public relations, and building construction departments. Last time, he handled water resources and parliamentary affairs departments.

Shrawon Kumar retained rural development and got additional charge of transport. Ashok Chaudhary retained rural works and Leshi Singh, one of the three women ministers, was given food and consumer protection. Madan Sahni, meanwhile, retained the social welfare portfolio.

Mohd Zama Khan, the only Muslim face in the cabinet, was allocated the minority welfare department.

Among the BJP lawmakers, Mangal Pandey retained the health portfolio and got additional charge of law & justice. State BJP chief Dilip Jaiswal was given industries. He handled the revenue and land reforms department before the cabinet reshuffle in the previous government in February this year.

Nitin Nabin retained road construction and gained urban development, while Ram Kripal Yadav was given agriculture.

Amit Shah vows to 'throw out infiltrators' after Mamata Banerjee urges SIR halt

NEW DELHI (TIP)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said the government will throw out every "ghuspetiya" from the country and alleged that some political parties are opposing the SIR exercise as they want the names of infiltrators to remain on the electoral rolls.

Addressing the BSF Diamond Jubilee (61st Raising Day) celebrations in Bhuj, Shah said SIR is the "purification" of the voters' list.

Shah's remarks on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voters' rolls came a day after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote a strongly worded letter to Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, asking him to immediately halt the exercise, which she claimed was "chaotic, coercive and dangerous."

Banerjee alleged that the SIR of the electoral rolls in Bengal had reached a "deeply alarming stage" and was being conducted in an "unplanned, dangerous" manner.

"Today, the BSF is engaged in preventing infiltration at all borders of the country. Stopping infiltration is not only essential for national security but also to protect the democratic system from being polluted," Shah said.

Describing SIR as the "purification" of the voters' list, Shah accused some political parties of trying to weaken the government's campaign against illegal infiltrators.

"These parties are opposing the ongoing SIR and the voter list purification process being carried out by the Election Commission because they want to ensure that the names of infiltrators remain on the electoral rolls," he added.

At the Diamond Jubilee celebration, Shah asserted: "Today, I want to make it very clear that we will deport every single infiltrator from this country, one by one. This is our resolve (Main is Heerak Jayanti Samaroh mein bahut spasth karna chahta hoon ki hum is desh mein se ek-ek ghuspaithiye ko chun-chun kar bahar nikalenge; yeh hamara pran hai). This is the resolve of the Modi government to deport each and every infiltrator from the country.

"Who will be the chief minister of any state in the country, or who will be the prime minister, is a decision that can only be made by the citizens of India. Infiltrators do not have the right to pollute our democratic system and influence our democratic decisions," Shah said.

Now, Chinese nationals can apply for tourist visa from all Indian consulates

In yet another sign of thaw in ties between India and China, the government has expanded 'tourist visa' facility for Chinese nationals, allowing them to apply for visa from all Indian embassies and consulates.

This is an expansion of visa facility that India resumed for tourist visas for Chinese nationals in July this year. It had started only through Indian mission in Beijing and consulates in Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. The extension to allow the visa facility shows the growing trajectory of bilateral ties. The Ministry of Home Affairs was in the loop of decision making as the tourist visa facility was suspended due to security-related issues. Tourist visas for Chinese citizens were suspended following the violent Galwan Valley clash in June 2020, which plunged the relations between the two countries to their lowest point in six decades. The expansion of tourist visa facility marks another step in the steady normalisation of ties after a tense four-year period triggered by a military stand-off in April 2020 along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Earlier, direct flights between India and China, which were stopped since early 2020 due to Covid scare, resumed in October this year.

India in history this Week

NOVEMBER 21 TO NOVEMBER 27

21 NOVEMBER

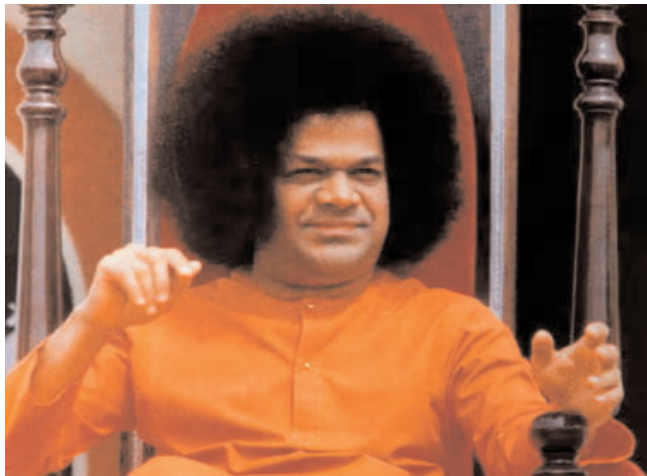
1517 Sultan of Delhi Alexander Shah Lodi died.
1899 The birth of Hare Krishna Mehtab, a prominent leader of the Indian National Congress and one of the makers of modern Odisha.
1872 Birth of famous Rajasthani poet and freedom fighter Kesari Singh Barhat.
1916 Birth of Yadunath Singh, the revered Indian military hero, Paramveer Chakra
1947 Post independence, postage stamps were issued for the first time in the country.
1962 During the India-China border dispute, China announced a ceasefire.
1921 The Prince of Wales (Emperor Edward VIII) arrived in Bombay (now Mumbai) and the Congress announced a nationwide strike.
1963 India's space program began with the release of rockets from the Thumba region of Kerala.
1970 Renowned Indian scientist Chandrashekhara Venkata Raman passed away.
2006 India and China decided to increase joint cooperation in the field of civil nuclear energy.
2007 PepsiCo chairman Indira Nooyi was included on the board of directors of the American Indian Business Council.

22 NOVEMBER

1517 After the death of Alexander Lodhi, his son Abraham Lodi became the ruler of Delhi.
1968 The proposal to change the name of Madras State to Tamil Nadu got approval from the Lok Sabha.
1992 In Assam, a bomb blast on a bus by Bodo militants killed 27 people.
2008 Eminent Hindi poet Kunwar Narayan was selected for the Jnanpith Award in the year 2005.
1939 Birth of Samajwadi Party chief and former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav.
1971 Pakistan violated the Indian air border and aerial conflict ensued between the two countries.
1830 Jhalkari Bai, the chief member of Rani Laxmibai's army, who was waging a war of independence against the British, was born.

23 NOVEMBER

1937 The country's famous scientist Jagdish Chandra Bose died.
1983 For the first time in the country, a Commonwealth summit was held in New Delhi.
1997 Sahitya Academy Award winner Nirad C Chaudhary completed 100 years of his life.



1926 Spiritual Guru Sai Baba was born.

24 NOVEMBER

1877 The first Hindustani Khasi Jamsetji Patigara to become deputy commissioner was born.
2003 Uma Devi Khatri, who instilled a comedy in Hindi films, died.

1871 The National Rifle Association was organized.
1904 The first successful caterpillar track was produced.
1926 Eminent philosopher Sri Aurobindo attained complete accomplishment.
1944 Famous Indian film actor and film director Amol Palekar was born.



1986 Legislators were expelled from the House together for the first time in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly.
1988 For the first time under the Dal Balaul law, Lok Sabha MP Lalduhoma was disqualified.
2008 Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, accused in the Malegaon bomb blast case, accused the ATS of showing obscene CDs.
1881 India's freedom fighter and politician Chhoturam was born.

25 NOVEMBER



2014 Sitara Devi, the famous dancer of Kathak died.
1866 Allahabad High Court was inaugurated.
1879 Birth of saint poet TL Vaswani.
1949 The constitution of independent India was signed by the President of the Constitutional Committee and implemented it with immediate effect.
1960 The STD system of telephone was first used in India between Kanpur and Lucknow.
2001 Benazir Bhutto met Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in New Delhi.



1890 India's famous linguist, litterateur and scholar Suniti Kumar Chatterjee was born.

1890 Radheshyam Kathavachak, a prominent writer in Parsi theatre, was born.

26 NOVEMBER

1949 The supreme law of the country adopted our constitution.
2008 The terror attack on Mumbai shook the world.
2009 The Constitution of India adopted the Constitution.



1960 Telephone STD service started between Lucknow and Kanpur for the first time in India.
2012 Arvind Kejriwal formed a new political party called Aam Aadmi Party.



1948 National Cadet Corps was established.
2008 The terrorist attack in Mumbai left 164 people dead, more than 250 injured.



27 NOVEMBER

1001 The Hindu Shahi ruler Jaipal was defeated by the invading Mahmud Ghazni.
1795 The first Bengali drama was staged.
1907 India's famous poet and writer Harivansh Rai Bachchan was born in Allahabad city of Uttar Pradesh.
2011 The famous Indian classical musician Sultan Khan died.
2008 Uttar Pradesh became the first state in the country to pay the Sixth Pay Commission.
1881 India's famous historian and internationally renowned scholar of archeology Kashi Prasad Jaiswal was born.
1888 Famous freedom fighter and first Speaker of Lok Sabha Ganesh Vasudev Mavalankar was born.



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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD 2025



SANGEETANJALI

INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED ARTISTS

VOCALIST: VIDUSHI KASTURI BANDOPADHYAY

SITARIST: SUPRATIK SENGUPTA SAROD: SOUMYA CHAKRAVERTY

HARMONIUM: ANIRBAN CHAKROBORTY TABLA: MIR NAQIBUL ISLAM

TIME: 5:30: – 7:30 P.M.

ADMISSION: FREE

DONATIONS WELCOME

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FOR CHAITANYA- JAGRUTI (AWARENESS & PURE CONSCIOUSNESS)



HEALTH IS WEALTH

The Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji: Its Relevance Today

ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਤੋਂ ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ।। ਤਕ ਦਾ ਸਫਰ

From being "fearless and without enmity" to "giving fear to none, nor fearing anyone", such was the journey of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji



BY GURCHARANJIT
SINGH LAMBA

Panthic poet Teja Singh Sabhar beautifully described a garland of martyrdoms:

ਸੁਰਗਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਬੈਠੀਆਂ ਹੈਸਨ, ਇਕ ਜਗ੍ਹਾ ਸਰਕਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ।
ਵੇਖਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵੇਖ ਰਹੇ ਨੇ ਬੁਤ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਨੁਹਾਰਾ ਦੋ।
ਗੱਲਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗਲ ਇਹ ਨਿਕਲ ਗੱਲ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਦੇ।
ਇਕ ਨੇ ਪੰਚਮ ਪਿਤਾ ਪਿਆਰੇ, ਇਕ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੋਤੇ ਜੋ।
ਉਸ ਪੋਤੇ ਨੇ ਪੋਤੇ ਲੈ ਲਏ, ਦੋ ਏਧਰ ਤੇ ਏਧਰ ਦੋ।

In the heavens sit two divine emperors,
Beheld by many as two wondrous figures.
From their talks emerged a single thought,
One is the Fifth Guru, the other his grandson Ninth Guru.

The grandson took his grandsons on His laps -two each of both sides.

This chain of martyrdoms began with Guru Arjan Dev Ji's sacrifice, followed by a series of martyrdoms.

On 24 November 1675, near the Red Fort in Delhi, the Ninth Guru, Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, was martyred on the orders of Aurangzeb. In human history, this event stands unique from many perspectives, with no parallel example. Guru Gobind Singh Ji, in his autobiography, wrote about this martyrdom:

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਆਨਿ ॥੧੫॥

Tegh Bahadur performed a deed unmatched by anyone else."

Throughout world history, countless sacrifices have been cherished in the heart of humanity, impossible to erase. But what was so special about Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom that led Guru Gobind Singh Ji to declare it the ultimate act, beyond which none could go? Was this martyrdom merely a momentary event, destined to fade with time? If so, it would be an injustice to that great sacrifice. In reality, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom has many dimensions and facets. Even after 350 years, the same causes, oppressions, and injustices persist across the globe. Mankind is facing the same issues, only the perpetrators and victims have changed. It seems humanity has neither fully valued nor learnt from this sacrifice. Thus, its significance and relevance remain as strong today as ever: Guru Gobind Singh Ji's words affirm: "Deities and demons were created." (Dasam Granth)

ਦੇਵ ਦੈਤ ਜਫਨ ਉਪਜਾਯੋ।। (ਦ.ਗ੍ਰ.)

If these two forces continue to coexist in the world, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom will forever inspire humanity.

A poet beautifully captured this sacrifice:

ਵਾਰ ਕੇ ਸੀਸ ਜਗਾਇ ਦੀਏ ਸਭ, ਸੇਏ ਪੜੇ ਥੇ ਜੋ ਪਾਇ ਪਸਾਰੇ।
ਕੰਠ ਲਗਾਇ ਅਭੇਦ ਕੀਏ ਜਨ, ਨੀਚ ਅਜਾਤ ਅਫ਼ਤ ਵਿਚਾਰੇ।



ਚਾਰ ਦਿਸ਼ਾ ਜਿਨ ਕੀ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਹੂੰ ਤੇ, ਬਾਜ਼ਤ ਹੈ ਅਬ ਸੰਖ ਨਗਾਰੇ।
ਪੰਨ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰ ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ, ਸੀਸ ਧਰੋ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਚਰਨਾਰੇ।

He gave his head to awaken those asleep,
Embraced and revealed the plight of the oppressed and outcast.

By his grace, drums and conch shells resound in all four directions.

Blessed Guru Tegh Bahadur, I lay down my head at thy feet.

The foundation of this sacrifice lies in Guru Nanak Dev Ji's divine proclamation, describing the Creator as Nirbhau (fearless) and Nirvair (without enmity). He firmly stated that without embracing these two divine qualities, one cannot connect with God. Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji embodied this message by living the principle: "Gives fear to none, nor fears anyone.

ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ।।

The words "fearless and without enmity" sound appealing, but to live them in the face of tyrants like Babur or Aurangzeb requires the courage of a true divine soul.

History bears witness that being both fearless and without enmity at the same time is extremely difficult. Every coward claims to be no enmity, and every tyrant claims to be fearless. But Gurmat demands both qualities simultaneously, and Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji proved this through his actions, showing he would neither instill fear nor accept it.

In world history, there are countless examples of sacrifices for oneself, family, community, or faith. But to give one's life for another's religion, for their religious rights, and for freedom of conscience-that's a lighthouse illuminating Chandni Chowk. This is why Guru Gobind Singh Ji gave the profound principle that, at the level of humanity, there can be no discrimination. His words state: "When the illusion of the heart is removed, what difference remains between Hindu and Turk

ਜਾਂ ਤੇ ਫੂਟ ਗਯੋ ਕ੍ਰਮ ਉਰ ਕਾ, ਤਿਸ ਆਗੇ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਕਯਾ ਤੁਰਕਾ।

This means that for one whose heart is free of duality, the distinction between Hindu and Muslim vanishes.

This sacrifice was for the protection of religious

symbols-the tilak and sacred thread-which Guru Nanak Dev Ji had rejected for his own path, declaring that his followers would not be bound by such rituals. Yet, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's sacrifice for those very Hindu symbols stunned the world.

As a poet said:

ਸਿਰ ਰਾਖੇ ਸਿਰ ਜਾਤ ਹੈ, ਸਿਰ ਕਾਟੇ ਸਿਰ ਸੋਹੇ।
ਜੈਸੇ ਬਾਤੀ ਦੀਪ ਕੀ ਕਟੇ ਉਜਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਏ।।

"Head saved, head lost. Head severed, yet it shines.
Like a lamp's wick cut, but still giving light."

In 1934, the renowned freedom fighter Bhai Parmanand, upon returning from abroad and visiting Kashmir, wrote in his book Story of My Life (p. 178): "Whenever I see a tilak on the forehead of a Brahmin boy in Kashmir, my head instinctively bows in gratitude to God, reminding me of the great sacrifice of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji."

However, a bitter truth remains: in 1675, at the age of 54, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji gave an unparalleled sacrifice for the Hindu faith. At that time, Guru Gobind Singh Ji was just nine years old. Yet, just 12 years later, Hindu hilly rulers allied with Aurangzeb's forces to attack Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Such is the paradox of the world.

The place where Guru Ji's head was severed is called Sis Ganj. His head was cremated at Anandpur Sahib, and his body was cremated at Baba Lakhi Shah Vanjara's haveli, now Rakab Ganj Sahib in Delhi. Both Chandni Chowk and Anandpur Sahib are known as Sis Ganj Sahib. Where Sikhs offer their heads, those places are called Shaheed Ganj (martyrdom shrines). Sis Ganj is a seed from which countless Shaheed Ganjs have sprouted. A poet wrote:

ਸ਼ਮਾਂ ਭੀ ਕਮ ਨਹੀਂ, ਕੁਛ ਇਸ਼ਕ ਮੇਂ ਪਰਵਾਨੇ ਸੇ।
ਜਾਨ ਦੇਤਾ ਹੈ ਮਗਰ ਵੇ, ਤੇ ਯੇ ਸਰ ਦੇਤੀ ਹੈ।

"The candle is no less than the moth in love.
The moth gives its life, but this one gives its head."

During Guru Nanak Dev Ji's time, when Babur invaded India, He stood up for oppressed Hindus and Muslim women alike, crying out: "Muslim women read their scriptures, yet suffer in agony, O Lalo!" (M:1, 723)

ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੀਆ ਪੜਹਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਕਸਟ ਮਹਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਖੁਦਾਇ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ।। (ਮ:੧ ੭੨੩)।

But during Aurangzeb's persecution of Hindus, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji gave his head.

As has been said by Guru Gobind Singh ji: "Be it Babur or Baba, both are in the hands of the Divine." (Dasam Granth)

ਬਾਬੇ ਕੇ ਬਾਬਰ ਕੇ ਦੋਊ।। ਆਪ ਕਰੈ ਪਰਮੇਸਰ ਸੋਊ।। (ਦ.ਗ੍ਰ.)

The "Shield of India," Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom at the hands of Aurangzeb, was documented by Guru Gobind Singh Ji himself, stating that his father protected the tilak and sacred thread of Hindus. This is profoundly significant. In 1975, during the 300th anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom, a malicious attempt was made to spread the false narrative that his martyrdom was not for religious freedom or the tilak and sacred thread but for

From page 20

disrupting law and order, for which he was punished according to the law.

However, the uproar that followed forced the professor who propagated this to admit that the most reliable testimony is an autobiography, and Guru Gobind Singh Ji's own writings detailed the truth. This quelled the falsehood.

Thus, Guru Gobind Singh Ji's words in his Bani are of utmost importance:

ਤਿਲਕਜੰਵਰਾਖਾਪ੍ਰਭਤਾਕਾ ॥ਕੀਨੇਬਡੋਕਲੁਮਹਿਸਾਕਾ॥

ਸਾਧਨ ਹੇਤਿ ਇਤੀ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰੀ ॥ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਯਾ ਪਰੁ ਸੀ ਨ ਉਚਰੀ ॥੧੩॥

"He protected the tilak and sacred thread, performing a great deed in this dark age.

For the sake of the righteous, he gave his head but did not utter a cry."

Yet now, attempts are being made again, in hushed tones, to claim that this Bani is not even Guru Gobind Singh Ji's. This is part of a deeper conspiracy to erase the crucial testimony of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom, as if to martyr him again.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji presented another dimension of this martyrdom, stating it was for Dharma, and Guru Ji gave his head but not his resolve: "For the sake of Dharma, he gave his head but did not surrender his principles.

ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸਾਕਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ ॥ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰੁ ਸਿਰਰੁ ਨ ਦੀਆ ॥

However, an equally significant point is Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's rejection of performing miracles, which renowned scholar Dr. J.S. Grewal highlights in Guru Tegh Bahadur and Persian Chronicles with multiple references. Historical texts like Khalsanama by Bakht Mal, Tarikh-e-Punjab by Ghulam Muhiyuddin Bute Shah, Risala Dar Ahwal-i-Nanak Shah Darvesh by Budh Singh, Umdat-ut-Tawarikh by Sohan Lal, Tawarikh-e-Sikhan by Khushwaqt Rai, Char Bagh-e-Punjab by Ganesh Das, and Ibratnama by Aliuddin are particularly noteworthy.

In Islamic philosophy, miracles (karamat) are believed to be a power possessed by auliya (those close to Allah). The authorities wanted to confirm that Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was not an auliya. However, not only did Guru Ji refuse to display miracles, but he also declared:

"Performing theatrical miracles is a futile act. It brings shame to the divine."

ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸਾਕਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ ॥ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰੁ ਸਿਰਰੁ ਨ ਦੀਆ ॥

ਨਾਟਕ ਚੇਟਕ ਕੀਏ ਕੁਕਾਜਾ ॥ਪ੍ਰਭ ਲੋਗਨ ਕਹ ਆਵਤ ਲਾਜਾ ॥੧੪॥

Thus, Guru Ji dismissed miracles as mere "tricks of jugglers."

In Islamic tradition, extraordinary and supernatural acts are divided into four categories:

1. Mu'jiza: Miracles performed by prophets.
2. Karamat: Miracles performed by auliya (saints).
3. Ma'unat: Acts performed by mystics or those in a state of divine ecstasy.
4. Istidraj: Acts performed by those outside the fold of true faith.

(Source: Punjabi Sufi Sahit Sandarbh Kosh, Gurdev Singh, p. 128)

Despite these categorizations, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji refused to perform miracles. It is said that he was even asked to publicly declare that he possessed no miraculous powers. However, Guru Ji neither performed miracles nor denied having them.

Guru Ji's martyrdom followed, which Guru Gobind Singh Ji immortalized in his writings:

ਦੇਹਰਾ ॥ਠੀਕਰ ਫੇਰਿ ਦਿਲੀਸ ਸਿਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪੁਰਿ ਕੀਯਾ ਪਯਾਨ ॥

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਸੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਆਨਿ ॥੧੫॥

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਕੇ ਚਲਤ ਭਯੋ ਜਗਤ ਕੇ ਸੋਕ ॥



ਹੈ ਹੈ ਹੈ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਭਯੋ ਜੈ ਜੈ ਜੈ ਸੁਰ ਲੇਕਿ ॥੧੬॥

Dohra: He broke the potsherds at Delhi's head, and departed to the divine city.

Tegh Bahadur performed a deed unmatched by any other. At Tegh Bahadur's departure, the world was filled with sorrow. The earth cried "Alas! Alas!" while the heavens resounded with "Victory! Victory!"

This was a unique event in human history. The world exclaimed in shock, "Can such a thing happen?" Yet, in the divine realm, there was jubilation. Poet Kankan captures this in his vivid style:

ਸੀਸ ਦੀਯਾ ਤਹਿ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਸਿਰਰ ਨ ਦੀਨਾ ਜਾਇ

ਜੰਵੂ ਟਿੱਕਾ ਰਾਖਿਆ ਚਲੇ ਰਾਮ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਇ ॥੧੭੪॥

ਹਯ ਹਯ ਹਯ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਭਯਾ ਸੁਰਗ ਲੋਕ ਜਯਕਾਰ ।

ਭਈ ਬਧਾਈ ਇੰਦ੍ਰ ਕੇ ਆਏ ਆਪ ਮੁਰਾਰਿ ॥੧੭੫॥

(ਦਸ ਗੁਰ ਕਥਾ - ਕੰਕਣ)

The True Guru gave his head but did not surrender his resolve. He protected the sacred thread and tilak, singing the praises of Ram.

The world cried "Alas! Alas!" while the heavens roared in victory. Indra himself came to offer congratulations. (Das Gur Katha - Kankan)

At the time of his father's martyrdom, Guru Gobind Singh Ji was just nine years old. As Guru Nanak Dev Ji said: "When the father believed, the father and son merged in the same hue."

This martyrdom for the sake of the tilak and sacred thread took place in 1675. Exactly 273 years later, on 10 December 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), signed by 48 countries, including India. The UDHR's thirty articles are significant, but Articles 1 and 18 stand out:

Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 18: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; this right includes freedom to change their religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest their religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance.

It feels as though these articles were written with Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's philosophy of sacrifice as their foundation. They affirm that every person is born free, with equal rights, free from discrimination, and entitled to live with a spirit of brotherhood. They also ensure freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, including the right to practice, teach, and worship, whether individually or collectively, publicly or privately. Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's unparalleled martyrdom remains a global inspiration for religious tolerance and the fight for human rights. It stands as a milestone in the struggle for human dignity, where one sacrificed their life for another's faith.

Interestingly, India's Constitution also reflects these principles, emphasizing "fraternity."

The lesson Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji taught through his sacrifice was adopted in principle by the United Nations. However, in practice, the world has failed to ensure religious freedom and human rights protection adequately. This remains a matter of concern. Every year, reports of human rights violations, including in India, are published in glossy formats. Governments often dismiss these reports, claiming the authors lack understanding of local realities. Thus, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom remains even more relevant today than ever before.

For India and its people, this martyrdom should hold immense significance. Yet, does it? It is no secret that the Sikh community, the heirs of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, has faced unresolved religious, social, legal, and cultural grievances for the past 75 years. These issues need resolution. Mere speeches or commemorative events are not enough.

The principles of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom still await realization, even 350 years later. While the world acknowledges these principles, two dates are particularly significant:

" 25 November 2025: The 350th anniversary of Guru Ji's martyrdom.

" 10 December 2025: United Nations Human Rights Day.

At the very least, efforts should be made to urge the United Nations and the Indian government to dedicate 10 December 2025 to Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's martyrdom.

A unique feature of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's Bani (spiritual compositions) is that it was written in simple, widely understood language, accessible to all. He also referenced mythological tales familiar to the masses. Before departing this transient world, Guru Ji composed his final Bani in Raag Jaijwanti, a melody of the first quarter of the night, resounding with divine praise:

Jaijwanti Mahala 9: Life passes, life passes, wasted in vain.

Hearing the Puranas day and night, yet the ignorant understand not.

Death has arrived, where will you flee?

The body you thought eternal will turn to dust.

Why not chant the Lord's name, O shameless fool?

Bring Ram's devotion to your heart, abandon your mind's pride.

Nanak's servant says: Shine in this world. (M:9, 1353)

ਜੈਜਾਵੰਤੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੯ ॥ਬੀਤ ਜੈਰੈ ਬੀਤ ਜੈਰੈਜਨਮੁ ਅਕਾਜੁ ਰੇ ॥

ਨਿਸਿ ਦਿਨੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਕੈ ਪੁਰਾਨਸਮਝਤੁ ਨਹ ਰੇ ਅਜਾਨ ॥

ਕਾਲੁ ਤਉ ਪਹੁਚਿਓ ਆਨਿਕਹਾ ਜੈਰੈ ਭਾਜਿ ਰੇ ॥੧॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥

ਅਸਥਿਰੁ ਜੇ ਮਾਨਿਓ ਦੋਸੇ ਤਉ ਤੋਰਉ ਹੋਇ ਹੈ ਖੇਹ ॥

ਕਿਉ ਨ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਲੇਹਿਮੁਖ ਨਿਲਾਜ ਰੇ ॥੧॥

ਰਾਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਹੀਏ ਆਨਿਛਾਡਿ ਦੇ ਤੈ ਮਨ ਕੇ ਮਾਨੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਇਹ ਬਖਾਨਿਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਬਿਰਾਜੁ ਰੇ ॥੨॥੪॥ (ਮ:੯ ੧੩੫੩)

This is Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's eternal message to humanity. In conclusion, Master Tara Singh's words beautifully encapsulate the martyrdom:

1. Blessed is the one who gets to serve others.

2. More blessed is the one who serves their faith.

3. Even more blessed is the one who serves another's faith.

4. Greater still is the one who protects another's religion.

5. The greatest is the one who gives their life for another's religion.

Finally, Guru Gobind Singh Ji's blessing remains our solace: "Remember Tegh Bahadur, and the nine treasures rush into your home. He provides help everywhere.

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦੁਰ ਸਿਮਰੀਐ ਘਰਿ ਨੇ ਨਿਧ ਆਵੈ ਯਾਇ ॥ਸਭ ਥਾਈ ਹੋਇ ਸਹਾਇ ॥੧॥

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From Page 20

Guru Tegh Bahadur: The ninth Sikh master

As the world marks the 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, we honor a spiritual giant whose sacrifice remains unparalleled. Revered as Hind di Chadar, he gave his life in 1675 to protect freedom of belief and uphold human dignity at a time of intense persecution. His stand for the Kashmiri Pandits became a universal message-that truth and conscience must never bow to tyranny. THE INDIAN PANORAMA revisits the Guru's life, teachings, and the profound relevance of his martyrdom, reminding us that courage, compassion, and moral clarity are timeless pillars that continue to guide humanity.

In the grand tapestry of Indian spiritual history, few figures radiate the moral force, courage, and spiritual clarity of Guru Tegh Bahadur, remembered with reverence as Hind di Chadar-the Shield of India. His life, shaped by renunciation, fearless sacrifice, and vast spiritual outreach, became a turning point in Sikh history. From his humble childhood as Tyag Mal, to the revelation of the Ninth Guru at Baba Bakala, to his extensive travels and founding of Sri Anandpur Sahib, Guru Tegh Bahadur's journey remains a saga of unparalleled spiritual aura and civilizational defence.

From Tyag Mal to Tegh Bahadur

Guru Tegh Bahadur was born on 1 April 1621 in Amritsar to Guru Hargobind Sahib, the Sixth Sikh Guru, and Mata Nanaki. He was originally named Tyag Mal, symbolizing a life rooted in selflessness, meditation, and inner discipline. Yet, destiny had inscribed both stillness and valor into his path.

As a young boy, he displayed deep inclination toward contemplation, often absorbed in reflection even during the lively tempos of daily life in the Guru's household. But fate had other tests in store. At the symbolic Battle of Kartarpur, where Guru Hargobind defended Sikh sovereignty, the young Tyag Mal fought with such remarkable courage that his father bestowed upon him the title "Tegh Bahadur"-Master of the Sword.

This duality of tyag (renunciation) and tegh (courage) defined his personality: a warrior who avoided violence, but stood up when dharma demanded it; a saint who embraced silence, yet spoke with a thunderous moral spine when defending the oppressed.

For years after the Sixth Guru's passing, Tegh Bahadur lived quietly with his family at Baba Bakala, immersed in deep meditation, humility, and seva. Little did the world know that this silence would one day become the voice of a nation's conscience.

The Coronation at Baba Bakala: How the Ninth Guru Was Revealed

The announcement of the next Guru after Guru Har Krishan Sahib was cryptic: "Baba Bakale." Amid the confusion, 22 claimants emerged at the village. It was a moment demanding both spiritual discernment and divine timing.

Enter Makhan Shah Lubana, a devout Sikh merchant. Having prayed for divine intervention during a storm at sea, he vowed to offer 500 gold coins to the true Guru if his life was saved. When he reached Baba Bakala, every claimant accepted only two coins - except one.



The recluse Tegh Bahadur, immersed in meditation, accepted the full 500, saying gently, "Why test the Guru?"

Makhan Shah ran to the rooftop and proclaimed: "Guru Ladho Re! I have found the Guru!"

The Sikh world erupted with clarity. On 20 March 1665, Tegh Bahadur was formally enthroned as the Ninth Guru of the Sikhs-a moment that reinstated spiritual unity and reaffirmed the lineage of Guru Nanak.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's Extensive Travels:

Once enthroned, Guru Tegh Bahadur set out on one of the most extensive spiritual journeys undertaken by any Sikh Guru. These travels were not political tours-they were missions of consciousness, humility, and inner reform.

Across Eastern India: Bengal, Assam, and Bihar

Guru Tegh Bahadur travelled eastward to regions where Guru Nanak's earlier message had taken root. At Dhaka, Sylhet, Pandua, and Assam, he engaged in inter-faith dialogue, uplifted local communities, and inspired devotional practice. His meeting with King Raja Ram Singh in Assam helped de-escalate conflict and promote peace-an act that revealed his quiet diplomatic wisdom.

Northern Plains: Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi

At places like Kurukshetra, Agra, Mathura, and Allahabad, he spread Guru Nanak's message of equality, compassion, and devotion. His kirtan

gatherings drew Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs alike. At Delhi, he encountered the turbulence of Aurangzeb's reign-signalling the confrontation that history would inevitably record.

Malwa and Southern Punjab

He travelled extensively in Malwa, founding and blessing numerous villages such as Mandi, Talwandi Sabo, Bahadurgarh, Patiala region, and Mullawal. These regions blossomed into Sikh centres due to his spiritual presence and social upliftment.

The Philosophical Footprint

During these travels, Guru Tegh Bahadur composed hymns infused with deep detachment, spiritual clarity, and a philosophical understanding of life's impermanence. His verses-now part of the Guru Granth Sahib-guide seekers toward fearlessness, humility, and liberation from ego.

Historic Encounters: Guru Tegh Bahadur and Contemporary Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim Leaders

Guru Tegh Bahadur's life intersected with some of the most influential figures of the 17th century.

With Sikh Sangats and Saints

He rejuvenated distant Sikh congregations that had not seen a Guru in decades. His engagement with Sangats in Eastern India and Malwa revived spiritual vigour across communities.

With Hindu Leaders: A Voice for Collective Dharma

His later years saw a defining moment

when Kashmiri Pandit scholars from Mattan sought protection from forced conversions under Aurangzeb. Their appeal echoed across India. Guru Tegh Bahadur's response was simple yet epoch-making:

"Tell the Emperor that if he can convert Tegh Bahadur, all will follow."

This was not a defense of any one religion; it was a defense of freedom of conscience-the right of every human being to worship without fear.

With Muslim Scholars and Saints

Contrary to popular simplification, Guru Tegh Bahadur engaged with several Muslim faqirs, saints, and leaders during his travels. His discussions emphasised the unity of the Divine, transcending sectarian divides. His martyrdom, too, saw Muslim figures-such as Saiyyad Adam Shah and others-decry cruelty and honour his sacrifice.

Sri Anandpur Sahib: The City Founded Under His Vision

In 1665, Guru Tegh Bahadur purchased land from Raja Deep Chand of Bilaspur and laid the foundation of Chak Nanki, which later became Sri Anandpur Sahib-one of the most sacred centres of Sikh history.

A City of Spiritual Learning and Martial Preparedness

Anandpur was envisioned as a place where: spiritual learning thrived, Sikh arts flourished, martial training coexisted with devotional practice, and communities lived under the ideals of equality and self-respect.

After Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom, it was here that Guru Gobind Singh forged the Khalsa in 1699-a direct continuation of his father's vision to create a society free from fear, injustice, and oppression.

Legacy of Anandpur Sahib

To this day, Sri Anandpur Sahib stands as a living testament to the Ninth Guru's foresight-an epicentre of Sikh courage, culture, and spiritual discipline.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom in 1675 at Chandni Chowk, Delhi, where he gave his life to protect religious freedom, remains unmatched. His sacrifice changed the course of history and catalysed the formation of the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh.

He is remembered not merely as a Sikh Guru, but as a defender of humanity, a guardian of civil liberties, and truly, Hind di Chadar-the Shield of India.

His life continues to inspire generations with its message of fearless righteousness, unyielding compassion, and unwavering commitment to truth.



"ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸਿਮਰਿਐ ਘਰਿ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਆਵੈ ਧਾਇ"

We Remember and Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji



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Guru Tegh Bahadur: A timeless beacon of freedom, tolerance & courage

In an age defined by polarisation, identity clashes, and shrinking spaces for dialogue, the life and martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji continue to shine like a moral lighthouse for the world. Three hundred and fifty years after his supreme sacrifice, the Ninth Guru's legacy is not confined to scriptures or memorials—his message echoes through human rights discourses, interfaith movements, global conversations on religious liberty, and the values we must pass on to younger generations. To understand the true power of his teachings today, one must revisit not merely the events of 1675 but the spirit behind them—a spirit rooted in courage, dignity, and an unwavering defence of humanity.

Guru Tegh Bahadur as a Global Symbol of Religious Freedom

In the international discourse on fundamental freedoms, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji occupies a rare and profound position. Most symbols of human rights are political; his was spiritual. At a time when the Mughal empire exerted immense pressure on people to renounce their faith, Guru Tegh Bahadur rose as a protector not only of Sikhs but of Hindus, ascetics, scholars, and ordinary civilians whose right to their own belief system was being threatened.

His stand in 1675—public, fearless, and without the slightest personal gain—was essentially the world's earliest, clearest assertion of the principle now enshrined in modern constitutions: "Let every human follow their conscience." This universal moral stance transcends geography and religion, making the Ninth Guru a global symbol for freedom of thought and expression. He didn't merely preach tolerance; he demonstrated it through sacrifice. In an era when governments, societies, and communities still struggle with coexistence, Guru Tegh Bahadur remains the embodiment of the statement: "Humanity is greater than any empire."

Why the World Needs His Message of Tolerance & Sacrifice Today

Modern societies are facing a profound erosion of empathy. Intolerance spreads through social media walls, communal distrust grows in public spaces, and ideological rigidity fractures friendships, families, and nations. In such a climate, the Ninth Guru's message offers a transformative antidote.

Guru Tegh Bahadur taught that moral courage is not loud—it is steady. True tolerance is not passive—it requires active commitment. And sacrifice is not loss—it is the price of universal justice.

His teachings urge us to rise above the noise of divisive politics and reclaim the shared humanity that binds us. He did not oppose a religion; he opposed



tyranny. He did not die for a single community; he died for humanity's collective right to believe freely. His legacy reminds the world that freedom survives only when individuals are willing to stand for the oppressed—without expecting rewards or fearing consequences.

Human Rights Movements and the Ideals of Guru Tegh Bahadur

Across continents, human rights activists, reformers, and defenders of civil liberties echo principles rooted in the Guru's life. The global language of rights—liberty of conscience, dignity of belief, equality before law—reflects the ideals he championed through action.

International organisations that advocate for persecuted minorities often cite historical precedents of moral resistance; few parallels match the magnitude of Guru Tegh Bahadur's stand. Unlike rebellions or armed uprisings, his was a peaceful, ethical, voluntary submission to suffering for the protection of others. It is rare in world history to find a figure who embraced martyrdom so that people of another belief could continue to practice it.

Human rights scholars often refer to his sacrifice as a "nonviolent assertion of conscience", a concept that predates modern philosophical frameworks. In many ways, he was the world's first defender of religious rights, centuries before these values entered legal charters or global treaties.

Interfaith Harmony in Modern India & the Guru's Legacy

India's greatest strength has always been its pluralism. Yet this pluralism is fragile—tested repeatedly by political tensions, cultural anxieties, and historical wounds. Guru Tegh Bahadur's life stands as a reminder of the subcontinent's deepest truth: that unity

cannot be imposed; it must be lived.

When he offered his life for Kashmiri Pandits, he was not making a religious statement—he was making a civilisational one. His action declared that India belongs equally to all who inhabit it, regardless of faith. The Ninth Guru's legacy thus becomes a foundational pillar for interfaith dialogue, multicultural coexistence, and national harmony.

Gurdwaras today welcome people of every community; the Guru's langar feeds millions without discrimination; his teachings promote convergence, not conflict. In a culturally complex nation like India, the Ninth Guru's ideals act as a blueprint for peace—a reminder that spiritual leadership is not about exclusion but protection.

Educating Today's Youth Through the Teachings of the Ninth Guru

The youth of today navigate a world of information overload, moral ambiguity, and increasing pressure to conform. Guru Tegh Bahadur's teachings can serve as a powerful compass for them—pointing toward inner resilience, clarity of purpose, and moral courage.

His bani (teachings) emphasises calmness in adversity, detachment from ego, purity of conduct, and fearlessness in righteousness. These values are profoundly relevant in an age of anxiety, consumerism, and identity crises. Educators and institutions can draw from his life to teach young people: how to stand up against bullying and injustice, how to value truth over convenience, how to honour diversity instead of fearing it, how to cultivate spiritual and mental strength, how to lead without seeking applause.

For students, the story of the Ninth Guru is not just history—it is a lesson in character-building, leadership, and ethical citizenship.

The Forgotten Disciples: Unsung Heroes Who Stood With the Guru

The story of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom is incomplete without acknowledging the brave souls who walked beside him. While history often focuses on the Guru's last days in Delhi, many disciples—ordinary villagers, traders, soldiers, scholars—supported him throughout his spiritual mission.

Figures like Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, and Bhai Dayala are remembered, but countless others remain nameless: the families who sheltered him during his travels, the devotees who endured persecution, and the communities that upheld Sikh values despite imperial pressure. These unsung heroes kept the flame of justice alive at great personal cost. Their sacrifices remind us that revolutions are never the work of one person alone—they are built upon the courage of many who choose to stand on the right side of history.

A Legacy That Refuses to Fade

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom did not end with his passing—it became the spark that illuminated the birth of the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh. His message continues to ripple across centuries, shaping philosophies, communities, and democracies.

Today, as nations struggle with intolerance and humanity grapples with division, the Ninth Guru's sacrifice stands like a timeless declaration: Freedom cannot be gifted by rulers; it must be upheld by the fearless. His legacy urges us to rise above self-interest, embrace moral courage, and protect the rights of others—even when the world chooses silence.

His story is not just remembered—it is lived, sung, commemorated, and carried forward. Because some sacrifices do not belong to the past; they belong to eternity.



We Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji



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From Page 20

The philosopher-martyr: Guru Tegh Bahadur's teachings for a turbulent age

Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Ninth Guru of the Sikhs, is often remembered for his unparalleled martyrdom, but his spiritual and scriptural contributions form an equally monumental legacy. His Bani, preserved in the Guru Granth Sahib, carries a voice of profound introspection-calm, detached, fearless, and universally compassionate. Through a relatively small yet spiritually immense corpus of hymns, he shaped Sikh philosophy into an inward-facing, contemplative tradition deeply attuned to the human condition.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's Bani in the Guru Granth Sahib: A Tapestry of Renunciation, Courage & Inner Peace

Though Guru Tegh Bahadur's contribution amounts to 116 Shabads and 15 Saloks, their philosophical weight is extraordinary. His verses are placed across 15 ragas, from Bhairav and Jaijaiwanti to Sarang and Basant, each ornamented with a reflective, meditative tone.

His Bani emerges after a century of Sikh experience marked by community-building, persecution, political upheaval, and spiritual expansion. Therefore, his hymns are not abstract philosophy; rather, they arise from the lived reality of suffering, impermanence, struggle, and the quest for divine anchoring.

Key Themes in His Bani

■ Renunciation without Withdrawal

Guru Tegh Bahadur's concept of tyag is neither monastic nor escapist. It is about loosening the grip of ego, desire, and material obsession so that one may engage in the world with purity of heart and clarity of purpose.

■ Courage as a Spiritual State

His verses repeatedly encourage the seeker to rise above fear-fear of death, fear of loss, fear of judgment. This fearlessness becomes the soil from which moral courage grows.

■ Sehaj: The Inner Equilibrium

His poetry resonates with sehaj—a serene state of being where the mind rests effortlessly in divine presence, untouched by turbulence.

The Bani of Guru Tegh Bahadur, thus, merges introspection with action, silence with moral stance, and inner detachment with outer responsibility.

Philosophy of 'Tyag' & Detachment in His Hymns

The heart of Guru Tegh Bahadur's teaching is the philosophy of tyag—but it is essential to understand it as he intended.

Tyag is not rejection of the world—

it is liberation from the illusions that enslave the mind.

His hymns speak of the transient nature of human experience:

- Wealth appears permanent but vanishes like dust.
- Youth fades like a passing shadow.
- Relationships, so tightly held, dissolve with time.
- Life itself is a temporary abode.
- This is not pessimism; it is illumination.

By accepting impermanence, one discovers stability. By understanding detachment, one finds deeper love. Guru Tegh Bahadur's tyag encourages: a mind unfettered by anxiety, a heart free of possessiveness, a life rooted in compassion rather than ambition.

This philosophical detachment empowered him to stand before the Mughal empire without fear; for his mind was already free from attachment to body, praise, or power.

Teachings on Human Rights, Freedom of Faith & Universal Brotherhood

Guru Tegh Bahadur's stand for the Kashmiri Pandits was the world's first recorded defence of religious freedom



by sacrificing one's own life—not for one's own community, but for another's right to worship freely.

His Bani expresses this universal ethics:

- All humans are children of the same Divine.
- Forced conversion violates the very essence of spiritual autonomy.
- No path is superior; sincerity of devotion matters more than ritual.
- Standing with the oppressed is a moral obligation, not a choice.

His martyrdom, therefore, was not for religion—it was for freedom of conscience, the foundation of any civilised society. This makes him not only a Sikh Guru, but a global champion of human rights long before these terms existed.

The Eternal Relevance of Salok Mahalla 9 in Today's Turbulent World

The Salok Mahalla 9, composed in the final days before his martyrdom, distils the wisdom of a perfected soul observing humanity with compassion and lucidity. These verses address modern dilemmas with uncanny precision.

Why are these saloks timeless?

- They reflect the fragility of existence.
- In a world overwhelmed by materialism, they remind us that life is fleeting and must be lived mindfully.
- They expose the illusions of ego and pride.
- In an era of social media, self-image, and competition, these saloks call us to humility.

- They teach acceptance of divine will.
- In times of anxiety, uncertainty, and global conflict, they offer a path to inner stability.
- They call for conscious living.
- Guru Tegh Bahadur urges us to awaken from spiritual slumber and live with purpose.
- They illuminate the path of courage and moral clarity.
- His closing teachings are a manual for living with dignity even in adversity.

The saloks remain a balm for the distressed and a compass for the confused—guiding humanity toward balance, peace, and fearlessness.

A Beacon for the Ages

Guru Tegh Bahadur's spiritual and scriptural legacy stands at the intersection of courage and compassion, detachment and responsibility, introspection and justice. His hymns are not relics of the past—they are living teachings, offering clarity in an age clouded by noise, conflict, and uncertainty.

He reminds us:

- To live without fear.
- To serve without ego.
- To love without attachment.
- To defend the dignity of every human being.
- To remain rooted in truth even when the world trembles. In a world searching for moral anchoring, his message shines brighter than ever—an eternal flame of wisdom guiding humanity across centuries.



We Salute Hind Ki Chadar Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji for his Supreme Sacrifice



BEDI FAMILY, New York

First row (L to R): Kirpa Kaur, Ryanbir Singh Bedi, Paramjit Singh Bedi,
Kuldip Kaur Bedi, Satbir Singh Bedi

Second row (L to R): Simarjit Kaur, Saachi Kaur, Japna Kaur, Asees Singh, Daya Singh

Third row (L to R): Jaswinder Singh, Bisman Singh, Tejvir Singh, Raminder Singh,
Ribli Kaur, Tresa Kaur, Gurpreet Singh, Supreet Kaur, Chazbir Singh Bedi

Guru's sacrifice and the battle for conscience

On 24 November 1675, in the bustling heart of Mughal Delhi, a moment unfolded that would permanently alter the moral and civilizational direction of India. Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Ninth Guru of the Sikh tradition, was publicly executed on the orders of Emperor Aurangzeb. To the Mughal court, it was punishment for "defying imperial authority" and "protecting the idolatrous Hindus." To history, however, it was something far greater: a martyrdom for freedom of conscience, centuries before such concepts were formally articulated by modern democracies and international human-rights charters.

As India commemorates the 350th Martyrdom Anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, it becomes essential to revisit not only the event but also the complex religious, political, and social forces that converged to make his sacrifice inevitable and transformative.

Guru Tegh Bahadur did not die for Sikhs alone.

- He did not die for political power.
- He did not die for territorial gain.
- He died for a principle that forms the bedrock of civilisational India: the right of individuals and communities to live and worship without fear.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND - THE ERA OF THE NINTH GURU

To understand why Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom holds such monumental significance, one must look closely at the world into which he stepped as Guru.

A Youth Tempered by Discipline and Reflection

Born in 1621 in Amritsar as Tyag Mal, the young Guru was trained in warfare by Guru Hargobind but drawn deeply toward contemplation. His childhood blended: the discipline of martial training, the silence of meditation, the values of humility and compassion, and the spiritual richness of the Guru household.

He earned the name Tegh Bahadur (Brave of the Sword) for his valour in the Battle of Kartarpur; yet the sword he ultimately wielded was the sword of spiritual courage, not violence.

By the time he became Guru in 1664, India was undergoing seismic changes:

Guru Tegh Bahadur's predecessors had laid a strong ethical, spiritual, and community foundation. Sikh institutions-gurdwaras, sangats, humanitarian networks-were thriving across Punjab and beyond.

After Shah Jahan's fall, Aurangzeb seized power through war and imprisonment. His ascension marked a shift from the culturally syncretic ethos of earlier Mughal rulers.

Sufi mystics, Bhakti poets, Hindu sanyasis, Jain monks, Sikh Gurus, and intellectuals across India challenged the rigidity of orthodoxy. Aurangzeb saw such movements as threats to imperial control.

Through extensive travels-from Bengal



and Assam to Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, and Delhi-Guru Tegh Bahadur preached: equality, fearlessness, honest living, spiritual detachment, compassion respect for all faiths.

The popularity of his teachings across Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, and local tribal communities drew both admiration and suspicion from the Mughal state.

In simple terms:

Guru Tegh Bahadur had become the moral voice of a pluralistic India - exactly what Aurangzeb's increasingly rigid empire sought to suppress.

THE CRISIS IN KASHMIR - A CIVILIZATIONAL APPEAL FOR HELP

To understand the magnitude of Guru Tegh Bahadur's decision, one must grasp the intensity of the crisis unfolding in Kashmir during the mid-17th century.

For centuries, Kashmir was celebrated as a cradle of Indian intellect-home to: towering Sanskrit scholars, centres of Shaivite and Vaishnavite philosophy, renowned Pandit families with unbroken lineages, poets, mystics, grammarians, mathematicians, a syncretic culture influenced by Shaivism, Buddhism, Sufism, and Bhakti. By 1670, this world stood on the brink of collapse.

Under Emperor Aurangzeb, Iftikhar Khan was appointed governor of Kashmir. His radical interpretation of the emperor's religious agenda included: forced conversions at mass scale, orders to demolish temples, public humiliation of Pandits, bans on religious gatherings, heavy taxation on non-Muslims, pressure on families to surrender their cultural traditions.

The centuries-old Kashmiri Pandit community found itself facing an existential threat. Their physical safety, spiritual identity, and cultural continuity were all in jeopardy.

The Delegation of Pandits: A Historic Journey

Unable to resist militarily, the Pandits sought refuge not in armies but in spiritual and moral leadership. Led by Pandit Kirpa Ram Dutt, a group of nearly 500 Pandits travelled from the cold valleys of Kashmir to the plains of Anandpur Sahib.

Their journey was both an act of desperation and a testament to the Guru's stature as a universal spiritual guardian.

The Appeal Before Guru Tegh Bahadur

Historical accounts describe the Pandits: with shaved heads forced by Mughal edicts, torn clothes symbolising humiliation, sacred threads removed by coercion, and eyes filled with fear yet carrying a last ember of hope.

When they narrated their suffering, Guru Tegh Bahadur listened in silence-absorbing the weight of their pain.

After a period of contemplation, the Guru uttered the words that echoed through history: "Go tell your Emperor: If he can convert your Guru, you shall all willingly accept his command."

This moment became the turning point of India's civilizational story.

Why This Offer Was Extraordinary

It meant:

- The Guru placed his own life

between tyranny and the oppressed.

- He accepted suffering not for Sikh rights, but for the religious freedom of another community.
- He transformed the struggle into a moral battle that no empire could justify.

The Kashmiri Pandits returned to Aurangzeb with the Guru's message - and the Mughal emperor immediately recognised the implications.

Aurangzeb knew he was no longer confronting a group of defenceless Pandits; he was confronting the moral authority of a Guru whose influence transcended geography and faith.

This was the spark that set the next chapter in motion.

AURANGZEB'S INDIA - POLITICS OF ORTHODOXY, EMPIRE & CONTROL

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom cannot be understood without analyzing the political atmosphere created by Aurangzeb-a ruler whose policies shaped the subcontinent's destiny.

Before Aurangzeb:

- Akbar promoted Sulh-i-Kul (peace for all) and interfaith dialogues.
- Jahangir enjoyed the arts, supported Sufis, and maintained political pragmatism.
- Shah Jahan encouraged temple patronage and regional cultural expression.
- Aurangzeb reversed this trajectory.
- The empire moved from acceptance to uniformity, from engagement to imposition.

Policies That Redefined the Era



We Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji

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- Director, Long Island 9/11 Memorial
- Vice President , National Federation of Indian Associations
- Chairman, Glen Cove Long Island Gurdwara
- Founder / President , Punjabi Cultural Society
- Founder / President , Sikh Center Gurdwara, Flushing
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- Former Vice President , Sikh Forum Inc. Plainview
- Former Chairman, India Association, LI-India Center
- Executive Committee Member, Richmond Hill First Sikh Gurdwara in 1973-74
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DARSHAN SINGH BAGGA



Bagga Plaza III



Bagga Museum

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From page 28

■ Reimposition of Jizya

The tax on non-Muslims had been abolished by Akbar, but Aurangzeb reinstated it as a symbol of religious hierarchy.

■ Temple Destruction and Conversion
Several major temples-including Kashi Vishwanath and Mathura's Kesava Deo were demolished or converted into mosques. Many others suffered desecration.

■ State-Driven Conversions

Governors and qazis were encouraged to increase conversion numbers, leading to widespread coercion.

■ Persecution of Intellectual Dissidents

Aurangzeb's intolerance extended even to: Sufi mystics, unorthodox Muslim scholars, poets, critics of imperial policy, regional saints promoting pluralism. Many were imprisoned or executed.

■ A Suspicious Eye Toward Popular Spiritual Leaders

Figures like Guru Tegh Bahadur posed a different kind of threat:

■ They did not seek political power, but they commanded moral authority - and that frightened an absolutist ruler more than any army.

Why Aurangzeb Saw the Guru as a Threat

Guru Tegh Bahadur advocated religious freedom, attracted diverse followers, challenged orthodoxy through philosophy, not war, travelled across Mughal territories spreading a message of liberation, commanded deep respect from ordinary people as well as intellectuals, was becoming a moral rallying point for the oppressed, To Aurangzeb, this was unacceptable.

A Guru who taught fearlessness (nirbhau) and non-discrimination (nirvair) was more dangerous to tyranny than any military commander.

In the emperor's eyes, by siding with the Kashmiri Pandits, Guru Tegh Bahadur had openly challenged the ideological core of imperial power.

Thus, the Mughal court decided not simply to punish him - but to make an example of him. The stage was set for confrontation.

THE GURU'S DECISION - A SPIRITUAL STAND WITH CIVILIZATIONAL IMPACT

Guru Tegh Bahadur's acceptance of the Kashmiris' plea was not a spontaneous emotional response. It was a conclusion born from deep spiritual insight and historical responsibility.

After the Kashmiri Pandits narrated their suffering, the Guru withdrew into meditation. His quiet reflection was not a retreat from responsibility, but a profound evaluation of the stakes:

- An entire intellectual civilisation was endangered.
 - A community vital to India's philosophical and cultural memory faced erasure.
 - Aurangzeb's policies were quickly spreading to other regions-Punjab, Banaras, Bengal, and even Deccan.
 - Silence from spiritual leaders could permanently distort India's future.
- He emerged from contemplation with



clarity: To protect the freedom of another faith is the highest expression of one's own.

The Role of the Young Gobind Rai

A pivotal moment occurred when Guru Tegh Bahadur asked his young son, Gobind Rai (the future Guru Gobind Singh):

"Who in this world could sacrifice their life to protect the right of people to practice their faith?"

Gobind Rai, merely a child but spiritually mature beyond his years, answered:

"None other than you, revered father."

This statement did not influence the Guru's decision-it affirmed it. The lineage of the Gurus was built on responsibility, sacrifice, and unwavering commitment to the oppressed.

A Sacrifice Rooted in Spiritual Philosophy

Guru Tegh Bahadur's bani emphasised: renunciation of ego, detachment from worldly fears, confronting injustice, equality beyond religious identity, spiritual sovereignty.

These themes were not poetic expressions; they became the philosophical framework for his act.

He stood for:

- Hindus facing persecution,
- but equally for the idea that no empire may dictate human conscience.
- and for humanity's inherent right to choose its spiritual path.
- His sacrifice was a spiritual declaration, not a political rebellion.

A Deliberate Acceptance of Martyrdom

Guru Tegh Bahadur did not prepare for war. He did not mobilize armies. He did not seek alliances.

Instead, he prepared himself and his companions for voluntary arrest.

This was a moral confrontation, not a military one.

A message to the empire:

- You may command swords, but not souls.
- The Political Shockwave of His

Decision

When Aurangzeb received news that the Guru himself had stepped forward, the emperor was stunned. The Guru's act undermined everything the Mughal state attempted to achieve:

- He raised the ethical stakes to a level where coercion looked barbaric.
- He transformed a local crisis into a pan-Indian moral reckoning.
- He made himself a symbol for every persecuted community.
- He exposed the empire's fragility - for tyranny fears spiritual authority more than rebellion.

In this light, Guru Tegh Bahadur's decision was nothing short of civilizational defiance - a stand that would reverberate for centuries.

THE ARREST - FROM ANANDPUR TO DELHI

Once Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to confront Aurangzeb directly, the path of martyrdom became inevitable.

In July 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur, accompanied by three devoted Sikhs -

Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Dayala, and Bhai Sati Das - began his journey from Anandpur toward Delhi.

He was not fleeing; he was presenting himself.

This journey was symbolic:

- It represented the moral walk into the heart of tyranny.
- It echoed the ancient Indian tradition of sages facing emperors to defend dharma.
- It marked the beginning of the Guru's personal sacrifice.

Along the way, countless villagers gathered for his blessings, unaware they were witnessing a moment that would reshape India's moral foundations.

Arrest at Malikpur Ranghar

The Mughal forces, acting on Aurangzeb's direct orders, intercepted the Guru near Malikpur Ranghar, close to Agra.

Accounts suggest the manner of arrest was intentionally humiliating:

- Soldiers surrounded the Guru.
- He and his companions were

chained.

- They were paraded publicly to instill fear among the people.
- But the Guru walked with a calmness that unsettled even his captors.
- His serenity was his rebellion.

Imprisonment in Agra

Before being transferred to Delhi, Guru Tegh Bahadur was held briefly in Agra. This served two purposes:

- To assess his intentions - the Mughal court could not believe he had voluntarily come forward.
- To intimidate him - the empire hoped that confinement would break his resolve.
- But the Guru remained unmoved.

It is in Agra that the first reports reached Aurangzeb: the Guru is ready to die, but not convert.

This enraged the emperor, for it challenged his authority at its core.

The Long March to Delhi:

A Parade of Intimidation

The transfer from Agra to Delhi was deliberately slow. Mughal officials hoped to use the journey as a psychological tactic:

- The Guru and his Sikhs were shackled and marched through towns.
- Crowds gathered, some horrified, some helpless, some silently praying.
- The Mughals intended to project their strength; instead, the Guru's dignified composure inspired awe and devotion.

Many later chroniclers write that: The Guru walked like a king and the empire trembled like a prisoner.

Arrival at Delhi: A City Divided

Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrival in Delhi created an emotional and political storm.

- Common people whispered that a holy man had been arrested unjustly.■ Hindu traders, Sufi faqirs, and ordinary Muslims feared the consequences of the empire's actions.

We Salute Hind Ki Chadar Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji for his Supreme Sacrifice



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From page 30

- Even some nobles in the Mughal court were uneasy - many admired the Guru.
- Aurangzeb saw the Guru as a threat not because of arms, but because of the moral unity he created.
- The Guru was imprisoned in Kotwali Jail, a place where political prisoners and dissenters were kept.

Attempts to Break His Spirit

Over the next days, the Mughal officials attempted:

- persuasion
- philosophical debate
- pressure
- threats
- false promises
- humiliation

They failed at each attempt.

Guru Tegh Bahadur had embraced his destiny - martyrdom had already been accepted before the empire laid a hand on him.

The Tortures, the Trials, and the Unshaken Resolve

Guru Tegh Bahadur's final journey stands as one of the most defining chapters in India's civilisational memory—a moment when a single luminous soul confronted the might of an empire and, through an act of serene defiance, altered the trajectory of Indian history. The tortures, trials, and unbroken resolve of the Ninth Sikh Guru form a narrative that transcends religion and era. They speak to the eternal struggle between spiritual sovereignty and political absolutism, between the freedom of conscience and coercive power. When the Kashmiri Pandits approached the Guru at Anandpur Sahib, narrating the torment they faced under Governor Iftikhar Khan's implementation of Aurangzeb's policies, their plight became a defining moral moment. Guru Tegh Bahadur's decision was immediate, courageous, and unparalleled; he declared that if the Emperor could convert him, all the Pandits would follow. It was a challenge that exposed the spiritual emptiness of tyranny and illuminated the Guru's determination to stand as a shield for Dharma, not just for his community but for an entire civilization.

Delhi's Fear of a Fearless Saint

The Mughal court viewed him as a threat—not because he commanded armies or ruled kingdoms, but because he possessed moral authority that could not be coerced, bribed, or intimidated. His arrest near Agra was therefore not a political necessity but a calculated attempt to silence a spiritual conscience that resonated across India. He was chained alongside his closest companions—Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, and Bhai Dayala—and paraded toward Delhi as if he were a criminal. But the crowds who saw him pass by witnessed not a prisoner, but a radiant ascetic whose calm eyes reflected an inner sovereignty stronger than imperial power.

The Court of Coercion: Convert or Perish

In Delhi, he was offered the same choice repeatedly: convert to Islam or face death. The interrogators failed to grasp that a



man who lived in union with the Divine could not be intimidated by mortality. Guru Tegh Bahadur responded with grace and clarity. He had embraced Dharma not as ritual but as righteous duty. To protect the weak was an act of truth, and to renounce this calling would be to betray the very essence of his existence. Aurangzeb, frustrated by the Guru's serenity, orchestrated a series of tortures meant to break his spirit by breaking the bodies of those he loved.

Martyrs Who Stood Beside the Guru

Bhai Mati Das was tied between two pillars and sawn alive. Historical accounts describe that as the blade cut through his skull, he continued reciting sacred verses, his voice unshaken. Bhai Dayala was boiled alive in a cauldron of water and yet maintained constant meditation until his last breath. Bhai Sati Das was wrapped in cotton, drenched in oil, and set aflame, turning into a pillar of fire while chanting the Divine Name. These martyrdoms were intended to crush the Guru's resistance, but instead they carved their place into the soul of the Sikh tradition. The Guru watched each execution in full awareness, his composure unbroken, his spirit only rising higher with each act of brutality. When the imperial judges again demanded conversion, the Guru sat unmoved, lost in meditation. No earthly authority could dictate his conscience.

The Martyrdom: 24 November 1675 - A Day That Altered India

Finally, on 24 November 1675, in Chandni Chowk, the sentence was carried out. A massive crowd gathered, their silence conveying grief, awe, and bewilderment. Guru Tegh Bahadur's final moments were imbued with profound peace. He sat in stillness, as though offering his head in complete surrender to the Divine. The executioner hesitated before raising the sword. When the blow fell, it ended a life but ignited a legacy that would shape the destiny of India. He became not only the defender of

Kashmiri Brahmins but the first martyr for religious freedom in recorded Indian history—a man who gave his life for the right of others to practise their faith.

The Storm, the Secrecy, and the Sacred Rescue

A sudden storm swept Delhi after the execution, plunging the area into chaos. In the confusion, Bhai Jaita (Rangretta) carried the Guru's severed head from Delhi to Anandpur Sahib, undertaking a journey that was both perilous and sacred. Meanwhile, Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara smuggled the Guru's body away and cremated it by burning down his own house. These acts of supreme devotion ensured that the Guru's remains would be honoured, and the sites of these events would later become Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib and Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib—monuments not to death, but to the immortality of truth.

Impact on Sikh History, Indian Civilization & the Freedom Movement

The Seed of the Khalsa Consciousness
The martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur fundamentally reshaped Sikh consciousness. His son, Guru Gobind Singh, drew from this moment of sacrifice the inspiration to forge the Khalsa—a community of saint-soldiers dedicated to protecting righteousness and resisting tyranny in all its forms. The Guru's death transformed meditation into moral force, devotion into defiance, and spirituality into a living, protective power. It was this legacy that culminated in the doctrine of the Khalsa: fearlessness, moral clarity, and readiness to defend the oppressed.

A Civilisational Turning Point

Beyond Sikh history, the Guru's sacrifice stands as a luminous milestone in India's civilisational journey. He gave his life not for his own followers, nor for political gain, but for the protection of another faith entirely. This made him an unprecedented figure—a martyr for universal human rights centuries before

such terms existed in political discourse. Had he not stood firm when he did, India's cultural and religious landscape might have been drastically altered. His sacrifice restored the psychological confidence of a society under siege and renewed its belief that Dharma could still be defended through courage rooted in inner freedom.

Inspiration for India's Freedom Struggle

This legacy extended into India's modern freedom movement. Leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose, Rabindranath Tagore, and Bhai Vir Singh all invoked the Guru as a beacon of spiritual courage. Revolutionaries and reformers alike saw in him a symbol of resistance to authoritarianism. His words—"Nishchay kar apni jeet karo," a call to resolute self-victory—became a mantra for generations seeking liberation, not only from colonial rule but from fear, injustice, and inner bondage.

The Eternal Lamp of Conscience

Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom was not merely a moment of tragic beauty. It was a civilisational turning point. It reaffirmed India's commitment to pluralism and the sanctity of conscience. It taught that spiritual conviction can be stronger than empires, and that defending the faith of another can be the highest dharma. In a world still struggling with intolerance, forced identities, and religious conflict, the memory of the Ninth Guru stands tall—reminding humanity that true courage lies not in domination but in protection, not in coercion but in compassion.

The Sword That Awakened a Nation

On 24 November 1675, a sword tried to silence a sage. Instead, it awakened a nation. Guru Tegh Bahadur did not merely give his head; he gifted India its moral spine. His martyrdom continues to illuminate India's civilisational path, a reminder that when conscience stands firm, tyranny trembles.



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Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji*



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Guru Tegh Bahadur and the legacy that lives on

The story of Sikh history in the 17th century is not merely a chronicle of religious events—it is a living continuum of family values, spiritual courage, and intergenerational legacy. It is the tale of a house whose foundation was laid by Guru Hargobind's doctrine of Miri-Piri, whose walls were strengthened by Mata Gujri's silent devotion, whose flame was lit by Guru Tegh Bahadur's supreme sacrifice, and whose crown was forged by Guru Gobind Singh in the creation of the Khalsa. It is a lineage where every generation rose above personal trials to shape the destiny of millions.

This is the story of family as strength, lineage as responsibility, and legacy as the eternal compass of the Sikh spirit.

MATA GUJRI JI: THE MATRIARCH WHO HELD THE FOUNDATION TOGETHER

When we turn the pages of Sikh history, the women behind the Gurus often appear as faint outlines. Yet, without their strength, the edifice of Sikh dharma could never have stood so tall. Among them, Mata Gujri Ji is a towering figure—though she never sought recognition, she shaped an entire epoch through courage, intelligence, and unshakeable poise.

Married into the house of Guru Hargobind, Mata Gujri grew up in an environment where spirituality walked hand in hand with responsibility, where the Hukam of the Divine guided every act of daily life, and where the Sikh community looked to the Guru's household as its heartbeat.

As the wife of Guru Tegh Bahadur, she witnessed: his long years of contemplation in Bakala, his deep immersion in naam-simran, his reluctance to project himself, and the quiet nobility of a saint who lived without desire.

Yet she never wavered. She managed the household, supported him with unwavering faith, and built an atmosphere in which his spiritual clarity could bloom.

When Kashmiri Pandits came seeking help, tortured by forced conversions, it was not just the Guru who was summoned by destiny—it was the entire household. Mata Gujri's silent acceptance of the Guru's decision to give his life for the freedom of another faith remains one of the most profound spiritual acts in Sikh history.

She did not plead. She did not ask, "Why must you go?" She understood.

Her acceptance of loss for the greater good elevated her from a figure in the Guru's household to a universal mother of courage.

Raising the Future Guru

After Delhi witnessed the beheading of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the body and head being separated under brutal orders, Mata Gujri stood as the guardian of the nine-year-old Gobind Rai. She carried the emotional weight of explaining to him not only what had happened but why it had happened.



She shaped his understanding of: freedom of conscience, the nature of tyranny, the spiritual meaning of sacrifice, and the responsibility that now rested on his shoulders.

Without her inner steel, the future Guru Gobind Singh could not have emerged with the clarity and resolve that he did.

YOUNG GOBIND RAI: A CHILD TRANSFORMED BY MARTYRDOM

History often underestimates the impact of early trauma on leaders. But Gobind Rai's experience was not trauma—it was revelation. The child who saw the severed head of his father brought secretly to Anandpur Sahib witnessed the cruelty of oppression, but he also saw the immense power of truth that could shake an empire without lifting a sword.

From a tender age, Gobind Rai had a keen intellect, a poetic soul, and a mind that questioned everything. But the martyrdom gave him clarity of purpose.

Under the guidance of Mata Gujri and the sangat, Gobind Rai matured rapidly into a visionary. Every tale of his father's courage, every memory of the sacrifices made, entered his being like drops of molten gold.

From age nine onward, Gobind Rai was no ordinary child. He became the center of the Sikh community: composing poetry full of metaphysical depth, holding spiritual assemblies with grace and authority, and training in archery, horsemanship, and warfare with unmatched zeal.

The martyrdom created a dual path

within him—compassion for the suffering and steel for the oppressor. This duality later became the hallmark of the Khalsa.

HOW GURU TEGH BAHADUR'S SACRIFICE BECAME BLUEPRINT FOR THE KHALSA

The martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur did not end with his execution—it began a movement. It became the spark that ignited a transformation in Sikh identity and global religious consciousness.

Never before in human history had a spiritual leader given his life not for his own followers, not for his own faith, but for the right of another religion to practice freely. This supreme altruism set a standard unmatched in world civilisation.

The message was clear: righteousness is universal, threats to any community are threats to all, and true spiritual leadership transcends boundaries.

When Guru Gobind Singh created the Khalsa in 1699, he was not introducing a new ideology—he was crystallising the essence of his father's sacrifice.

The martyrdom became the philosophical spine of the new order. The Khalsa was designed to ensure that no tyrant would ever again terrorise the innocent, and no community would ever again stand defenseless.

AN UNBROKEN CHAIN OF MIRI-PIRI

The Sikh Gurus were not disconnected figures—they were a continuum of evolving wisdom. The lineage from Guru Hargobind to Guru Tegh Bahadur represents a seamless, purposeful progression.

Guru Hargobind introduced the two swords—Miri and Piri—symbolising the synthesis of temporal leadership and spiritual authority. He changed Sikhism forever by declaring that devotion must walk with courage.

He built the Akal Takht as the throne of the timeless One, signalling that Sikhs would henceforth uphold justice actively.

Where Guru Hargobind externalised resistance, Guru Tegh Bahadur internalised it. His life was one of: deep meditation, philosophical insight, compassion for the downtrodden, and readiness for the ultimate sacrifice.

His bani in the Guru Granth Sahib repeatedly emphasises the state of "nirbhau, nirvair"—without fear, without hate. His life was the greatest demonstration of that truth.

Guru Gobind Singh perfected the Miri-Piri tradition by blending the courage of Guru Hargobind and the moral clarity of Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Khalsa he created was: spiritual yet disciplined, warrior-like yet compassionate, sovereign yet humble.

The story of Mata Gujri, Guru Tegh Bahadur, and Guru Gobind Singh is not confined to the past. It continues to define Sikh identity and global ideals of freedom and justice. Their legacy teaches that: true courage is often silent, sacrifice is the highest form of leadership, and spiritual power can challenge empires without raising a weapon.

The family line that began with Guru Hargobind's vision ultimately gave to the world a community that stands for dignity, equality, and universal freedom.



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The landscape of Sikh history is mapped not only through scriptures and memories, but through living monuments-gurdwaras and sacred sites that stand as witnesses to the life, travels, teachings, and martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, the Ninth Guru of the Sikhs. Each site holds within its walls echoes of courage, quiet meditation, divine insight, and the ultimate sacrifice that reshaped the moral conscience of India. Together, they form a geographical tapestry that narrates the Guru's spiritual odyssey—from his birth and early travels to his last days in Delhi and the aftermath of his martyrdom.

In these historic spaces, the past is not distant—it breathes through the sangat, the shabad, and the ever-glowing flame of remembrance.

GURDWARA SIS GANJ SAHIB, DELHI: THE SITE OF SUPREME SACRIFICE

At the heart of Chandni Chowk stands Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib, one of the most sacred sites in Sikh memory. Here, on 24 November 1675, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was publicly beheaded under the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb for defending the religious freedoms of Kashmiri Pandits. This site is not merely a memorial—it is the very ground where the Guru's luminous moral stand reached its zenith.

A Testimony to Fearlessness

The Guru faced death with complete serenity. The Mughal court hoped to break his resolve with torture, humiliation, and threats, but the Guru remained unmoved. His martyrdom elevated the principle of "sarbat da bhala"—the welfare of all, demonstrating that spirituality and human rights are inseparable.

A Living Symbol in a Bustling Bazaar

Today, amidst the chaos of old Delhi, the gurdwara stands like an island of peace—its golden dome and white marble walls reminding millions of the price paid for religious liberty. The well where the Guru bathed in captivity, the remains of the Mughal kotwali, and the sacred tree believed to be present at the time of martyrdom offer a direct link to that historic moment.

GURDWARA RAKAB GANJ SAHIB: THE HEROISM OF LAKHI SHAH VANJARA AND

Historic gurdwaras and sacred sites related to Guru Tegh Bahadur



THE CREMATION IN FLAMES

Not far from the Parliament House in New Delhi stands Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib—the site where the headless body of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji was taken secretly and cremated by the devoted Sikh Lakhi Shah Vanjara and his son, Bhai Naghaiya.

A Night of Heroism Against the Shadow of Tyranny

After the martyrdom, the Mughal authorities forbade anyone from claiming the Guru's body. But Lakhi Shah Vanjara, a humble transporter and trader, risked everything to rescue it. Hiding the sacred body beneath stacks of hay and wood on his ox-cart, he carried it away under the cover of night.

To avoid detection, he set his entire house on fire—burning it down intentionally—so that the Guru's body could be cremated respectfully without arousing suspicion.

Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib stands today as a tribute to this unparalleled act of devotion. The sacred site represents



the courage of the common Sikh who rose above fear, proving that the Guru's legacy was protected not only by warriors, but by ordinary devotees willing to risk their lives.

BABA BAKALA SAHIB: THE SEAT OF REVELATION

Before he became the Ninth Guru,

Tegh Bahadur lived for many years in the quiet town of Bakala, immersed in meditation. It was here that the revelation of his Guruship unfolded after the passing of Guru Har Krishan Ji. When Guru Har Krishan Ji uttered the cryptic words "Baba Bakale" before his passing, many claimants appeared. Confusion reigned, and the sangat was



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From Page 36

bewildered. Yet in the silence of Bakala, the true Guru remained in deep contemplation.

Makhan Shah Lubana's Historic Cry

The revelation came through the Sikh trader Makhan Shah Lubana, who proclaimed, "Guru ladho re!"-"I have found the Guru!"-after testing the claimants. His historic cry filled the town, ending the confusion and establishing Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji as the rightful Guru.

Today, Gurdwara Baba Bakala Sahib stands as a beacon of truth, discernment, and the spiritual depth that defined the Ninth Guru's early years.

SRI ANANDPUR SAHIB: THE VISION, THE FOUNDATION & THE RISING OF A NATION

Anandpur Sahib is inseparable from the story of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. It was he who purchased the land, laid the foundations of the settlement, and named it Anandpur-the City of Bliss. This sacred ground would later become the birthplace of the Khalsa under Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji envisioned Anandpur as a place where spirituality, community life, education, and moral training could flourish. He built a small settlement that attracted seekers, scholars, poets, and warriors. Though he would be martyred before witnessing Anandpur's golden age, he planted the seed from which the Khalsa Raj would blossom.

A Place Where Legacy Turned Into Movement

Under Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Anandpur Sahib transformed into the nucleus of Sikh sovereignty, but its spiritual foundations rested firmly on the contributions of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

GURDWARA BANGLA SAHIB, MATHURA

One of the lesser-known yet deeply significant sites associated with Guru Tegh Bahadur is the Gurdwara in Mathura, often referred to by devotees as Gurdwara Sri Bangla Sahib (Mathura).

During his extensive travels, Guru Tegh Bahadur visited Mathura-a city under severe economic and religious pressure during Mughal rule.

Tradition narrates that the Guru stayed in a small dwelling (the 'Bangla'), now commemorated as a Gurdwara, offering hope and counsel to the oppressed Hindu population.

His presence symbolized spiritual resistance in a city ravaged by harsh jizya taxes and temple demolitions.

The Mathura Gurdwara today stands as a testament to the Guru's outreach beyond Punjab-his universal mission to support the downtrodden and uplift the spirit of faith during dark times.

Guru ka Tal Gurudwara in Agra

Guru ka Tal is a historical Sikh pilgrimage site dedicated to the memory of ninth Guru Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. The Gurudwara was built over the place where the Guru Tegh Bahadur offered voluntary arrest to Aurangzeb, the Mughal Emperor. This historic structure dates back to the 17th century.



THE GURU'S TRAVEL ROUTE: FROM PATNA TO ASSAM-A PILGRIMAGE OF COMPASSION AND COURAGE

Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's travels across Northern and Eastern India left behind a trail of sacred sites that continue to inspire millions. His journeys were not political campaigns but missions of compassion-reaching out to communities living under hardship, giving spiritual guidance, and strengthening the Sikh presence across the subcontinent.

Patna Sahib: The Cradle of Destiny

Guru Tegh Bahadur's travels to Patna resulted in the birth of his son, Gobind Rai, in 1666. Today, Takht Sri Patna Sahib stands as a major Sikh shrine, celebrating the union of family destiny with divine purpose.

Bihar, Bengal & Dhubri: The Guru's Quiet Footsteps

From Patna, the Guru traveled extensively, visiting: Gurdwara Handi Sahib (Bihar), Gurdwara Gaya Sahib, Sites in Bengal around Dhaka and Faridpur, Gurdwara Damdama Sahib, Dhubri, Assam. His presence brought hope to regions struggling under Mughal and local oppression. At Dhubri on the banks of the Brahmaputra, he mediated conflicts, opened avenues for peace, and offered the healing light of the Guru's word.

Assam: A Chapter of Diplomacy and Healing

The Guru's visit helped ease tensions between the Ahom rulers and local factions. His presence brought stability, and the memory of the "Brahmaputra Darshan" still lingers as a luminous moment in regional history.

From village shrines to major gurdwaras, each site along the route marks an encounter between the Guru's compassion and the people's yearning for justice and spiritual clarity.



A SACRED MAP OF SACRIFICE, SERVICE & SPIRITUAL ENDURANCE

The gurdwaras and sacred spaces associated with Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji form a powerful spiritual geography. From the quiet sanctity of Baba Bakala to the brutal site of Sis Ganj, from the flames

of Rakab Ganj to the serene paths of Assam, each site narrates a fragment of the Guru's soul.

Together, they remind us that: sanctity resides not in stone but in sacrifice, history lives not in monuments but in memory, and the path of the Guru is not a trail of power-but of truth.

We Salute Hind Ki Chadar Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji for his Supreme Sacrifice



VIDUSHI PURNIMA A DESAI REIKI GRAND MASTER

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Founder & President, Sriniketan Foundation
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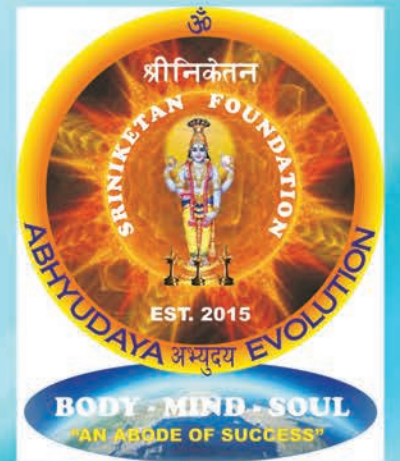
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Art, culture & heritage: Guru Tegh Bahadur lives through paintings, poetry & sacred architecture

Across the vast canvas of South Asian civilization, few figures unify art, memory, devotion, and resistance the way Guru Tegh Bahadur, the Ninth Guru of the Sikhs, does. His life—a tapestry of meditation, moral courage, compassion, and martyrdom—has inspired artists, poets, architects, musicians, and entire communities for more than three centuries. Because his message transcended religious boundaries, the creative imagination of Punjab and northern India has continually found new ways to express the magnitude of his sacrifice.

Guru Tegh Bahadur does not live only in manuscripts and historical chronicles; he thrives in paintings and frescoes, in marble domes and sacred courtyards, in folk songs sung by wandering musicians, and in the poetry and kirtan that echo in Gurdwaras across the world. His legacy—fought for with his head but never surrendered in spirit—continues to shape artistic and cultural heritage in ways that are profound and enduring.

What follows is a journey through the many artistic traditions that preserve and reinterpret his memory, revealing how culture becomes the custodian of courage.

Depictions of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Sikh Art Through the Centuries

The earliest depictions of Guru Tegh Bahadur emerged soon after his martyrdom, when the Sikh community sought visual ways to immortalize a tragedy so vast that it shook the spiritual conscience of India. These works, produced in the 17th and 18th centuries, often followed the detailed lines of Mughal miniature painting. The Guru appears serene and contemplative, seated cross-legged with a white robe flowing gently and a rosary in hand. The emphasis was not on grandeur but on stillness, reflecting the 26 years he spent meditating at Baba Bakala.

As the Sikh kingdoms and principalities grew in the 18th and early 19th centuries, especially under Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Sikh art blossomed. Court painters in Lahore, Patiala, Amritsar, and Kapurthala adopted more vibrant colours and dramatic flourishes. Paintings of this period often depict the Guru's spiritual radiance, the royal grace of the House of Guru Hargobind, and scenes of the young Gobind Rai receiving blessings from his father. These works emphasize lineage, continuity, and the spiritual heritage passed down from father to son.

The later 19th and 20th centuries saw the rise of lithographs, woodcuts, and mass-produced calendar art. These images—found in homes, dharamsalas, shops, and workshops—played a major role in shaping popular Sikh memory. Artists began portraying dramatic scenes: the Guru speaking to the



Kashmiri Pandits seeking refuge, his arrest and torture, his final moments in Chandni Chowk, and the courageous cremation by Bhai Lakhi Shah Vanjara. This was art in service of remembrance, meant to teach even the simplest villager the story of a Guru who gave his life for the freedom of another faith.

In the 21st century, Sikh art has entered a digital renaissance. Muralists in cities, graphic novelists, calligraphers, and digital illustrators reinterpret the Guru with bold lines, symbolic motifs, and modern colour schemes. The imagery now often frames Guru Tegh Bahadur as a global symbol of human rights—a man who stood for liberty long before the concept took shape in modern political discourse. In these contemporary artworks, he stands tall: sword in one hand, scripture in the other, radiating both saintly compassion and the steel of resistance. The blend mirrors his true legacy—meditation and martyrdom, spirituality and sacrifice.

Sacred Architecture Inspired by the Ninth Guru

If visual art captures emotion, sacred architecture captures memory. The Gurdwaras associated with Guru Tegh Bahadur stand as architectural testaments to the resilience of a people who refused to let tyranny silence their truth. These structures are not mere shrines; they are living museums of Sikh identity.

Two of the most iconic shrines are Gurdwara Sis Ganj Sahib and Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib, both in Delhi. Sis Ganj Sahib marks the exact spot where the Guru offered his head to protect the right of Kashmiri Pandits to practise their faith. The well from which he bathed and the banyan tree under which he meditated before martyrdom still form part of the sacred complex. Its Indo-Mughal arches and gilded sanctum symbolize the community's survival through oppression.

Rakab Ganj Sahib commemorates the heroic act of Lakhi Shah Vanjara, who

risked his life to cremate the Guru's body by setting his own house on fire. The marble-domed Gurdwara stands where flames once rose as a shield against tyranny. Every stone of Rakab Ganj speaks of devotion rising above fear.

Beyond Delhi, the architecture of Baba Bakala Sahib preserves the deep spiritual life of the Guru. Its subterranean meditation chamber and historic well remind visitors of the decades he spent immersed in contemplation before being revealed as the true Guru. The structure reinforces themes of depth, silence, and inner knowing.

Equally significant is Anandpur Sahib, founded by Guru Tegh Bahadur as Chakk Nanaki. Though Anandpur became historically associated with Guru Gobind Singh, its foundations bear the imprint of the Ninth Guru's vision. The Takht, the fort-like structures, the havelis, and the terraced courtyards embody the philosophy of Miri and Piri—the harmony of temporal responsibility and spiritual authority first instituted by Guru Hargobind and carried forward by Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Travel along the path of Guru Tegh Bahadur—from Patna Sahib to Assam—and one encounters smaller yet equally powerful shrines. The architecture in these regions merges Sikh tradition with local aesthetics: Bengali curved roofs, Assamese bamboo craftsmanship, and eastern Indian brick patterns. These Gurdwaras remind us that the Guru was not confined to Punjab; he was a traveler who carried solace to distant lands, awakening devotion across rivers, forests, and kingdoms.

Through these sacred spaces, architecture becomes an eternal custodian of his memory, sheltering his message within walls built by love, sacrifice, and community.

How Folk Traditions Preserve the Memory of His Martyrdom

While art and architecture preserve the Guru's image, folk traditions keep his

spirit alive. In the villages of Punjab, Himachal, Haryana, and the plains stretching into the Ganga belt, the story of Guru Tegh Bahadur is woven into songs, oral narratives, and communal gatherings.

The dhadi-sarangi tradition remains one of the most powerful carriers of this memory. Dhadi jathas—wandering balladeers—sing heroic narratives called vaars. Their deep, resonant voices recount the pain of the Kashmiri Pandits who sought refuge, the Guru's noble decision to sacrifice himself, the brutal tortures inflicted upon Bhai Mati Das, Bhai Sati Das, and Bhai Dayala, and the tearful moment young Gobind Rai received the news of his father's martyrdom. These ballads keep alive emotions that no textbook can capture: pride, grief, devotion, and the moral thunder of resistance.

In rural gatherings, elderly storytellers narrate tales of the Guru's travels—how he blessed the poor, mediated conflicts, and stood beside the oppressed in distant regions. Villages associated with Guru Tegh Bahadur—such as Baba Bakala, Kiratpur Sahib, and Anandpur—host annual fairs and commemorations where these stories are retold to new generations. The oral tradition ensures that children learn not just the facts but the values behind the sacrifice.

Among the nomadic Vanjara tribes, especially the descendants of Lakhi Shah Vanjara, stories about the covert cremation have become part of community identity. They speak of a night when a man burnt his own house to protect the dignity of a Guru, transforming a humble dwelling into a pyre of courage.

Even in Uttarakhand, Himachal, and parts of UP, local folk songs recount the Guru's refusal to bow to Aurangzeb, portraying him as a guardian of dharma. These traditions reveal how deeply Guru Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice penetrated the consciousness of diverse cultures.

Folk culture, thus, becomes a living monument—one that breathes, moves, travels, and evolves.

Poetry, Ballads & Kirtan That Celebrate His Legacy

If folk songs carry emotion and architecture carries memory, then poetry and kirtan carry the spiritual essence of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

His own hymns—115 in the Guru Granth Sahib—form the philosophical core of his artistic legacy. These shabads explore themes such as detachment from material illusions, impermanence of life, compassion for the suffering, and the importance of meditative awareness. His compositions like "*Jo nar dukh me dukh nahin maanta...*", "*Chit charan kamal ki mauj...*", and "*Sagal duar kau chhaad kai...*" represent some of the highest expressions of Sikh metaphysics: fearless devotion to the Divine.

INDIAN AMERICAN PIANO PRODIGY, CHARU SURI, RECEIVES GRAMMY® NOMINATION

BY MABEL PAIS

"SHAYAN is a love letter to the ancient ragas of India — not as performance, but as medicine. It is music that invites the world to pause, reflect, and rest." - Charu Suri

CHARU SURI, Indian-born pianist and composer, received a GRAMMY® nomination for SHAYAN in the Best Contemporary Instrumental Album category of the 68th Grammy® Awards. The nominations were announced on November 7, 2025. The Awards ceremony will take place on Sunday, February 1, 2026, in Los Angeles at the Crypto (crypto-com/us) Arena.

The piano prodigy is known for weaving Indian ragas into her music. Suri made a historic fifth appearance at Carnegie Hall on July 25, 2024, becoming the first Indian jazz artist to do so. Charu has been making waves in the jazz scene, having performed over the past year in Italy, London, Blues Alley in D.C., Boston Jazz Festival and beyond. In 2024, she was awarded a Jazz Roads Grant to enable her to bring her unique sound to many venues across the United States.

"This new album by Charu Suri is without doubt something wonderfully special, from the genesis of genius to the world as a panacea of peace." - One World Music

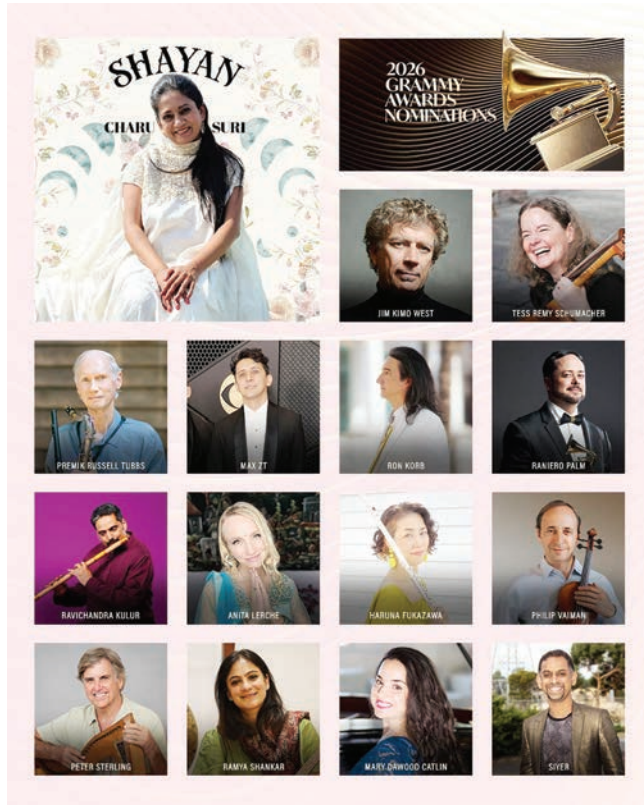
One of the few female jazz composers and pianists to emerge from India, Charu has blazed a new sonic identity and has performed in world-renowned venues from the GRAMMY® Museum, Lincoln Center, Birdland, NCPA Mumbai, and the Royal Opera House in Mumbai.

Her work has been performed by Yo Yo Ma, The New Jersey Symphony, Steve Gadd, John Patitucci, and Joe Lastie from Preservation Hall, among others. Her latest album, SHAYAN, topped the U.S. and World charts and her previous "raga jazz" album, RAGS & RAGAS, topped international jazz charts and reached #3 in the U.S. and #1 in India on iTunes.

She has won several awards including 'Gold Entertainer of the Year' from the International Singer Songwriters Association (ISSA), Intercontinental Music Awards, Global Music Awards and is a Governor of the Recording Academy, New York Chapter.

This is her first GRAMMY® nomination; she is also nominated as producer in the Global Music Album, Sounds of Kumbha by Siddhant Bhatia and is a pianist on the Children's album, Herstory, by Flor Bromley.

Recently, she was elected Governor of the Recording Academy New York Chapter.



Charu Suri. -Credit: charusuri.com.

Links to stream Charu's albums
SHAYAN:

<https://charusurimusic.bandcamp.com/album/shayan>

RAGS & RAGAS: <https://songwhip.com/charu-suri/rag-and-ragas>

RAGAS & WALTZES:
<https://charusuri.bandcamp.com/album/ragas-waltzes>

THE BOOK OF RAGAS VOL. 2:
<https://charusuri.bandcamp.com/album/book-of-ragas-vol-2>

NEW AMERICAN SONGBOOK EP:
<https://charusuri.bandcamp.com/album/new-american-songbook>

Learn more at charu@charusuri.com.

SHAYAN: THE ALBUM

A Sonic Journey to Restore the Body's Natural Rhythm

World Premier: August 22, 2025

GENRE: World/ Contemporary Instrumental

LABEL: Independent (Amala Records)

REPRESENTED BY: Quiriosity

Acclaimed composer and pianist Charu Suri, often hailed as the Queen of Raga Jazz, presents her 5th album 'SHAYAN' - HARNESSSES THE HEALING EFFECTS OF ANCIENT INDIAN RAGAS to help people sleep better, and gently return the body to its natural circadian rhythm. Inspired by the healing energy, this album is a meditative blend of traditional Indian melodies and serene global instrumentation. SHAYAN is a musical experience meant not for the stage, but for the soul — to be felt in bedrooms, healing centers, nursing homes, and anywhere rest is needed.

SHAYAN TRACK LIST

1. Shayan - [4:33] - Shayan uses raga Kalyani, the Eastern equivalent of the Lydian scale.
2. Mohanam Hymn [7:28] - Mohanam is a pentatonic Carnatic raga whose Hindustani equivalent is Bhupali.
3. Inner Peace [6:38] - Based on Raga Desh, an evening raga that is often associated with the monsoon season.
4. Raga Jog [8:44] - Raga Jog is a Hindustani classical raga, typically sung at the late night or early morning hours.
5. Nightingale [4:16] - Based on raga Bagesri, typically performed from 9 p.m. to midnight.
6. Raga Durga [4:49] - Raga Durga is a sweet Hindustani pentatonic scale sharing commonalities with Carnatic Shuddha Saveri.
7. Shayan Reprise [4:33] - A reprise of the title track, Shayan, based on Kalyani.

FEATURED ARTISTS ON SHAYAN

Jim Kimo West – Grammy® Winner, Guitar / Raniero Palm & the Venezuela String Recording Ensemble – Grammy® Winner, Strings / Ron Korb – Grammy® Winner, Flute / Max ZT – Grammy® Nominee, Dulcimer / Tess Remy-Schumacher – Cello / Premik Russell Tubbs – Flute / Anita Lerche – Vocals / Ravichandra Kulur – Flute / Siyer – Vocals / Haruna Fukazawa – Flute / Philip Vaiman – Violin / Mary Dawood Catlin – Vocals / Peter Sterling – Harp / Ramya Shankar – Ukulele

KEY CREDITS

Producers: Charu Suri, Siddhant Bhatia, Tess Remy-Schumacher, Devan Ekambaram

Mixing Engineer: Siddhant Bhatia - Mastering Engineer: Lonnie Park

Recording Engineers: Chris Sulit, Christina Giacona, Patrick Conlon, Todd Catlin, Corey Miller

LINCOLN CENTER PRESENTS THE WINTER HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

BY MABEL PAIS

The Indie Collaborative (indiecollaborative.com) is putting on a unique, family-friendly musical show celebrating the Winter holidays, including Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Diwali, the New Year, the Chinese New Year, and the Winter Solstice. Top-notch artists spanning multiple musical genres will entertain and delight you.

Featuring Grammy and Emmy nominees and winners, top charting and multiple award-winning artists: Flor Bromley, Steve Elci, Joanie Leeds and Joya, Vivian Fang Liu, Grant Maloy Smith, Camille Harris, and music from the Bluestone Sisters. All backed by an all-star "house band" of Alex Otey (Trumpet), Christian Fabian (Bass), Christian Finger (Drums), Charu Suri (Piano), EJ Ouellette (Fiddle), Lou Caimano (Sax), and Ricky Persaud, Jr.



Bruno Walter Auditorium, Lincoln Center. -Credit: Courtesy, charusuri.com

PROGRAM

WHAT: HOLIDAYS OF THE SEASON

WHEN: December 3, 2025, 7:00-8:30 PM EST

Doors open: 6:30 PM, meet-and-greet
WHERE: The Bruno Walter Auditorium at Lincoln Center
111 Amsterdam Avenue, New York City, NY 10023

(Located in the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts - nypl.org - 212 870 1605)

Producers: Eileen Sherman and Grant Maloy Smith, The Indie Collaborative

Emcee: Grant Maloy Smith

TICKETS

To order tickets, visit indiecollaborative.com/event-details-registration/2025-winter-holiday-festival
Indie Collaborative
Learn more at indiecollaborative.com

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

EXPERIENCE AWARD WINNING COMPOSER JOHN DEBNEY'S 'ELF IN CONCERT' ENTIRE SCORE PERFORMED LIVE TO PICTURE BY NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

BY MABEL PAIS

"What the New Jersey Symphony has established, bringing music to the Garden State in schools and in six different cities, is a sincere accomplishment. And it's never been better." – nj.com

Buddy the Elf! spreads Christmas cheer quite like nobody else!

This holiday season, CineConcerts (cineconcerts.com) and Warner Bros. Discovery Global (warnerbros.com/experiences) brings us the timeless holiday classic 'Elf in Concert,' to NJPAC in Newark and Count Basie Performing Arts Center in Red Bank, December 6-7, 2025.

It will feature New Jersey Symphony performing every note from **John Debney's** (The Passion of the Christ, Iron Man 2, The Jungle Book, Hocus Pocus) heartwarming score while the entire film is projected on a large screen. Directed by Jon Favreau (The Lion King, The Mandalorian, Rudy, Iron Man, Iron Man 2) and starring Will Ferrell the film is considered by many to be one of the best holiday movies of all time.

John Debney, composer and conductor explains, "I'm so thrilled to be working with Warner Bros. Themed Entertainment and CineConcerts on the upcoming 'Elf in Concert.' Writing the score was a true highlight of my career. Seeing the joy that the music and film brings to audiences each year is truly wonderful. 'Elf' has really become a modern classic and bringing this into concert halls worldwide is an absolute honor. I very much look forward to presenting this unforgettable concert experience to live audiences worldwide!"

STORY

In 'Elf,' Buddy was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa's elves. Unable to shake the feeling that he doesn't fit in, the adult Buddy travels to New York, in full elf uniform, in search of his real father.

PROGRAM

December 6, at 2 pm, at NJPAC in Newark

December 7, at 2 pm, at Count Basie Performing Arts Center in Red Bank

**New Jersey Symphony
Conner Gray Covington -
Conductor**

TICKETS

For tickets and more information, visit njsymphony.org or call 1.800.ALLEGRO (255.3476).

Subscribe today!
njsymphony.org/subscribe

For further information, visit cineconcerts.com.

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Instagram: @CineConcerts

Hashtag: #ElfInConcert



Elf -Credit : njsymphony.org.



Walter and Santa Claus chatting next to Santa's sleigh. - Credit : njsymphony.org.

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

The 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 2026.

For more information about the New Jersey Symphony, visit njsymphony.org.

Connect with New Jersey Symphony on: Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, and YouTube

CINECONCERTS

Cineconcerts (cineconcerts.com) is one of the leading producers of live and digital music experiences performed with visual media, and continues to redefine entertainment. Founded by Producer/Conductor Justin Freer and Producer/Writer Brady Beaubien, CineConcerts will engage over 4.8

million people worldwide in concert presentations in over 3,000 performances in 48 countries through 2025, and recently launched CineConcerts +PLUS (cineconcertsplus.com) - a global digital network and app suite with hundreds of exclusive podcast episodes and produced content. CineConcerts continues to work with some of the most prestigious orchestras and venues in the world including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, London Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, and more.

Recent and current live and digital concert experiences (cineconcerts.com/concerts) include 'Elf in Concert,' 'The Pinball Concert' (Digital), 'The Polar Express in Concert,' 'Rudy in Concert,' 'The Passion of the Christ in Concert,' 'The Da Vinci Code in Concert,' 'The Harry Potter Film Concert Series,' 'Gladiator Live,' 'The Godfather Live,' 'It's a Wonderful Life in Concert,' 'DreamWorks Animation In Concert,' 'Star Trek: The Ultimate Voyage 50th Anniversary Concert Tour,' 'Breakfast at Tiffany's in Concert,' and 'A Christmas Dream Live.'

Connect with CineConcerts on: Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram

WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY GLOBAL EXPERIENCES (WBDGE)

Warner Bros. Discovery Global Experiences (warnerbros.com /

experiences) is a worldwide leader in the creation, development, licensing and operating of location-based entertainment based on the biggest franchises, stories, and characters from Warner Bros. world-renowned film, television, animation, and games studios, HBO, Discovery, Cartoon Network and more.

WBDGE is home to the groundbreaking locations of The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal theme parks around the world, award-winning Warner Bros. Studio Tour locations in London, Hollywood, and Tokyo, the iconic Harry Potter New York flagship store, Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi, The WB Abu Dhabi, The FRIENDS Experience, The Game of Thrones Studio Tour and countless other experiences inspired by Harry Potter, DC, Looney Tunes, Scooby-Doo, Game of Thrones, FRIENDS and more. WBDGE is part of Warner Bros. Discovery's Revenue & Strategy division.

JOHN DEBNEY

"If I'm doing my job well," says Debney, "I need to feel it. I really try to make sure that whatever I'm doing — even if it's a comedy — that I'm feeling it and feeling either humor or the pathos or the dramatic impact of what I'm seeing. That's the way I approach it."

John Debney is the ultimate film music character actor. In equal demand for family films such as 'Elf,' as he is for adventure films like 'Iron Man 2,' the Oscar-nominated composer also scored the powerful and poignant 'The Passion of the Christ.' Debney is an agile jack-of-all-genres, composing for comedies ('Bruce Almighty'), sci-fi action ('Predators'), horror ('Dream House') and romance ('Valentine's Day') with the same confidence and panache. Debney is also known for his work in such films as 'Princess Diaries,' 'Sin City,' 'Liar Liar,' 'Spy Kids,' 'No Strings Attached,' 'The Emperor's New Groove,' 'I Know What You Did Last Summer' and 'Hocus Pocus.' Debney's work also includes Disney's 'The Jungle Book' directed by Jon Favreau, Fox's 'Ice Age: Collision Course' directed by Mike Thurmeier, and Twentieth Century Fox's award-winning musical 'The Greatest Showman' starring Hugh Jackman and Zac Efron. Debney's most recent films include 'The Beach Bum' starring Matthew McConaughey and directed by Harmony Korine, the Warner Bros. comedy feature 'Isn't It Romantic' starring Rebel Wilson, Paramount Pictures' family adventure feature 'Dora and the Lost City of Gold,' and Bleecker Street's biopic 'Brian Banks.' Upcoming for Debney is 'Come Away' directed by Brenda Chapman and starring Angelina Jolie.

Learn more at johndebney.com.

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

NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON: AN ASTROPHYSICIST GOES TO THE MOVIES PART II

BY MABEL PAIS

DR. NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON, much-admired American astrophysicist, planetary scientist, author, and science communicator, will return to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) on Sunday, November 30th, at 3:00 p.m.

This year, he will delve into a scientific analysis of iconic films such as Harry Potter, The Wizard of Oz, Mary Poppins, and 2001: A Space Odyssey.

Join Neil deGrasse Tyson at NJPAC as he examines the scientific inaccuracies and occasional truths portrayed in your favorite movies. Prepare for an experience that will inspire laughter, learning, and a new perspective on film. This will be an interactive exploration of the mysteries of our universe. As the director of the Hayden Planetarium at the Rose Center for Earth and Space in New York City, Tyson excels in elucidating the power of science to clarify the complexities of our world and address some of our most pressing questions.

Expect an evening filled with laughter, thought-



Neil deGrasse Tyson.

Credit: neildegassetyson.com.

provoking ideas, and awe at the wonders of the Universe. Tyson, a world-renowned science communicator, has guided audiences on journeys from the nucleus of an atom to the farthest reaches of the Universe.

A New York Times best-selling author, his books are celebrated for their insightful and accessible approach to astrophysics.

This captivating lecture invites you to engage with some of the most intriguing questions being examined by today's leading scientists. Embark on a voyage to the frontiers of the known — and the unknown — during this cosmically entertaining evening at NJPAC.

TICKETS

Tickets can be purchased by visiting NJPAC.org or the NJPAC Box Office or calling 888.GO.NJPAC (888.466.5722).

NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON

Learn more about Neil deGrasse Tyson at neildegassetyson.com.

THE ROCK ORCHESTRA REIMAGINES ROCK AND METAL WITH CLASSICAL GRACE

BY MABEL PAIS

THE ROCK ORCHESTRA (the-rock-orchestra.com), that reimagines Rock and Metal with all the grace and power of Classical, will perform in New Jersey on November 29 and New York City on December 9, 2025. The New Jersey performance is at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC - njpac.org - 888 466 5722) and the New York City performance takes place at the Beacon Theater (214 Broadway, Manhattan, New York City - 888 729 4718). Each performance starts at 8 PM.

The Rock Orchestra, originating in the United Kingdom in 2020, was created by events impresario and producer Nathan Reed with a vision of reimagining Rock and Metal with all the grace and power of classical.

Complemented by a stunning gothic visual world, the Rock Orchestra breathes beautifully dark energy into your favorite songs and presents them in a wholly unique way.

With over 400 shows and half a million guests in only 4 years, The Rock Orchestra has quickly established itself as a mainstay for rock fans worldwide and calls itself home to a rotating collective of some of the world's most talented musicians and vocalists.

Every show is a unique journey traversing the two greatest genres on Earth - in a way you've never seen before.... and it's coming to a city near you.

HISTORY

2021 - The group's first ever UK tour sold out under socially-distanced conditions. With 5 sold-out performances at the Clapham Grand performed to over 29,000 attendees.

2022 - Their Ireland tour sold out in 3 days: a sold out show at Brixton Academy. The group released 'Chop Suey' their first ever public media



The Rock Orchestra. -Credit: njpac.org.

release and performed to over 62,000 attendees.

2023 - This was its sold out debut USA tour: a sold out show on NYC Broadway at the historic Palladium on Times Square.

2024 - The Orchestra released 'Zombie' - achieving 10 million streams within 2 months. It was set to perform 122 shows that year across the world performing across 10 countries. It performed to over 231,000 attendees.

2025 - This year the group is set to have the biggest worldwide tour to date, covering the USA, UK/Ireland and Europe across 200 shows.

TICKETS

For tickets to any of the performances, visit the-rock-orchestra.com.

ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION

The Rock Orchestra is committed to creating an inclusive and welcoming experience for all customers. They believe that everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy the power of live music - no matter their access needs.

If you have access requirements, contact the venue directly to make arrangements, or if you prefer speak

with the Rock Orchestra team by reaching out to info@the-rock-orchestra.com.

THE NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

One Center Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102
njpac.org or 888.GO.NJPAC
(888.466.5722)

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FOLLOW NJPAC'S STANDING IN SOLIDARITY SERIES ONLINE:

Website: njpac.org/takeastand
Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand
Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

THE BEACON THEATRE

Considered the "older sister" to Radio City Music Hall, Roxy Rothafel opened the Art Deco Style Beacon Theatre in 1929 as an "international Music Hall" to

present live entertainment, cultural, and popular events.

While it opened as a forum for vaudeville acts, drama, opera, and movies, some of the greatest names in rock and roll have played there, including the Rolling Stones, Michael Jackson, Aerosmith, Radiohead, and Queen. Even such luminaries as His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Bill Clinton acknowledged the Beacon, with the Dalai Lama choosing it as the site of his teaching classes in 1999, and Clinton ending his 60th birthday celebration with a private Stones concert.

Upholding the fine standards of quality musical entertainment, the 2,600 seat three tiered venue rightfully earned its title as a national landmark and a permanent spot on the National Register of Historic Places. A wondrous tribute to music in the city that never sleeps, the Beacon Theatre is a true representation of artistry in form and content.

TicketSales.com has the largest inventory of Beacon Theatre tickets, so keep checking for great deals on resale tickets.

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

Thanksgiving Day: A celebration of gratitude, gathering & American tradition

Thanksgiving Day stands as one of the most cherished and culturally significant holidays in the United States—an annual moment when families gather, communities bond, and gratitude becomes the central language of the nation. More than a feast, more than a long weekend, Thanksgiving carries layers of history, myth, memory, and evolving meaning. Across generations, it has transformed from a humble harvest celebration to a national ritual that shapes American identity and togetherness.

It is a national holiday in the United States, and Thanksgiving 2025 occurs on Thursday, November 27.

In 1621, the Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Native Americans shared an autumn harvest feast that is acknowledged today as one of the first Thanksgiving celebrations in the colonies. For more than two centuries, days of thanksgiving were celebrated by individual colonies and states. It wasn't until 1863, in the midst of the Civil War, that President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national Thanksgiving Day to be held each November.

Thanksgiving at Plymouth

In September 1620, a small ship called the Mayflower left Plymouth, England, carrying 102 passengers—an assortment of religious separatists seeking a new home where they could freely practice their faith and other individuals lured by the promise of prosperity and land ownership in the New World. After a treacherous and uncomfortable crossing that lasted 66 days, they dropped anchor near the tip of Cape Cod, far north of their intended destination at the mouth of the Hudson River. One month later, the Mayflower crossed Massachusetts Bay, where the Pilgrims, as they are now commonly known, began the work of establishing a village at Plymouth.

Throughout that first brutal winter,

Thanksgiving Day bears its origin from the harvest festival. Generally, Americans give thanks to God for their autumn harvest and every other success they have achieved in the year. The Day in the US is observed on the fourth Thursday in November. This year, it falls on November 27



most of the colonists remained on board the ship, where they suffered from exposure, scurvy and outbreaks of contagious disease. Only half of the Mayflower's original passengers and crew lived to see their first New England spring. In March, the remaining settlers moved ashore, where they received an astonishing visit from an Abenaki Native American who greeted them in English.

Several days later, he returned with another Native American, Squanto, a member of the Pawtuxet tribe who had

been kidnapped by an English sea captain and sold into slavery before escaping to London and returning to his homeland on an exploratory expedition. Squanto taught the Pilgrims, weakened by malnutrition and illness, how to cultivate corn, extract sap from maple trees, catch fish in the rivers and avoid poisonous plants. He also helped the settlers forge an alliance with the Wampanoag, a local tribe, which would endure for more than 50 years and tragically remains one of the sole examples of harmony between

European colonists and Native Americans.

In November 1621, after the Pilgrims' first corn harvest proved successful, Governor William Bradford organized a celebratory feast and invited a group of the fledgling colony's Native American allies, including the Wampanoag chief Massasoit. Now remembered as America's "first Thanksgiving"—although the Pilgrims themselves may not have used the term at the time—the festival lasted for three days.

Historians have suggested that many



From page 44

of the dishes were likely prepared using traditional Native American spices and cooking methods. Because the Pilgrims had no oven and the Mayflower's sugar supply had dwindled by the fall of 1621, the meal did not feature pies, cakes or other desserts, which have become a hallmark of contemporary celebrations

Pilgrims held their second Thanksgiving celebration in 1623 to mark the end of a long drought that had threatened the year's harvest and prompted Governor Bradford to call for a religious fast. Days of fasting and thanksgiving on an annual or occasional basis became common practice in other New England settlements as well.

During the American Revolution, the Continental Congress designated one or more days of thanksgiving a year, and in 1789 George Washington issued the first Thanksgiving proclamation by the national government of the United States; in it, he called upon Americans to express their gratitude for the happy conclusion to the country's war of independence and the successful ratification of the U.S. Constitution. His successors John Adams and James Madison also designated days of thanks during their presidencies.

In 1817, New York became the first of several states to officially adopt an annual Thanksgiving holiday; each celebrated it on a different day, however, and the American South remained largely unfamiliar with the tradition.

In 1827, the noted magazine editor and prolific writer Sarah Josepha Hale—author, among countless other things, of the nursery rhyme "Mary Had a Little Lamb"—launched a campaign to establish Thanksgiving as a national holiday. For 36 years, she published numerous editorials and sent scores of letters to governors, senators, presidents and other politicians, earning her the nickname the "Mother of Thanksgiving."

Abraham Lincoln finally heeded her request in 1863, at the height of the Civil War, in a proclamation entreating all Americans to ask God to "commend to his tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife" and to "heal the wounds of the nation." He scheduled Thanksgiving for the final Thursday in November, and it was celebrated on that day every year until 1939, when Franklin D. Roosevelt moved the holiday up a week in an attempt to spur retail sales during the Great Depression. Roosevelt's plan, known derisively as Franksgiving, was met with passionate opposition, and in 1941 the president reluctantly signed a bill making Thanksgiving the fourth Thursday in November.

Traditions

In many American households, the Thanksgiving celebration has lost much of its original religious significance; instead, it now centers on cooking and sharing a bountiful meal with family and friends. Turkey, a Thanksgiving staple so ubiquitous it has become all but synonymous with the holiday, may



or may not have been on offer when the Pilgrims hosted the inaugural feast in 1621. Today, however, nearly 90 percent of Americans eat the bird—whether roasted, baked or deep-fried—on Thanksgiving, according to the National Turkey Federation. Other traditional foods include stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie. Volunteering is a common Thanksgiving Day activity, and communities often hold food drives and host free dinners for the less fortunate.

Parades have also become an integral part of the holiday in cities and towns across the United States. Presented by Macy's department store since 1924, New York City's Thanksgiving Day parade is the largest and most famous, attracting some 2 to 3 million spectators along its 2.5-mile route and drawing an enormous television audience. It typically features marching bands, performers, elaborate floats conveying various celebrities and giant balloons shaped like cartoon characters.

Beginning in the mid-20th century and perhaps even earlier, the president of the United States has "pardoned" one or two Thanksgiving turkeys each year, sparing the birds from slaughter and sending them to a farm for retirement. A number of U.S. governors also perform the annual turkey pardoning ritual.

Ancient Origins

Although the American concept of Thanksgiving developed in the colonies of New England, its roots can be traced back to the other side of the Atlantic. Both the Separatists who came over on the Mayflower and the Puritans who arrived soon after brought with them a tradition of providential holidays—days of fasting during difficult or pivotal moments and days of feasting and celebration to thank God in times of plenty. As an annual celebration of the harvest and its bounty, moreover, Thanksgiving falls under a category of



festivals that spans cultures, continents and millennia. In ancient times, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans feasted and paid tribute to their gods after the fall harvest. Thanksgiving also bears a resemblance to the ancient Jewish harvest festival of Sukkot. Finally, historians have noted that Native Americans had a rich tradition of commemorating the fall harvest with feasting and merrymaking long before Europeans set foot on their shores.

Understanding the Native American Perspective

In recent years, Thanksgiving has also become a moment for deeper historical reflection. For many Native American communities, the holiday holds painful memories of colonization, displacement, and cultural loss. Some groups observe Thanksgiving as a National Day of Mourning, using it to honor their ancestors and highlight their continuous struggle for

recognition and justice.

This duality—celebration for some, mourning for others—has opened space for more honest conversations about American history. Schools and families increasingly acknowledge the complexities behind the traditional story, promoting a more inclusive and respectful understanding of the holiday.

A Holiday That Speaks to the Soul

At a time when the world often feels divided, rushed, or uncertain, Thanksgiving offers something simple yet profound—a chance to slow down, gather, appreciate, and reconnect. It reminds people that gratitude is not an event but a way of living.

More than a holiday, Thanksgiving is a pause button on the American calendar. A moment to breathe. A moment to remember. A moment to give thanks for all that sustains us—family, friendships, health, community, and the hope that tomorrow will be better.



Sonam Kapoor announces second pregnancy

Bollywood fashion icon Sonam Kapoor on Thursday, Nov 20, delighted fans by announcing that she is expecting her second child. The actress shared her big news through a striking Instagram post—one that perfectly blended high fashion with heartfelt emotion.

Sonam posted a photo of herself dressed in a vibrant hot-pink pure wool suit featuring oversized padded shoulders and a soft, curved shoulder line. In the picture, she cradles her growing baby bump with a serene smile. Her caption was a single word that said it all: “MOTHER.”

Rumors about Sonam being pregnant again had been circulating since October, with reports suggesting she was already in her second trimester.

Sonam Kapoor married businessman Anand Ahuja in May 2018. The couple welcomed their first child, a baby boy named Vayu, in August 2022.

Nora Fatehi Makes a sparkling debut on ‘The Tonight Show’

Bollywood actress and dancer Nora Fatehi has officially made her debut on The Tonight Show, performing alongside Jamaican singer Shenseea and even posing for a picture with host Jimmy Fallon. The appearance marks a major international milestone in Nora’s global journey as an artist. In a collaborative Instagram post with the Fallon Tonight BTS handle, Nora shared a series of images from her appearance — including a cheerful photo of her posing with Jimmy Fallon and Shenseea.

The caption read: “TONIGHT: @norafatehi ft. @shenseea perform ‘What Do I Know? (Just A Girl)’! #FallonTonight.”

Nora also posted multiple clips on her Instagram Stories, expressing excitement over her debut on the iconic American talk show.

Nora and Shenseea performed their energetic new track “What Do I Know (Just A Girl)”, released under 5 Junction Records/Warner Records.

Upon its release, Nora said she was thrilled to finally share the song with the world, adding that it marks the beginning of her “pop girl era.”

She said, “And diving into this new sound has been such an inspiring journey. Shenseea and I poured our hearts into every part of it — from recording the vocals to nailing the choreography for the music video. I couldn’t be prouder of what we created together!”

The track, written by Grammy-nominated songwriter Justin Tranter, highlights Nora’s versatility and strength as a performer. Nora made her acting debut in 2014 with Roar: Tigers of the Sundarbans. She quickly gained popularity in Telugu cinema with special appearances in films such as Temper, Baahubali: The Beginning, and Kick 2. She also appeared in Malayalam films like Double Barrel and Kayamkulam Kochunni. Her reality TV journey began with Bigg Boss in 2015, followed by Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa in 2016. Nora later featured in Bollywood films, appearing in Satyameva Jayate in the hit track “Dilbar.” In 2019, she collaborated with Tanzanian artist



Rayvanny for her first international English single “Pepeta”. In 2022, she was one of the artists featured in “Light The Sky”, a track for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

She has since played supporting roles in Hindi films including Street Dancer 3D, Crakk, and Bhuj: The Pride of India.

Are Saiyaara stars Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda dating?



The whispers around Saiyaara co-stars Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda have picked up once again, and Bollywood’s grapevine is buzzing louder than ever. The young actors, who tasted massive success with their recent release, have been at the centre of dating rumours for months. While both continue to dodge questions about their personal equations and remain focused on upcoming work commitments, a new comment from Karan Johar has added fuel to the speculation.

During his appearance on Sania Mirza’s podcast Serving It Up With Sania, Karan playfully addressed the industry chatter surrounding the duo. Without explicitly naming anything, he dubbed Ahaan and Aneet as the possible next “It couple” of the film fraternity. When pressed about their relationship, he replied, “Well... they are not yet official, so if they are going to be, I don’t know whether or not because I haven’t checked.”

Karan had earlier spoken about the actors’ meteoric rise while attending the Mumbai press meet for Mirai, led by Manoj Manchu and Teja Sajja. Reflecting on Saiyaara’s impact, he stressed how the industry has shifted away from old

formulas. “Every film has its own destiny. Sometimes big-star movies work wonders, sometimes fresh faces lead the way... There is no fixed formula anymore,” he said, highlighting how new talent can command the big screen with equal force.

He went on to note that while many newcomers would continue to emerge, not every project would recreate the cultural moment Saiyaara delivered. “Box office has no rules. You create your story, tell it differently, and then it’s up to the audience to interpret it. They decide what deserves their love and their money.”

Showering praise on director Mohit Suri’s leading pair, Karan added, “Woh superstars nahin the; ab superstars ban gaye hain (They weren’t superstars, but now, they are).” His remark echoed the industry’s sentiment—Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda have swiftly transitioned from promising newcomers to bona fide youth icons.

Released on July 18 under the Yash Raj Films banner, Saiyaara has gone on to collect an impressive ₹70.67 crore worldwide, firmly establishing its leads as the freshest breakout names in Bollywood’s new wave.

Jumanji 3 first look features Johnson, Hart, Gillan, Black in full avatar mode

Jumanji 3 is officially ready to roll the dice and “let the games begin.” The team behind Sony’s highly anticipated sequel shared the first photo of the main cast in costume on Wednesday, marking the start of production. The image features Kevin Hart, Dwayne Johnson, Karen Gillan and Jack Black back in their adventure-ready looks, paired with the caption, “Look who’s on the loose.”

Hart also posted the picture, adding his own excitement to the moment. “Back in action and loving it I missed you Jumanji This one will be our biggest!” he wrote, hinting at an even more ambitious instalment.

The untitled third film follows 2017’s ‘Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle’ and 2019’s ‘Jumanji: The Next Level’, which successfully rebooted the franchise originally led by Robin Williams in the 1995 adaptation of Chris Van Allsburg’s book. Director Jake Kasdan returns for the new chapter, co-writing the script with Jeff Pinkner and Scott Rosenberg. The movie is scheduled to hit theatres on December 11, 2026.

Just a day earlier, Johnson posted a behind-the-scenes video from the Universal Studios backlot, surprising fans on his way to set. “A little day one of Jumanji excitement,” he said. “So good to be shooting in Los Angeles. I have not shot a film in Los Angeles in I don’t know when, so it feels so good to



bring a production back home to Los Angeles.”

Johnson also revealed a meaningful detail about his character this time around. He will wear a necklace holding the dice used in the 1995 ‘Jumanji’ film. “This is the dice from the original Jumanji with Robin Williams as a show of respect and a way of honoring Robin and this entire franchise that he started as we film our very last Jumanji,” the actor shared.

The returning cast includes Nick Jonas, Alex Wolff, Morgan Turner, Ser’Darius Blain, Madison Iseman,

Lamorne Morris and Danny DeVito. Last week, Johnson posted footage from the film’s table read, writing, “Amazing to get the whole gang back together, and our jaws were hurting from laughing so hard.”

The modern ‘Jumanji’ films have been global box-office hits, with ‘Welcome to the Jungle’ earning over \$950 million worldwide and ‘The Next Level’ surpassing \$801 million. Now, with the cast reunited and production underway, fans can expect another high-energy, heartfelt adventure when Jumanji returns in 2026.



Jennifer Aniston makes first public appearance with boyfriend Jim Curtis

Jennifer Aniston and her boyfriend Jim Curtis have taken a major step in their relationship, marking their first official public appearance as a couple. The two attended a star-studded gala at the Four Seasons Hotel in Los Angeles, twinning in black as they made their debut together, Aniston walking the red carpet solo before Curtis joined her inside the venue. Photos circulating online show the pair posing happily for the cameras, making their relationship red-carpet official. Fan accounts also shared images of Curtis seated beside Aniston during the ceremony, cheering her on as she took the stage for her speech.

Aniston’s decision to go public with Curtis comes shortly after she opened up about their relationship in an interview with ELLE, calling him “extraordinary.” Speaking about his work, she said, “Hypnotism is one of the many things that he does.” She further added, “He’s very special, very normal, and very kind, and wants to help people heal, move through their trauma and stagnation into clarity. It’s a beautiful thing to commit your life to.”

Romance rumours between Aniston and Curtis first began during the Fourth of July weekend, when the couple was seen vacationing in Mallorca. Over the months that followed, they were seen on several dinner outings with friends, but this event marks their first formal public appearance.

Their red-carpet moment comes shortly after Aniston went Instagram official with Curtis, sharing a cosy birthday post captioned, “Happy birthday my love... Cherished.”

This marks Aniston’s first public relationship since her divorce from Justin Theroux. She was previously married to Brad Pitt.

Sydney Sweeney’s Christy sets unwanted box office record with drastic 92% fall

Actor Sydney Sweeney’s horrid run at the box office has continued with her newest release, Christy. A biopic of boxer Christy Martin, the film opened to lukewarm reviews and horrible returns at the box office in its opening week. If there was any chance of a recovery, it has been snuffed out in its second weekend. Christy saw the worst-ever fall for a film in its second week, and was completely wiped out overseas.

According to Box Office Mojo, Christy had a domestic collection of \$1.3 million in its opening weekend, one of the worst ever for a wide release in Hollywood history. If this wasn’t bad enough, the film saw a 92% fall in collections over the second weekend, bringing in only \$108K over its second weekend. This is the worst opening weekend collection for a film in Hollywood history, surpassing any other wide release. As of November 20, Christy’s total domestic box office collection stands at a dismal \$1.9 million.

The film has fared even worse in the international markets outside North America. Christy opened to just \$14K overseas in its opening weekend and was then taken off theatres worldwide after Monday. In its second weekend, it has added \$0 to its overseas total. The film’s worldwide gross remains under \$2 million. With daily earnings now below \$20,000, the film is almost certain to end its lifetime run with a worldwide total under \$2 million, a disastrous figure for a film made for over \$15 million.

Directed by David Michôd, Christy is the story of former professional boxer Christy Martin, who became the best boxer in the US in the 90s, before her husband-turned-coach



tried to murder her. Sydney Sweeney gained over 40 lbs to play the boxer in the film and underwent extensive boxing training as well. The film also stars Ben Foster, Merritt Wever, Katy O’Brian, Ethan Embry, and Chad L. Coleman.

Venezuela says opposition leader will become fugitive if she collects Nobel

Venezuela's opposition leader will be considered a "fugitive" if she travels to Norway to collect her Nobel Peace Prize, the nation's attorney general has said.

Tarik William Saab told news agency AFP that María Corina Machado - who has been living in hiding to avoid arrest - was accused of "acts of conspiracy, incitement of hatred, and terrorism". The 58-year-old was named as the prestigious prize's recipient in October, being praised for her efforts towards a "peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy".

She has long denounced President Nicolás Maduro's government as "criminal" and called on Venezuelans to unite to depose it. Many nations view his rule as illegitimate.

Machado - who has long been one of the most respected voices in Venezuela's opposition - was barred from running in last year's presidential elections, in which Maduro won a third six-year term in office.

The elections were widely dismissed on the international stage as neither free nor fair, and sparked protests across the country. Despite her barring, Machado was able to unite Venezuela's opposition behind her little-known surrogate on the ballot, Edmundo González.

The government-controlled National Electoral Council declared Maduro the winner - even though tallies from polling stations showed that González had won by a landslide.

González later fled to Spain, fearing repression. This was followed by attempts to detain other opposition officials.

Ukraine would give Russia chunk of territory as part of 28-point US peace plan

WASHINGTON (TIP)

Ukraine would give up a swathe of eastern territory to Russia and slash the size of its army under a sweeping 28-point peace plan backed by US President Donald Trump, according to a draft obtained by AFP.

Kyiv would also pledge never to join NATO, and would not get the Western peacekeepers they have called for, although European warplanes would be stationed in Poland to protect Ukraine.

A US official tells AFP the draft plan includes a powerful security guarantee for Kyiv, modeled on NATO rules, which would commit the US and European allies to respond to any attack on Ukraine.

Russia would meanwhile be readmitted to the G8 group of nations and be rewarded with sanctions relief under the plan, which US officials say was still a "working document."

The proposal involves major concessions by Kyiv, which has previously refused to cede any land, while appearing to meet many of Moscow's maximalist demands following its 2022 invasion.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky says he expected to discuss the plan with Trump "in coming days." He says any deal must bring a "dignified peace" that respects Kyiv's sovereignty.

The White House denies reports it had cooked up the proposal with Moscow, saying envoy Steve Witkoff and Secretary of State Marco Rubio had been "quietly" working with both sides for the past month.

Key parts of the proposal correspond to Moscow's previous demands and cross Ukraine's red lines.

These include that Ukraine would withdraw from the Lugansk and Donetsk



regions, the frontline industrial belt known collectively as the Donbas that Ukraine still partly holds.

The two regions and Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, "will be recognized as de facto Russian, including by the United States," while a demilitarized zone would be created in the Donbas.

The war-torn southern regions of Kherson and Zaporizhzhia -- which Russia falsely claims to have annexed -- will be "frozen along the line of contact," it said.

Russia's army occupies around a fifth of Ukraine -- much of it ravaged by years of fighting.

Ukraine security

Ukraine had been hoping for European-led peacekeepers but Russia's refusal to accept any such force also wins out in the plan.

NATO would agree not to station troops in Ukraine, while the country would be barred from joining NATO by both its own constitution and the alliance's statutes.

Kyiv meanwhile would reduce its army by a little less than half, to 600,000 personnel.

In return, Ukraine would receive "reliable security guarantees," the plan says without specifying, but "European fighter jets" would be stationed in

neighboring Poland.

Ukraine would also have to hold elections in 100 days -- a further Russian demand and one echoed by Trump, who called Zelensky a "dictator without elections" earlier this year.

Amid a spiralling corruption scandal in Ukraine that has claimed the jobs of two ministers, Kyiv had meanwhile removed language about an audit of foreign aid and replaced it with a call for a "full amnesty," a senior US official told AFP.

G8 return for Russia?-

Under the proposal, Russia would be "reintegrated into the global economy" and be allowed back into the G8, from which it was expelled in 2014 after the annexation of Crimea.

Sanctions would snap back if it invades Ukraine again.

Yet Russia meanwhile faces few military restrictions under the plan, which says only that "it is expected that Russia will not invade neighboring countries."

The contents of the proposal plan have fuelled suggestions that Moscow was involved in drafting it.

"It seems that the Russians proposed this to the Americans, they accepted it," a senior Ukrainian source told AFP.

But US officials insisted all sides were involved. Zelensky also met a Pentagon delegation headed by US Army Secretary Daniel Driscoll in Kyiv on Thursday.

The timing has also raised questions, coming as the corruption row rattles Zelensky and Russia pushes forward with its grinding offensive.

On the ground, Russia claimed Thursday to have recaptured the key city of Kupiansk in eastern Ukraine -- which Kyiv denied -- as Putin visited an army command post to speak with officers.

EU-Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum discusses shared prosperity, economic security, digital connectivity

BRUSSELS (TIP)

Kaja Kallas, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, chaired the fourth EU-Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum in Brussels, on 20 and 21 November 2025. During the Forum, participants focused on how to enhance cooperation and deepen solidarity in three parallel roundtables: Security priorities in the face of current geopolitical developments. Shared prosperity, economic security, and digital connectivity. Common endeavours for a clean and sustainable future.

The Forum brought together around 70 delegations from the EU institutions and EU member states, as well as from countries and regional organisations from the Indo-Pacific region, spanning from the East coast of Africa to the Pacific Islands countries.

The EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum has become a unique platform for the EU and its member states to engage collectively with Indo-Pacific partners. It reflects a shared interest in fostering concrete cooperation on a



region-to-region basis, enhancing mutual security, prosperity and resilience, and laying the foundations for an ever more ambitious partnership.

Amid geopolitical shifts and economic uncertainty, Europe and the Indo-Pacific find their futures increasingly intertwined. Recent challenges, from growing pressure on the multilateral system to the weaponisation of trade and technology and the

accelerating climate crisis, are bringing the two regions closer together. In this context, they continue to rely on the rules-based international order, and the multilateral institutions which ensure compliance as well as accountability with agreed rules and norms.

The Forum offered a good opportunity for the EU to highlight the concrete progress made in strengthening partnerships with Indo-Pacific countries and organisations since the previous Ministerial meeting in February 2024. This includes the Security and Defence Partnerships agreed with Japan and the Republic of Korea; the conclusion of negotiations on the EU-Indonesia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement; the signature of the EU Clean Trade and Investment Partnership with South Africa; the EU financial and technical support to the ASEAN Power Grid development; the first-ever EU-Pacific Business Forum that unlocked nearly EUR300 million in new investments and budget support; as well as numerous other cooperation agreements and initiatives led by EU member states.

In 3 years, China will have world's first floating artificial island that 'can survive nuclear attack'

China is developing a massive floating research platform engineered to survive nuclear shock waves, a project that analysts say could reshape competition for maritime influence.

The Deep-Sea All-Weather Resident Floating Research Facility, officially classified as a national major scientific infrastructure project under China's 14th Five-Year Plan, will be the world's first mobile, self-sustaining artificial island, reports scmp.com.

The structure, weighing 78,000 tonnes, uses a semi-submersible twin-hull design and will support long-duration missions far from shore.

According to Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU), which leads the design, the platform will measure 138 metres long and 85 metres wide, with a main deck rising 45 metres above the waterline. It will accommodate up to 238 personnel for four months without resupply and operate at speeds of up to 15 knots. The vessel can function in rough conditions up to sea state 7 and withstand typhoons rated as high as category 17.

Despite its civilian label, the platform incorporates nuclear-blast-resistant construction normally found in military systems. A paper published on November 4 in the Chinese Journal of Ship Research by Professor Yang Deqing's team at SJTU confirms that parts of the superstructure follow GJB 1060.1-1991, a Chinese military standard for nuclear shock protection. These protected compartments house crucial emergency systems for power, navigation and communication.

BUDAPEST (TIP)

A remarkably well-preserved Roman sarcophagus has been unearthed in Hungary's capital, offering a rare window into the life of the young woman inside and the world she inhabited around 1,700 years ago.

Archaeologists with the Budapest History Museum discovered the limestone coffin during a large-scale excavation in Óbuda, a northern district of the city that once formed part of Aquincum, a bustling Roman settlement on the Danube frontier.

Untouched by looters and sealed for centuries, the sarcophagus was found with its stone lid still fixed in place, secured by metal clamps and molten lead. When researchers carefully lifted the lid, they uncovered a complete skeleton surrounded by dozens of artefacts.

"The peculiarity of the finding is that it was a hermetically sealed sarcophagus. It was not disturbed previously, so it was intact," said Gabriella Fényes, the excavation's lead archaeologist.

The coffin lay among the ruins of abandoned houses in a quarter of Aquincum vacated in the 3rd century and later repurposed as a burial ground. Nearby, researchers uncovered a Roman aqueduct and eight simpler graves, but none approaching the richness or pristine condition of the sealed tomb.

Keeping with Roman funerary customs, the sarcophagus held an array of objects: two completely

Gunmen abduct more than 200 schoolchildren, 12 teachers in attack on Nigerian Catholic school

ABUJA (TIP)

Gunmen attacked a Catholic boarding school in a western region of Nigeria and abducted more than 200 schoolchildren Friday, Nov 21, the Christian Association of Nigeria said, in the latest in a spate of abductions in Africa's most populous country.

The attack and abductions took place at St. Mary's School, a Catholic institution in the Agwara local government's Papiri community. Attackers seized 215 pupils and students as well as 12 teachers, said Daniel Atori, a spokesperson for the Niger state chapter of CAN.

"I just got back to the village tonight after I visited the school where I also met with parents," Atori said in a statement, quoting the Most Rev. Bulus Dauwa, the CAN chairman in Niger. The statement added that the association is working "to ensure our children's safe return." The Niger State Police Command said the abductions took place in the early hours, and that military and security forces have since been deployed to the community. It described St. Mary's as a secondary school, which in Nigeria would serve children between the ages of 12 and 17.

A satellite image shows that the school compound is attached to an adjoining primary school, with more than 50 classroom and dormitory buildings. It's located near a major road linking the towns of Yelwa and Mokwa.

Dauda Chekula, 62, said that four of his grandchildren, ranging in age from 7 to 10, were among the schoolchildren



abducted. "We don't know what is happening now, because we have not heard anything since this morning," Chekula said. "The children who were able to escape have scattered, some of them ran back to their houses and the only information we are getting is that the attackers are still moving with the remaining children into the bush." The statement by the secretary to the Niger state government said that the abduction occurred, despite prior intelligence warning of heightened threats.

"Regrettably, St. Mary's School proceeded to reopen and resume academic activities without notifying or seeking clearance from the State Government, thereby exposing pupils and the staff to avoidable risk," it read.

Umar Yunus, a Papiri resident, said there were only local security

arrangements and no official police or government forces securing the school at the time of the attack on Friday.

The Catholic Diocese of Kontagora said in a statement that a security staffer was "badly shot" during the attack. Authorities, meanwhile, closed 47 of the country's federal unity colleges that are mostly in conflict-battered northern states. The unity colleges — a group of elite government schools with attendance drawn from across the country — are to be closed immediately, according to a circular issued by Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education.

The abductions took place days after gunmen on Monday attacked a high school and abducted 25 schoolgirls in the neighbouring Kebbi state, in Maga, around 170 kilometres from Papiri.

Lid on 1,700-year-old Roman sarcophagus hidden beneath Budapest lifted



intact glass vessels, bronze figures and 140 coins. A bone hair pin, a piece of amber jewellery and traces of gold-threaded fabric, along with the size of the skeleton, point to the grave belonging to a young woman. The objects, Fényes said, were "items given to the deceased by her relatives for her eternal journey." "The deceased was buried very carefully by her

relatives. They must have really loved who they buried here," she said. During the Roman period, much of what is now Hungary formed the province of Pannonia, whose frontier ran along the right bank of the Danube River less than 1.6 km from the site. A short distance away stood a legionary camp guarding the empire's border, and the newly found structures are believed to have been part of the civilian settlement that grew around it. Anthropologists will now examine the young woman's remains, a process expected to reveal more about her age, health and origins. But even now, the grave's placement and abundance of artefacts offer strong clues.

The sarcophagus and its contents "definitely make it stand out," said Gergely Kostyál, a Roman-period specialist and coleader of the project. "This probably means that the deceased was well-to-do or of a higher social status." "It is truly rare to find a sarcophagus like this, untouched and never used before, because in the fourth century it was common to reuse earlier sarcophagi," he added.

Pakistan 'recalibrates' Afghan policy: Report

ISLAMABAD (TIP)

In a significant shift, Pakistan appears to have finally recalibrated its Afghan policy, moving away from any notion of appeasing the Afghan Taliban and, instead, follow a "waiting game" to unravel things there.

The Express Tribune said, quoting senior officials familiar with the development, that Islamabad is now "comfortable waiting" for political and security conditions in Afghanistan to evolve on their own, a marked departure from the past when Pakistan often felt compelled to intervene or mediate.

The shift is rooted not just in changing regional dynamics but also in Pakistan's mounting frustration over the Afghan Taliban's lack of action against the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

Despite repeated engagements and high-level delegations, officials say Kabul has shown little inclination to rein in the TTP responsible for some of Pakistan's deadliest recent attacks.

That lack of progress hardened attitudes in Islamabad, the newspaper said.

"We realised we were investing energy without any meaningful outcome," a senior official said. "If the



Afghan authorities are unwilling or unable to address our core concern, then there is no reason for us to carry the burden of expectations on their behalf."

For years, Pakistan was viewed as the country with unique leverage over the Afghan Taliban. Western governments routinely pressed Islamabad to "deliver" Kabul on issues ranging from counterterrorism to women's rights to inclusive governance.

Officials say that expectations placed Pakistan at the centre of global

frustration in Afghanistan, despite Islamabad's own security concerns and limited influence.

"Earlier, the world kept asking us to persuade the Taliban on different issues," said one official, explaining the exhaustion in Islamabad over repeated international pressure. "Now they finally understand where we stand and what our limitations are."

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Bangladesh Earthquake Death Toll Climbs To 10

At least 10 people have died and more than 200 others were injured across Bangladesh after the 5.7-magnitude earthquake struck the South Asian nation, causing widespread panic and structural damage, local media reported on Saturday, Nov 22.

Four of the victims died in Dhaka, five in Narsingdi, and one in Narayanganj. In Dhaka, the fatalities occurred in Armanitola after the railing of a building's roof collapsed, killing three people and injuring several others, reports leading Bangladeshi newspaper, The Dhaka Tribune.

In Narsingdi, five deaths were reported as the impact of the tremor rippled through the district.

The quake, which struck at 10:38 a.m. on Friday, measured 5.7 on the Richter scale according to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, which identified its epicentre in Madhabdi, Narsingdi and described it as a moderate earthquake.

More than 200 people sustained injuries in Dhaka, Narsingdi and Gazipur. The Directorate General of Health Services confirmed that 10 injured people were admitted to DMCH and 10 others to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital.

Normalcy returns to Nepal's Bara after violent Gen-Z protests, security concerns remain

BARA (TIP)

After two days of violent protest, Simara city in the Bara district of Nepal is returning to normalcy, with security seen as the major concern for locals ahead of the upcoming election.

Tension started to flare up in Simara Chowk of Bara district after CPN-UML cadres charged at the Gen-Z protestors who were staging a peaceful protest on Wednesday. Tension continued for the second day, with Gen-Z protestors alleging that police had let those inciting violence go free.

"On Wednesday and Thursday, the situation was quite tense here. The Gen-Z were on the street in large numbers and protesting. (District) Leaders of the CPN-UML had attacked the Gen-Z (District Coordinator) Samrat (Upadhyay), which flared up the tension, but since yesterday, the condition is returning to normalcy," Gopal Rijal, an auto rickshaw driver in Simara, told ANI.

The situation continued to simmer after the police arrested three individuals, who included two elected ward chairs from the CPN-UML -- Dhan Bahadur Shrestha and Kaimuddin Ansari. Shrestha is the chair of Ward 2, while Ansari is of Ward 6. Another accused, Arvind Sah, named as the main perpetrator and planner of the attack on the Gen-Z group, was arrested in Hetauda on Thursday night.

"The situation around here had started to fall back to normal since yesterday morning. There hasn't been any violence or clashes since yesterday. The Gen-Z groups had gone for talks with the authorities in Pathlaiya. The situation has continued to remain normal; there isn't an environment of fear till now," said Lokendra Prasad Baral, another resident of Simara, to ANI as he continued his business on Saturday morning.

The disgruntled Gen-Z protestors, on the late evening of Friday, reached a verbal agreement with the local authorities



to address their demands. The two parties reached an agreement two days after the claimed attack on the Gen-Z youths by the CPN-UML (Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist) cadres on Wednesday in Simara Chowk.

As per the verbal agreement, the agitated group has given a three-day ultimatum to authorities to fulfil the demand; otherwise, they will again return to the streets.

With about three months left for the parliamentary elections, the violence and clashes in Simara have increased concerns for locals in the Bara district.

"Security has been a challenge now. There are numerous groups increasing the security challenges. This has increased the fear that it would hamper the conduct of the election, as the challenges have continued to pile up. There are many factions and sub-factions with their own interests, and there is a lack of unity and uniformity amongst the people themselves," Rijal said.

The two-day protest in one of the districts in the southern plains of the Himalayan nation left at least six people injured in the clashes. The police also had to use tear gas and fire into the air to disperse the protestors on Thursday.



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Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji



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President Children's Medical Center, Flushing.
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and Honor the
Sacrifice of
Shri Guru Tegh
Bahadur Ji



MASTER MOHINDER SINGH

- Former President, Gurdwara Sikh Cultural Society, Richmond Hill, New York
- Founder President, Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana Sikh Center, Guru Tegh Bahadur Marg, Richmond Hill, New York
- Member, Community Board 9, Queens County, New York



*We Honor the Sacrifice of
Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji*



HARIDAS KOTAHWALA
Chairman, Royal India USA, Inc.
Chairman, Navika Capital Group
of Companies
President, IDCA
Patron, RANA



*We Salute Hind Ki Chadar Shri Guru Tegh
Bahadur Ji for his Supreme Sacrifice*



Hervender Singh,
Harjeet Kaur and Family
New Jersey, USA

Home remedies to nourish your dry scalp

There are several potential causes of a dry scalp. These include washing the hair too frequently, not drinking enough water, and having a reaction to harsh hair care products. Health conditions such as psoriasis could also result in a dry scalp. However, a person may be able to treat their dry scalp at home. Although they may not work for everyone, the following are some potential home remedies that may have some merit when it comes to treating a dry scalp.

Coconut oil

Coconut oil has some recognition in the medical community as being an effective moisturizer.

A review of research found that coconut oil is safe and effective in treating dry skin, which may indicate that it could also be useful in treating scalp dryness. However, another study showed that although coconut oil did not have any ill effects, there was no noticeable difference between the scalps of people who used the oil and those who did not. In this study, the researchers compared the hair care practices of 240 medical students.

Tea tree oil

Tea tree oil is a popular essential oil that lots of people use for its many potential health benefits.

According to a research review in the journal *Clinical Microbiology Reviews*, tea tree oil may have antifungal, antiseptic, and antibiotic properties that could help with scalp dryness.



Aloe vera

Some people use aloe vera for relief from sunburn and dry skin. Research suggests that people may experience relief with aloe vera due to its anti-inflammatory effects.

When a person applies it to the scalp, aloe vera may help alleviate the itching associated with a dry scalp. It may also help with moisturizing the scalp. An old study comparing the use of aloe vera gel with a placebo in 44 participants with seborrheic dermatitis — which is a condition that causes scaly, flaky skin — found that the aloe vera gel was more effective in reducing scaliness and itching.

Olive oil

In the diet, olive oil has displayed anti-inflammatory properties. Some research suggests that these properties could also be present

when a person applies it to the skin.

A review of research notes that olive oil has helped boost wound healing and skin regrowth in animal studies, largely through its anti-inflammatory effects. Skin inflammation can lead to dry skin.

Mashed bananas

Witch hazel may also help with the symptoms of a dry scalp, such as itchiness. According to some research, the nutrients in bananas may provide effective scalp treatment. One research paper, for example, suggests that the potassium, oils, and vitamins in bananas can help moisturize the scalp, treat dandruff, and improve hair health. The authors state that people can try this natural remedy by making their own banana hair conditioner at home.

FOOD CORNER

Pav Bhaji

Ingredients

For the Bhaji

- 2 large potatoes (boiled & mashed)
- 1 cup cauliflower (boiled & mashed)
- ½ cup green peas (boiled)
- 1 large onion (finely chopped)
- 2 tomatoes (finely chopped)
- 1 green capsicum (finely chopped)
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 2-3 green chillies (finely chopped)
- 2 tbsp Pav Bhaji Masala
- 1 tsp Kashmiri red chilli powder (for colour)
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- Salt to taste
- 2-3 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1½ cups water
- Fresh coriander (finely chopped)
- 1 lemon (to squeeze on top)

For the Pav

- 6-8 pav buns
- 2 tbsp butter
- A pinch of pav bhaji masala for toasting

Instructions

- Prepare the Vegetables
- Boil the potatoes, peas and cauliflower.
- Mash them lightly and keep aside.
- Make the Bhaji Base
- Heat oil + butter in a large pan.
- Add chopped onions and sauté until light golden.
- Add ginger-garlic paste and green chillies. Cook for 1 minute.
- Add capsicum and sauté for 2-3 minutes.
- Add tomatoes and cook until soft and mushy.
- Add Spices
- Mix in: Turmeric, red chilli powder, pav bhaji masala, salt.
- Cook until the masala releases oil.
- Add the Mashed Vegetables
- Add boiled potatoes, peas and cauliflower.
- Mix and mash everything well.
- Add water gradually and mash/cook until it becomes smooth and thick.
- Add 1-2 tbsp butter and simmer for 5-7 minutes.
- Taste and adjust salt, masala or butter.
- Toast the Pav
- Heat a tawa.
- Spread butter on the buns.
- Sprinkle a pinch of pav bhaji masala.
- Toast until golden and crisp.
- Serve hot with:
- A big dollop of butter on the bhaji
- Chopped onions
- Lemon wedges
- Fresh coriander
- Toasted pav



Ways to naturally lighten your hair at home



Every once in a while, we may get bored of our dark hair colour. But some people are too scared to colour their hair using chemicals that may harm the quality of their hair. What if we told you, you can use natural remedies to brighten your hair at home. Yes, you heard that right! Here are 7 ways you can lighten your hair colour naturally.

Lemons

Mix two tablespoons of lemon juice in a cup of warm

water and apply to your strands as an all-over mask. Then, sit outside and let your hair dry in the sun, letting the heat activate the lemon. Be sure to follow up with a nourishing treatment, like a coconut oil mask, as the fruit juice may aggravate dry hair.

Chamomile Tea

If you would like to give your hair more of a golden glow, opt for chamomile tea. Fill a large mug with boiling water, then steep a chamomile tea bag in it for 10 minutes. Once the tea has cooled, pour it over clean hair and let strands soak overnight. Rinse and feel free to repeat! Chamomile also has anti-dandruff properties.

Cinnamon

If you do not want a drastic colour change, then opt for cinnamon since it gives a subtle change. Mix a teaspoon of cinnamon with enough water to form a paste. Apply your usual conditioner thoroughly to wet hair and leave it on. Apply the cinnamon-water mixture to your slick strands. Wrap a shower cap around your strands, then leave the mixture on for at least six hours or overnight. Rinse it off, and enjoy a brighter, delicious-smelling mane.

Vitamins and minerals that women require more than men



All vitamins and minerals are essential for keeping the human body functioning well, irrespective of the gender. However, there are some vitamins and minerals that women need more of than men do, says Dr Chetna Jain, Director, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Cloudnine Group of hospitals, Gurgaon.

Calcium

Synonymous with bone health, calcium helps build strong bones and is necessary for women at all stages of life — from teens to old age. Multiple studies suggest that 90 per cent of adult bone mass is achieved by age 18, and peak bone mass usually happens in the late twenties. By their thirties, women's bone mass usually starts declining. During menopause and post-menopause, bone loss can accelerate in women as the body produces less oestrogen.

Who needs it: Adolescent girls need 1300mg daily, while adult women require around 1000mg. Pregnant women, post-menopausal and older women need 1200-1300mg. It is best to get the daily requirement from diet. Calcium supplements should only be taken if advised by your doctor, especially during pregnancy or in older years, as over supplementation may cause many adverse effects.

Food sources: Dairy products like milk, cheese, yogurt, seeds (poppy, sesame, celery and chia), tofu, beans, lentils, amaranth, nuts (almonds), leafy greens, figs etc.

Vitamin D

Together with calcium, vitamin D is needed to build strong bones as it supports calcium absorption, and good bone health and immune function. Like calcium, vitamin D remains important for women in all ages.

Who needs it: As it is good for maternal bone health, so most pregnant women need it as also lactating mothers as long as they are breastfeeding. Declining oestrogen levels increase the risk of bone loss, so menopausal and post-menopausal women require higher calcium and vitamin D intake, as suggested by multiple studies. Try to get your daily requirement through diet and sun exposure. Opt for supplements only under medical advice, as over-dose can weaken the bones and damage kidneys and heart.

Women between 19 and 70 years require 600 IU (15 mcg) daily while those above 70 need 800 IU (20 mcg) daily. Pregnant and breastfeeding women also need 800 IU (20 mcg) daily. Those with darker skin, limited sun exposure, or other conditions like obesity may need more and should consult a doctor.

Food sources: Fatty fish, fish liver oils, beef liver, egg yolks, cheese, fortified milk and breakfast cereals, mushrooms (in small amounts).

Iron

Iron remains one of the most important minerals for women, needed to build healthy blood cells that carry

oxygen in the body, and to make certain hormones and connective tissue in the body.

Who needs it: Almost all women need iron, but those with heavy menstrual periods especially require iron. Iron requirement goes up during pregnancy. Many women, pregnant women in particular, do not get adequate iron from food or diet alone, raising the risk of anaemia, causing the heart to work harder to pump blood so that more oxygen can reach all of the body. Symptoms include constant fatigue, dizziness, etc.

In India, over 57 per cent of women between 15-49 years are anaemic because of iron deficiency, mostly caused by low dietary iron, heavy menstrual bleeding and some infections.

The daily requirement for iron for women varies by age and condition: it is 21 mg/day for adult women (19-50 years), 25-27 mg/day for pregnant women, and 30 mg/day for lactating women. For women over 50, the requirement drops to 8 mg/day.

Food sources: Organ meats (liver), lean red meats, chicken, seafood (oysters and clams), beans, lentils, dark leafy greens, tofu and iron-fortified cereals and breads.

B vitamins

Among the B vitamins, folate (B9) and vitamin B12, in particular, are crucial for women, due to their role in foetal development and preventing birth defects. B6 is vital for hormonal health, mood regulation, brain function, energy, menopausal symptoms and preventing anaemia. Vitamin B12 supports red blood cell production, brain function and nerve health.

Who needs it: Women who are pregnant or trying to get pregnant. Folate's (folic acid) requirement for women of childbearing age is 400 mcg daily. B6 is needed especially during pregnancy and lactation for help with morning sickness, and in preventing anaemia. It may also help with symptoms of premenstrual syndrome (PMS). B12 is important for woman following vegan or vegetarian diets and older women, as its absorption may reduce with age. Older women with diabetes should be especially careful as some diabetes medicines as well as age may affect B12's absorption.

Food sources: It's best to get a variety of B vitamins from a diverse diet.

B6: Beef liver, poultry, fish (tuna and salmon), eggs, chickpeas, potatoes, bananas, non-citrus fruits, fortified cereals, whole grains, nuts and seeds.

B9: Dark leafy green vegetables (spinach, asparagus), lentils, beans, fortified cereals and breads, citrus fruits, nuts, seeds, eggs and liver.

B12: Lamb, pork, liver and kidney meat, clams, oysters, crab, salmon, tuna, chicken, turkey, eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt, fortified breakfast cereals, nutritional yeast and certain plant-based milks like soy.



Study details molecular changes in how hypertension can impair cognition

Hypertension can start impairing major brain cells responsible for cognition well before blood pressure increases by a measurable amount, according to a study conducted on mice, which can help explain how the condition is a major risk factor for cognitive impairment.

Findings published in the journal *Neuron* suggest that hypertension may induce early changes in how genes in a brain cell express themselves and could interfere with one's thinking and memory, researchers from Weill Cornell Medical College said.

The study can provide clues for finding ways through which neurodegeneration -- seen in disorders such as Alzheimer's -- could be blocked, they said.

Having high blood pressure has been shown to heighten one's risk of cognitive impairment, usually seen to precede Alzheimer's disease and dementia, which are marked by affected decision-making and loss of memory.

However, the reasons behind how hypertension can impact cognition are not understood, the researchers said. While hypertension medications succeed in lowering blood pressure, brain function shows little or no effects, suggesting that changes to blood vessels could cause damage independently of the elevated pressure associated with hypertension, they added.

"We found that the major cells responsible for cognitive impairment were affected just three days after inducing hypertension in mice, before blood pressure increased," said senior author and lead researcher Dr Costantino Iadecola, director of the Feil Family Brain and Mind Research Institute and professor of neuroscience and neurology at Weill Cornell Medical College.

"The bottom line is something beyond the dysregulation of blood pressure is involved," Iadecola said.

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Perseverance rover discovers alien rock on Mars

Nasa's Perseverance rover has made what could be one of its most intriguing discoveries yet on the Martian surface, a rock that may have originated from deep space.

While exploring a site nicknamed "Vernodden" beyond Jezero Crater, the rover encountered a sculpted, glossy boulder that stood out among the surrounding flat terrain.

The rock, named "Phippsaksla," measures about 80 centimeters across and immediately caught the science team's attention due to its unusual colour, shape, and texture. Using its laser-equipped SuperCam instrument, Perseverance analysed the rock's composition and discovered high concentrations of iron and nickel, elements typically found in metallic meteorites.

These metals are thought to form in the cores of large asteroids, suggesting that Phippsaksla did not originate on Mars but likely arrived there after traveling through space.

Nasa scientists are cautiously optimistic but note that further study is essential before confirming its extraterrestrial origin. Still, if Phippsaksla is indeed a meteorite, it would mark the first such discovery for Perseverance inside or near Jezero Crater.

Until now, researchers had been puzzled by the rover's lack of meteorite finds despite Jezero's geological similarities to Gale Crater, where the Curiosity rover encountered several, including the "Lebanon" meteorite in 2014 and "Cacao" in 2023.

Past missions have also encountered iron-nickel meteorites, such as "Heat Shield Rock," found by Opportunity in 2005, and others spotted by Spirit.

These findings offer valuable insights into how meteorites weather under Martian conditions over millions of years, helping scientists understand surface processes, erosion, and chemical changes across time.

Perseverance's discovery of Phippsaksla adds a new dimension to its exploration of Jezero's ancient terrain.

Whether it is confirmed as a meteorite or an unusual type of native Martian rock, the find shows the diverse geological and cosmic history preserved on Mars, a planet that continues to surprise even its most seasoned robotic explorers.



What is Nano Banana 2 trend? Google's upgraded AI-image tool is taking over the internet

Get ready for a much awaited update from the fruit-bowl of AI. Nano Banana 2 aka Nano Banana Pro, is the latest image-generation gadget from Google DeepMind that's stirring up the internet. After the viral success of the original Nano Banana model, Google has now unveiled a more polished, powerful version built on the Gemini 3 Pro architecture. With studio-quality visuals, multilingual text rendering and search-grounded world-knowledge baked in, Nano Banana 2 seems to be aiming for the crown of every creator's toolbox.

What is Nano Banana 2?

Essentially, Nano Banana 2 (Pro) is the next-generation image generation and editing model. It supports high-fidelity outputs (2K and 4K resolution), advanced editing controls (lighting, focus, colour grading), and best of all, crisp, legible text embedded in the image. What this means in practice: a user can prompt the model to generate an infographic about cardamom tea, complete with real-world facts, step-by-step visuals, and multi-language text. The model taps into Google Search for world-knowledge grounding, allowing



it to incorporate real-time data (for example, weather or sports) when generating visuals.

Nano Banana 2 is being rolled out across several platforms, in the Gemini app, in Google Ads, in Google Workspace and in the enterprise API. Google says the version also comes with built-in SynthID watermarks to flag the image as AI-generated.

Difference between Nano Banana 2 and Nano Banana 1

While Nano Banana 1 (officially Nano Banana) wowed audiences with its rapid image-edit capabilities and meme-worthy figurines, Nano Banana 2 (Pro) represents a more refined leap.

The key upgrades include supporting 4K resolution and studio-grade control over lighting, depth and composition.

Unlike the earlier version where text in images often looked odd or garbled, Nano Banana 2 handles typography and multilingual text with professionalism. The upgraded model integrates Google Search to generate images with real-world context (e.g. up-to-date data), something the first version lacked.

With multi-image inputs and reference style control (up to 14 images), the "Pro" version caters better to branding and professional workflows. In short, Nano Banana 1 was expressive and fun. Nano Banana 2 (Pro) is expressive, and professional-ready.

But it's not all bananas and sunshine. The rise of this image-tool brings several red flags that may be used for cyber crime. With high-fidelity visual generation, the potential to create realistic yet fake images increases. That means more misinformation, impersonation and brand misuse.

When you upload images or prompts, how is your data used? Google's systems may use inputs for training unless you opt out, raising questions about consent and privacy.

Apple will soon let you replace Siri in your iPhone

In the past year, AI voice assistants have become much more advanced and capable. The likes of Google Gemini and OpenAI's ChatGPT can handle complex queries and provide information to users. However, Apple's Siri is seemingly falling behind in this race. Now, the Cupertino giant is planning to give iPhone users the choice to use third-party voice assistants.

In iOS 26.2 beta 3, Apple has confirmed that iPhone users will soon be able to replace Siri with third-party voice assistants. The company's official developer documentation reveals that a user will be able to activate third-party assistants via the Side Button on their iPhone.

Apple's Siri replacement feature limited to Japan

Unfortunately, Apple states that the feature will only be available to users in Japan. Apple's developer notes state, "In Japan, people might place an action on the side button of iPhone that instantly launches your voice-based conversational app." However, the choice for consumers will also depend on whether developers have updated their apps to work with the new



system.

This will only function if the user's Apple Account region is set to Japan and the device is physically located in the country.

Apple's decision to support third-party assistants in Japan is likely done in compliance with the Mobile Software Competition Act Guidelines established by the Japan Fair Trade Commission. Apple's approach is believed to be a response to local

regulatory requirements, rather than a global policy shift at this stage.

While some may be disappointed to not get this feature outside Japan, Apple is planning for a big overhaul to Siri soon. The Cupertino giant will reportedly pay \$1 billion to Google to get a Gemini-based Siri next year. Apple will also ensure that this model runs solely on its own servers, and no user data is accessed by Google or any third party.

US sanctions Indian entities, individuals involved in Iranian petroleum sales

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON (TIP)

The Trump administration has sanctioned entities and individuals from India involved in sales of Iran's petroleum and petroleum products, saying the funds from this trade support Tehran's regional terrorist proxies and procure weapons systems that are "a direct threat" to the US.

The Departments of State and Treasury sanctioned shipping networks responsible for funding the Iranian regime's "malign activities" through illicit oil sales, as well as an airline and its affiliates that arm and supply Iran-backed terrorist groups.

Among those added to the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control Specially Designated Nationals List are Indian nationals Zair Husain Iqbal Husain Sayed, Zulfikar Hussain Rizvi Sayed, Maharashtra-based RN Ship Management Private Limited and Pune-based TR6 Petro India LLP.

The State Department is designating 17 entities, individuals, and vessels in several countries, including, but not limited to India, Panama, and the Seychelles, involved in Iran's petroleum and petroleum products sales, the administration said.

Concurrently, the Department of the Treasury is designating 41 entities, individuals, vessels, and aircraft, intensifying its efforts against Iran's petroleum and petrochemical exports and disrupting financial streams and commercial operatives that support Iran's malign activities.

The funds generated by this oil trade are used to support Iran's regional terrorist proxies and procure weapons systems that pose a direct threat to US



forces and American allies, the State Department said on Thursday.

The administration said TR6 Petro is an India-based petroleum products trader, which between October 2024 and June 2025, imported over USD 8 million worth of Iranian-origin bitumen from multiple companies.

It is being designated for knowingly engaging in a significant transaction for the purchase, acquisition, sale, transport, or marketing of petroleum or petroleum products from Iran, the State Department said.

The Iranian regime continues to fuel conflict in the Middle East to fund its destabilising activities, the State Department said. This behaviour enables Iran to fund its nuclear escalations, support terrorist groups, and disrupt the flow of trade and freedom of navigation in waterways that are crucial to global prosperity and economic growth.

The United States will continue to act against the network of maritime service

providers, dark fleet operators, and petroleum products traders involved in the transport of Iranian crude oil and petroleum products, it said.

The State Department said the US will continue to act in support of National Security Presidential Memorandum 2 (NSPM-2), which directs the imposition of maximum pressure on the Iranian regime to deny it access to resources needed to sustain its destabilising activities.

"The United States remains committed to disrupting the illicit funding streams that finance all aspects of Iran's malign activities. As long as Iran devotes revenue to funding attacks against the United States and our allies, supporting terrorism around the world, and pursuing other destabilising actions, we will use all the tools at our disposal to hold the regime accountable," it said.

The action is being taken pursuant to counter-terrorism provisions, which target Iran's petroleum and petrochemical sector.

India, Israel launch free trade agreement talks; aim For USD 40 billion trade boost

India and Israel on Thursday, Nov 20, inked terms of reference (ToR) to formally launch negotiations for a free trade agreement, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said.

The ToR include market access for goods by eliminating tariff and non-tariff barriers, investment facilitation, simplification of customs procedures, increasing cooperation for innovation and technology transfer, and easing norms to promote trade in services.

"We have signed the ToRs today. Now we will soon finalise the dates for starting the negotiations for that," Goyal told reporters here. Goyal, who is leading a 60-member business delegation to Israel, met leaders and businesses to discuss ways to boost bilateral trade and investments.

He said that services such as IT, tourism and movement of skilled professionals will get a boost from the proposed pact.

Both countries will make a bridge for the movement of skilled professionals like doctors, engineers and nurses, he added.

The TOR was signed by Goyal and Israeli Economy and Industry Minister Nir Barkat.

Goyal said that the Israeli side has conveyed that they will not seek market access in sensitive areas such as dairy, rice, wheat and sugar.

He also informed that Israel has come out with pre-qualification documents for a metro project. It is a USD 50 billion (Rs 4.5 lakh crore) worth project and Indian companies can participate in this, Goyal said, adding that at present, in over 20 cities, India has metro lines.

India and Israel had been negotiating a similar agreement since May 2010. Eight rounds were held, but talks stalled later. The last round was held in October 2021.

Reliance ends use of Russian crude for exports to comply with EU sanctions

MUMBAI (TIP)

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) on Thursday, Nov 20, said it has halted the use of Russian crude at its export-only refinery in Jamnagar, Gujarat, as the company moves to comply with European Union sanctions. RIL is India's largest buyer of Russian oil, which it processes and turns into fuel, such as petrol and diesel, at its giant oil refining complex at Jamnagar.

The complex is made up of two refineries—one SEZ unit from which fuels are exported to the European Union, the US and other markets, and an older unit that caters to the domestic market.

It may be noted that the European Union (EU), which is a big market for Reliance, has imposed wide-ranging sanctions targeting Russia's energy revenues, including measures that restrict the import and sale of fuels produced from Russian crude oil. To comply with these, Reliance has stopped processing Russian



crude oil at its only-for-exports (SEZ) refinery.

"We have stopped importing Russian crude oil into our SEZ refinery with effect from November 20," a company spokesperson said in a statement.

As is the case with any large industrial factory, the

refinery must have past raw material (crude oil) inventories, which it is currently processing and turning into fuels. Once the old inventory runs out, newer products will only be made from non-Russian oil. "From December 1, all product exports from the SEZ refinery will be obtained from non-Russian crude oil," the firm said. "The transition has been completed ahead of schedule to ensure full compliance with product-import restrictions coming into force in January 2026." Last month, when the US sanctioned Russia's largest oil exporters, Rosneft and Lukoil, the firm had stated that it would meet all applicable restrictions and would adjust its refinery operations to meet compliance requirements.

"We have noted the recent restrictions announced by the European Union, the United Kingdom and the United States on crude oil imports from Russia and export of refined products to Europe. Reliance is currently assessing the implications, including the new compliance requirements," Reliance had said.

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - NOV 24 TO NOV 30, 2025

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA



Aries

ARIES

Ganesha says this week's horoscope for Aries encourages you to remain balanced and focused. There may be some irregularities in your life at this time, which will motivate you to face challenges. There may be some turmoil in relationships with those around you, but this is temporary. Maintain patience and try to resolve problems through dialogue. Sharing your feelings with loved ones this week will help reduce stress. Be sensitive when expressing your emotions, as others' reactions can be unpredictable. Don't be afraid of difficulties; they can also become opportunities. This week will provide you with time for personal growth and self-reflection. Recognize your inner strength and move forward with positivity. Take time to laugh and refresh yourself; this can improve your situation. Remember, this too shall pass, so stay calm and keep moving forward.

TAURUS



Taurus

Ganesha says this week's horoscope for Taurus indicates the possibility of giving your overall life a new direction. This time will be full of positive changes and opportunities for you. You will experience balance and stability in your lifestyle, which will be very beneficial for your mind and soul. A new energy will flow within you, allowing you to better understand your thoughts and feelings. This week is a time of self-realization for you. You will experience new maturity and depth in your relationships. Your social behavior will be open and confident, allowing you to make new connections and strengthen old ones. Your communication skills will improve, allowing you to share your thoughts and feelings clearly. You can consider this period excellent for your personal growth. Overall, this week will be excellent for you, enhancing the quality of your life. Try to spread positivity around you and enjoy life.

GEMINI



Gemini

Ganesha says this week will be very positive and wonderful for Geminis. Your communication skills and clarity of thought will increase, allowing you to express your ideas better. This is a time for you to engage in new ideas and projects. People around you will listen to you and appreciate you, which will improve your social standing. Your relationships with friends and family will become sweeter

and more harmonious. Relationships with friends and family will strengthen. Through mutual communication, you will be able to resolve old issues. You will experience warmth and love in your relationships. This week will provide you with the opportunity to spend time with people with whom you can share your feelings. This is a time to showcase your experience and creativity. The experiences you share will be inspiring to others. You will feel energized, and your positive attitude will propel you forward. In short, this week will be excellent for you from both a personal and social perspective.

CANCER



Cancer

Ganesha says this week will be a bit challenging for Cancerians. There may be many upheavals and changes in your life, which will require you to exercise your strength and patience. This time may bring ups and downs in your relationships. Your feelings with loved ones may be mixed, requiring some time for discussion and understanding. Expressing your feelings openly is important, as this will strengthen your relationships. Try to resolve old issues; this may ease some tension. Enlisting the support of family and friends will be crucial. This week, focus on your sensitivity and face any difficulties boldly. Remember, every challenge brings an opportunity. Demonstrate patience and understanding in your relationships. Your genuine feelings will help you move forward during this time. Maintain a positive attitude, and your relationships will gradually improve.

LEO



Leo

Ganesha says this week, you will experience a surge of inner energy and confidence. Those around you will be impressed by your positivity and charismatic personality, increasing the likelihood of forming new relationships. You will take full advantage of social opportunities this week. This is a time to spend time with friends and make new friendships. An atmosphere of joy and excitement will surround you. This time will help you connect with others and build stronger emotional bonds. Openness and honesty in conversations will bring you closer. This week, your radiance will attract everyone's attention, increasing the closeness in your relationships. This is a time to express your thoughts and feelings, and this can strengthen your relationships. This week is excellent for relationships, including celebrating love and friendship.

VIRGO



Virgo

Ganesha says this week may be a somewhat challenging experience for Virgos. This time indicates turmoil in your life, which may impact your mental and

emotional health. There may be some turmoil in relationships. You need to pay attention to your communication with your partner. Use patience and understanding to resolve problems. The actions you take will impact your relationships, so maintain a positive mindset. Be patient when resolving any misunderstandings or disagreements. Better communication and empathy can help strengthen your relationships. This week, you should try to channel your emotions in the right direction. Avoid any negativity and move forward with a positive mindset. Remember, difficulties are temporary, and during this time, you can take important steps to improve your relationships.

LIBRA



Libra

Ganesha says this week will be quite encouraging for Libras. You will experience a new sense of commitment and balance in your life. This is a time to revitalize your relationships. Mutual understanding and cooperation with those around you will strengthen your relationships. You will have opportunities to socialize with family and friends, which will further improve your mental state. This week, you will be able to express your feelings through a special conversation or meeting, which will increase the sweetness in your relationships. It's important to exercise caution, as some disagreements may arise, but these can be resolved through dialogue. This week, your natural shyness and charm will intensify, attracting those around you. The beginning of new relationships is also possible. Overall, you will have pleasant experiences in love and relationships this week. Share your thoughts and feelings, as this is a time to revitalize your relationships.

SCORPIO



Scorpio

Ganesha says this week can be a bit challenging for Scorpios. You will feel changes in your surroundings. During these times, introspection and maintaining a level head can help. You may experience some instability in your relationships. Be careful in your interactions and communicate wisely. You need to maintain harmony with those close to you. Problems are always resolved through dialogue, so pay attention to this. It's best to avoid arguments or disagreements. Expressing your feelings appropriately will prove helpful this week. This is a time for dedication and discovering your inner strength. Meditation and yoga can be beneficial for maintaining inner peace. Don't hesitate to understand and accept your emotions. Channel your energy positively and view this challenging time as an opportunity.

SAGITTARIUS



Sagittarius

Ganesha says this week will be filled with

some challenges for Sagittarius. Overall, this time will be unfavorable, which may cause mental stress and anxiety. Relationships may experience some ups and downs. Disputes or disagreements with family and friends are possible, so it's important to exercise patience and understanding. Maintain balance in conversations, as a lack of communication can exacerbate problems. Your social life may be affected this week, so focus on your close relationships and strengthen them by spending more time with them. During this time, you should participate in positive activities to improve your emotional state. Keep your thoughts positive, as this will help you cope with difficulties. View this week as a challenge that can provide you with opportunities for better relationships and personal growth. Work to understand your emotions and connect better with others.

CAPRICORN



Capricorn

Ganesha says this week marks the beginning of a new chapter of happiness in partnerships and relationships for Capricorns. The atmosphere around you will be filled with positivity. This is the perfect time to connect with friends and loved ones. You can forget old conflicts and start a new relationship or friendship. A sense of mutual trust and respect will strengthen your relationships this week. Cooperation and understanding will increase, deepening your relationships. Have the courage to express your feelings openly. This week holds signs of accomplishments for you, allowing you to make a fresh start in your relationships. Those experiencing some tension in their relationships will be able to resolve it this week. So don't lose heart and give your relationships time. Throughout this week, you will experience love and understanding, which will bring fulfillment to your personal life. This positivity will provide you with the energy to move forward.

AQUARIUS



Aquarius

Ganesha says this week is a time of completeness and harmony for Aquarius. You will be able to balance various aspects of your life. It's time to improve your relationships with those around you. Friendship and cooperation will play an important role in your life. You will be able to express your feelings openly, which will increase mutual understanding. This week, you will try to spend time with your family and friends, which will be beneficial for your mental health. Interacting with loved ones will strengthen your relationships and make you feel loved and supported. You will also have the opportunity to make new plans and share them with your loved ones.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : NOV 24 TO NOV 30 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

NOVEMBER 24

Ganesha says that although productive, the rewards of this day may be gradual, so you should give it your all. Although it may be better to do business today, partnerships and joint ventures should be avoided. If you are not able to get people to support your current endeavor, you will feel frustrated and disappointed. Romance may blossom, and some lovers may even decide to get married.

NOVEMBER 25

Ganesha says that women can experience great fruits during this time. Prosperity and fortune may come your way if the stars are kind to you. Good financial inflow can improve your living conditions and savings. If you become obsessed with the other gender, it may take a while to be able to think again. A remarkable leap forward in your professional career is predicted if you take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves before you. There can be some concern about the health of parents, but try not to worry too much.

NOVEMBER 26

Ganesha says that today your expenses may increase, which will make it difficult for you to save. Investments made during this time can eventually give good returns, if not immediately. Academic excellence and participation in extra-curricular activities can be acknowledged by the students. Though the slow progress of work and arguments over small things may make you angry and even affect your health, at the end of the day, you may be happy and satisfied with your achievements.

NOVEMBER 27

Ganesha says financial gains on this day can come from many fronts, but doubts in your relationships are likely to be a black area on the chart of your success and achievements. Socializing, gatherings, and pleasant outings can all be frequent and enjoyable. Wedding bells may ring for the deserving, and others may find romance to keep them going. Don't trust others more than necessary. Time management and planning can be of utmost importance.

NOVEMBER 28

Ganesha says a promotion or increase in responsibilities on this day may give you a reason to rejoice. Your profile may gain some sophistication with new initiatives. In the home, there can be a healthier, more loving environment that can promote prosperity and excellent health. Professionals willing to work abroad may be welcome. Housewives may have to deal with the problem of frequent visits from family and friends. It is possible to go on a spiritual journey to a distant place.

NOVEMBER 29

Ganesha says if you get a promotion or get more responsibility, then you will have a reason to rejoice on this day. Your resume can look more polished with new projects. There can be a better and more loving environment in the home, which can result in prosperity and good health. Professionals looking to make a career abroad may be welcome. Housewives may have to deal with the problem of frequent visitors and family members. Traveling to a distant place is possible for spiritual progress.



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

NOVEMBER 30

Ganesha says you are skilled in making new relationships, which helps you gain a lot of popularity and profit. Today, you will get a chance to raise your standard of living through new contacts made by you. Your professional advancement should be your main focus, as it can give the required results. Your parents' health may be a matter of concern, but your spouse and children may be supportive. If you go out and join clubs and social activities, you will be quite successful socially.

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CONTD FROM PAGE 56

Participating in social activities will boost your energy and confidence. This is a remarkable week for you, where you can improve relationships and gain new experiences. Overall, this week will bring you satisfaction and happiness. Filled with positivity, it will open doors to new opportunities and better relationships in your life.



PISCES

Ganesha says this week will be full of challenges for Pisces. You will find it a little difficult to control your emotional state. There may be some disagreements with family and friends, which could impact your morale. The turmoil around you may cause you anxiety. During this time, exercise restraint in expressing your emotions and try to handle the situation wisely. However, it is also true that you will learn a lot from this challenging situation. This is a time to deeply understand your feelings. Take some time for self-reflection and use this time positively. Talk to those close to you and

share your feelings. Consider this week a time for self-reflection and delve deep within yourself to discover your true

feelings. This way, you can overcome this difficult period and strengthen your relationships. With dedication and

understanding, this difficult period will also pass.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Sikh History This Week

NOVEMBER 21 TO NOVEMBER 27

21st November

1921 The "Chabia da morcha" was started. Due to some misunderstandings, the keys to Sri Harimandir Sahib's "ToshaKhana" (Panthic treasury) were seized by the Deputy Commissioner on Nov. 7, 1921. The agitation to recover the keys is known as "Chabia da morcha". This agitation resulted in the eventual return of the keys on Jan. 19, 1922. The keys were returned to Baba Kharak Singh, President of SGPC, during active diwan in front of the Akal Takhat, by District Authorities, Amritsar. Mahatma Gandhi hailed this event as the "first decisive battle for India's freedom won". Baba KHARAK SINGH, popularly known as "the Betaj Badshah" was one of the greatest Sikh leaders, a religious reformer and freedom fighter. For more than three decades, he struggled boldly against mismanagement of Gurdwaras and the British rule in India. He was tried by court in every important agitation for independence, went to prison fifteen times and suffered incarceration for an aggregate of twenty years. In the liberation of Sikh shrines from the British agents his role was decisive. Giani Partap Singh calls him the most honored Sikh leader of Indian people and founder of Gurdwara Reform Movement who had firm determination, a sense of selfless service detachment and simplicity ("Akali Lehar de Mahan Neta", p. 5, tr. mine).

1953 Sampuran Singh Raman starts fast unto death for Punjabi Suba.

1967 Master Tara Singh passed away.



1997 Singh Sahib Bhai Ranjit Singh, Jathedar, Sri Akal Takhat, formally released the Constitution of the World Sikh Council.

22nd November

1664 Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji visited Sri Amritsar. About a month after his installation as the Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur decided to visit Amritsar and pay homage at Sri Harmandir Sahib. Since Guru Hargobind's departure from Amritsar to Kiratpur in 1635 no other Guru had visited Harmandir Sahib. The custody of the shrine had fallen in the hands of Minas, Prithi Chand's descendants, who were staunch enemies of the Sikh Gurus and their families. On hearing of the arrival of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Amritsar, the occupants closed the doors of the shrine and refused to admit the Guru and his party into the Gurudwara. Guru Tegh Bahadur with his followers camped under a tree only a few meters to the north of Akal Takhat. This place was later known as Thara Sahib and a gurudwara was built at the site. A few days later, on the full moon light, Makhana Shah and his men, who had accompanied the Guru to Amritsar, managed to get admittance into Harmandir Sahib. Guru Tegh Bahadur went in and offered his prayers.

1693 Aurangzeb issued orders that read: "News from

Sirhind, Gobind declares himself to be Guru Nanak. Faujdars ordered to prevent him from assembling his forces." When these orders did not produce much effect, "a general order was issued for their massacre."

1818 Maharaja Ranjit Singh's forces conquered Peshwar.

1840 Co-regency of Chand Kaur and Sher Singh formed.

1848 Anglo-Sikh war was fought at Ram Nagar, Gujranwala.

23rd November

1845 Sikh troops marched to the Sutlej ferries.

1938 Kahan Singh Nabha, a great Sikh Scholar passed away.

24th November

1271 Bhagat Nam Dev Ji was born at Nursi Bahamani, district Sitara (Maharashtra). His verses have been included in Sri Guru Granth Sahib. He died in 1349 at Pandarpur.

Nam Dev was a celebrated saint whose name was a household word for the people of Maharashtra. They chanted his hymns amidst their families.

He was born in the village of Narsi Bamni in the Satara District of Maharashtra. His father was Dam Seti and mother Gona Bai. He was inspired to bhakti by his father and later became a disciple of Vishoba Khechar. They say, that once, when his maternal grandfather was to go out somewhere, he instructed Nam Dev to offer milk to God. Following the instructions literally, he placed a cup of milk before the image of the Lord. With a child's unquestioning faith and unflattering devotion he created such an atmosphere that God drank the proffered milk. Another time, when Nam Dev was absorbed in meditation, the proud Brahmans, jealous of his spiritual attainments, threw him out of the temple, saying that being a Shudra, he had no business to be in a holy place. Nam Dev bore the humiliation calmly and sat outside the back wall of the temple and plunged into deep meditation. Moved by his love and devotion, God performed a miracle and the temple gate moved to where Nam Dev was sitting. Seeing this, the Brahmans recognized his greatness and besought him for forgiveness.

1598 Akbar visited Guru Arjan Dev Ji at Goindwal. Guru Arjan's perception of the times to come was not withstanding Akbar's high regards for him. According to the Court historian, Abdul Fazal's Akbar Namah, Guru Arjan accorded a prodigious reception to Akbar on this day at Goindwal. Akbar was really impressed by Guru Arjan's bewitching and handsome appearance, sweet and melodious voice and fascinating and charming manners, his princely style of living, his warm reception and his singing of hymns in praise of God. At Guru Arjan's instance, Akbar issued orders to remit the revenue by one-sixth.

1675 Martyrdom, Ninth Patshah, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.

1969 Fateh Singh announced another fast unto death for transfer of Chandigarh to Punjab. The fast was to begin on Jan. 26, 1970, to be followed by self-immolation on Feb. 1, 1970.

1979 "Maerath Morcha" announced on behalf of All India Sikh Student Federation.

25th November

1710 Sikhs successfully attacked and killed RustamDil Khan near Sadorae.

1888 The final straw, causing a breakup among Singh and Arya Samaj, came at the Lahore Arya Samaj anniversary celebrations. Here Lala Guru Datt Arora in a speech sharply criticised Sikhism. Pertinently, he said that is Swami Dayanand called Guru Nanak a fraud, what

did that matter? Swamiji had the sum of the Vedas in his hands! He continued that "Guru Gobind Singh was not even a hundredth part like our Maharishi Sawami Dayanand Saraswati and it is difficult to say whether the Sikhs have any religion or not, but surely they have no knowledge of any kind." Other Arya speakers, specifically Pandit Lekh Ram and Lala Murli Dhar rose to second Lala Guru Datt's comments and added their own words of sarcasm to the criticism of Sikh religion.

1967 Lachman Singh Gill became the Chief Minister of Punjab.

26th November

1708 Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur) stormed Samana Town, leaving 10,000 dead, followed up



by routing Faujdars of Kapuri and Mustabad. Samana was a center of traditional Sikh hatred. The executor of Guru Tegh Bahadur belonged to this place; his son had beheaded the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh; evacuation of Anandpur Sahib was made by the Guru on strength of false promises made by Ali Husain of Samana. The Khalsa army punished the tyrants and their associates. Later, the city of the "Jallads" (executioners) was placed under the charge of Fateh Singh, one of the five Councillors.

1871 Giani Rattan Singh Namdhari and his assistant Rattan Singh were hanged outside Ludhiana jail in open public view.

1949 The Sikhs rejected the new Constitution of India. The Sikh members refused to sign it.


1972 The first Gurdwara service was held at the Guru Ram Das Ashram in Los Angeles, California.

1973 A young Navy enlisted man was ordered to report for captain's mast at Miramar Naval Air Station at San Diego to explain the uniform he wore. When he reported for duty on this day, he was told that White turbans are definitely non-regulation.


27th November

1502 Guru Amar Das married Bibi Mansa Devi of village Sankhetra, district Sialkot, daughter of Baba Devi Chand of Behl Clan. After the marriage, Bibi Mansa Devi was renamed as Bibi Ram Kaur. They had their first child in 1519, a daughter Bibi Dani, when Guru Amar Das was 40 years old. Other children from this marriage were Baba Mohan born in 1521, Baba Mohri born in 1522, and Bibi Bhani born in 1534.



1914 Sikhs unsuccessfully attempted to attack Ferozepur Fort. Bhai Sahib Randhir Singh, a stalwart of the Ghadr movement, took part in this attack and was consequently arrested on May 9, 1915 and gaoled for a long term of imprisonment till Oct. 4, 1930 under section 121 (a) of the Indian Penal Code in the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case.



We Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji




Lal Motwani and Kavita Motwani
New York





SHAHEEDI DIWAS
Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji

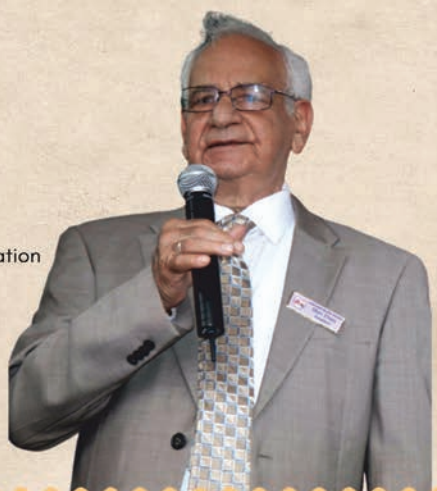
We Remember and Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji



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We Salute Hind Ki Chadar Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji for his Supreme Sacrifice



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We Remember and Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji



**VIKAS
INDU
HARSAHAB AND
RAUNAK DHALL**

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Trump characterizes his meeting with...

much the two agreed. "We had a meeting today that actually surprised me. He wants to see no crime. He wants to see housing being built. He wants to see rents coming down. All things that I agree with," he said, suggesting their priorities overlapped more than expected.

Trump acknowledged differences in how to approach rising rents but said the goal was mutual. "One of the things I really gleaned very, very much today -- he'd like to see them come down ideally by building a lot of additional housing. That's the ultimate way... He agrees with that and so do I," he said, noting that both saw housing expansion as essential.

Challenging media narratives of a strained relationship, Trump said, "If I read the newspapers and the stories, I don't hear that. But I heard him say it today and I think that's a very positive step... I expect to be helping him, not hurting him," adding, "I want New York City to be great. I love New York City. It's where I come from."

The President also commended Mamdani's successful run for mayor, describing it as an "incredible race against some very tough people, very smart people."

He added that "we agreed on a lot more than I thought," stressing that both shared "one thing in common: we want this city of ours that we love to do very well."

Mamdani echoed this tone of cooperation, calling the meeting "productive."

He said their discussion centered on shared affection for the city and on the need to improve affordability. It was, he said, "focused on a place of shared admiration and love, which is New York City, and the need to deliver affordability to New Yorkers."

Trump, for his part, said he was prepared to support the incoming mayor. "The better he does the happier I am," he said, signaling a willingness to set aside previous friction.

The display of warmth stood in contrast to the months of pointed criticism the two had exchanged on issues

such as immigration and New York's financial challenges, marking a significant shift in tone during their White House meeting.

Standing beside the president, Mamdani echoed Trump's assessment, describing the discussion as highly productive and focused on urgent cost-of-living challenges facing New Yorkers.

"I appreciated the meeting with the president, as he said, it was a productive meeting focused on a place of shared admiration and love, New York City," Mamdani said, according to CNN.

The mayor-elect added that they discussed issues driving residents out of the city, including rising rent, groceries and utilities.

"We spoke about rent, we spoke about groceries, we spoke about utilities. We spoke about the different ways in which people are being pushed out. I appreciated the time with the president, I appreciated the conversation, and I look forward to working together to deliver that affordability for New Yorkers," Zohran Mamdani said as per CNN.

This meeting may not eliminate the vast differences between Trump and Mamdani. Nor will it erase their respective political narratives-narratives that define them as opposite poles of American political life. But it does show that leadership sometimes requires the willingness to sit down with one's ideological opposite, acknowledge a shared problem, and search, however tentatively, for shared ground.

In a time of polarization so acute that even dialogue feels exceptional, the Trump-Mamdani meeting stands out not merely because the two men are "strange bedfellows," but because their conversation reflected a rare and increasingly valuable political instinct: the instinct to prioritize the needs of the people over the demands of political branding.

If New York's affordability crisis becomes the issue that brings together such unlikely partners, it may yet be the beginning of a new, more pragmatic chapter in the city's political story. (With input from various agencies)

GOP Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene...

Greene said the House should have been working to address providing health insurance instead of being shut down for eight weeks. She said her colleagues, now back in the House, will soon go into campaign season - and leave Washington again. "I raged against my own speaker and my own party for refusing to proactively work diligently to pass the plan to save Americans health care and protect Americans from outrageous, overpriced and unaffordable health insurance policies," Greene said. "The House should have been in session, working every day to fix this disaster, but instead, America was force fed disgusting political drama."

Greene and Trump had been on opposite sides for weeks on issues including foreign policy and health insurance subsidies. The rift broke on Nov. 14 as she pushed to force the House to vote on requiring the Justice Department to release more Epstein files. Late last week, the president called Greene a "traitor" and said he would endorse a challenger against her in the 2026 midterms. Greene said that she has "too much self-respect and dignity" and that she loves her district too much to endure "a hurtful and hateful primary against me by the president that we all fought for." Greene also said that she has also endured "nonstop, never-ending personal attacks, death threats, lawfare, ridiculous slander and lies" throughout her career in Congress.

In a 10-minute video, Greene touted her voting record as a staunch member of the Republican Party and her push for limits on H-1B visas, 50-year mortgage loans, as well as her stances on foreign wars, as well as her demands on the release for more information on Epstein.

"Loyalty should be a two-way street and we should be able to vote our conscience and represent our districts interest because our job title is literally representative," she said, adding that "standing up for American women who were raped at 14 years old trafficked and used by rich, powerful men should not result in me being called a traitor and threatened by the president of the United States whom I've fought for."

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

We Remember and Honor the Sacrifice of Shri Guru Tegh Bahadur ji



ALICIA, HARINDER (HARRY),
MANJEET, AJOONI



Vivaha Panchami, observed on the fifth day of the bright half of the Hindu month of Margashirsha (November-December), commemorates one of the most cherished episodes in the Ramayana: the sacred wedding of Lord Rama and Goddess Sita in the ancient kingdom of Mithila. More than a festival, it is a spiritual remembrance of an ideal marriage founded on dharma, devotion, purity, and cosmic balance. Across India and Nepal, particularly in Janakpur and Ayodhya, the day is celebrated with extraordinary reverence, drawing lakhs of pilgrims who come to witness the re-enactment of this celestial union.

Origins of Vivaha Panchami in the Ramayana Tradition

The story traces back to the Bal Kand of the Valmiki Ramayana. When King Janaka discovered baby Sita emerging from the earth while ploughing a sacred field, he raised her as his daughter. As she grew into a woman of unparalleled beauty, grace, and strength, Janaka announced a swayamvara with a unique condition: whosoever would lift and string the mighty Shiva Dhanusha—the divine bow guarded for generations—would win Sita's hand.

Many kings and warriors failed the challenge. But when Prince Rama, the eldest son of King Dasharatha of Ayodhya, arrived with sage Vishvamitra, he effortlessly lifted, bent, and broke the bow—a moment that shook the heavens and marked the divine pairing as destined by cosmic law. The wedding, described in lyrical detail by Tulsidas in the Ramcharitmanas, became the model for righteous marital union.

The Significance of Rama and Sita's Marriage

More than an event, the marriage symbolizes the union of Purusha and Prakriti, the cosmic masculine and feminine principles. Rama embodies:

- Maryada (righteousness)
- Dharma (duty)
- Satya (truth)

Sita represents:

- Shakti (energy and strength)
- Karuna (compassion)
- Pavitrata (purity)

Their union teaches that marriage is not merely a social contract but a sacred journey of shared responsibility, sacrifice, and spiritual growth. Vivaha Panchami thus becomes a reminder of ideal companionship rooted in harmony.

Celebrations in Janakpur: The Heart of Vivaha Panchami

Ram-Sita Vivah Mandap - The Centre of Devotion

In Janakpur, the ancient kingdom of Mithila, the festival is celebrated with an authenticity unmatched anywhere else. The Janaki Mandir and Ram-Sita Vivah Mandap become the epicentre of the festivities as priests perform rituals recreating the ancient wedding.

The Grand Procession (Baraat) from Ayodhya

A symbolic procession representing Rama's wedding party arrives at Janakpur. Devotees dress as sages, princes, courtiers, and dancers, filling the streets with colour, music, and devotion. The atmosphere resonates with shlokas, bhajans, and

Vivaha Panchami: The divine wedding of Rama and Sita



Important information

Vivah Panchami 2025 or Ram Vivah Utsav 2025

Tuesday, 25 November 2025

Panchami tithi start : 24 November 2025 at 09:22 pm

Panchami tithi end : 25 November 2025 at 10:56 pm

traditional Maithili folk songs.

Rituals and Ceremonies

- Kanyadaan of Sita by King Janaka
- Vedic mantras chanted by priests
- Mangal Fera around the sacred fire
- Cultural plays and Ramayana performances

The wedding is enacted not as a drama but as a deeply spiritual ritual experienced with tears, prayers, and the belief that the divine couple truly descends to bless the devotees.

Ayodhya's Celebrations: The Groom's Homeland

In Ayodhya, Vivaha Panchami is marked with:

- Special darshans in Ram Janmabhoomi and Kanak Bhawan
- Recitations of Ramcharitmanas, especially the Vivah Geet
- Processions depicting the departure of Rama for Mithila
- Decorated temples and night-long bhajans

The mood remains festive yet devotional, celebrating both the joy of marriage and the glory of dharma.

Rituals Followed by Devotees

Fasting and Worship

Many observe a vrat, offering prayers to Rama and Sita for marital harmony and blessings. Married couples worship the divine couple seeking protection and strength in their relationships.

Reading of Vivah Kanda

Reciting the Vivah Kanda from the Ramcharitmanas is believed to cleanse the mind, remove obstacles in marriage, and invoke divine grace.

Charity and Community Feasts

Feeding the poor, distributing prasad, and organizing community dinners reflect the spirit of sharing and abundance that the divine wedding signifies.

Symbolism and Spiritual Essence of Vivaha Panchami

- Ideal Marital Conduct

The festival sets forth the values of mutual respect, patience, support, and emotional strength.

- Victory of Humility Over Ego

Rama's gentleness, even after breaking the bow, teaches humility in victory.

- Divine Balance

The union reflects cosmic balance—neither dominance nor submission, but harmony.

- The Blessing of Stability

Sita's steadfastness, courage, and moral clarity exemplify the strength needed to uphold dharma within the household.

Regional Traditions Across India and Nepal

Mithila (Bihar & Nepal)

- Maithili songs like Suhavnaa Vivah and Sita Swyambar Geet
- Folk dances and traditional kohbar motifs
- Unique marriage rituals performed in the name of Rama and Sita

Uttar Pradesh

- Temples in Ayodhya, Varanasi, and Chitrakoot hold special recitations and public feasts.

Maharashtra & Gujarat

- Bhakti sammelans, Ramayan discourses, and community pujas form the core celebrations.

South India

- In some temples, Vivaha Panchami merges with Kalyanotsavam traditions where devotees witness the divine wedding ceremony.

Modern Relevance of Vivaha Panchami

In an era where relationships often struggle for stability, the festival reminds us of:

Shared dharma in marriage

- Emotional resilience during hardships
- The need for mutual respect
- Patience and trust as foundations of love
- The ideal of partnership as service to each other and society
- Couples today see Vivaha Panchami as an opportunity to renew vows, resolve differences, and seek divine guidance.

Vivaha Panchami stands not only as the commemoration of Rama and Sita's marriage, but as a timeless celebration of sacred companionship. It invites people to seek purity of intention, balance in relationships, and devotion to dharma. Whether celebrated in Janakpur, Ayodhya, Mithila, or homes across the world, the festival transports devotees to an age when divine love walked on earth and blessed humanity with the perfect ideal of marriage.

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Hampi: Walking through the lost empire of stone and story

There are places you visit and then there is Hampi, a landscape you enter, as though crossing the threshold of time itself. Scattered across the sun-washed plains of Karnataka, Hampi is a spectacular tapestry of colossal ruins, carved temples, ancient bazaars, mythological echoes, and surreal geography formed by boulders stacked like forgotten sculptures by nature. Once the capital of the mighty Vijayanagara Empire, one of the richest kingdoms of medieval India, Hampi today is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that continues to inspire wonder, awe, and quiet reflection. Hampi is located in the central part of Karnataka in the southern part of India. It is 353 km from Bangalore, and 13 km from Hospet. It is located on top of the rugged terrain and is 467 m above sea level. Tungabhadra River flows through Hampi. It has a tropical climate with hot summers (April-June), and cool winters (October-February). It experiences the southwestern monsoon rains from June to August.

Virupaksha Temple

The temple is so constructed that its main entrance faces east and homes to two courtyards. No sooner you enter the temple, there is a statue of Nandi with three heads. There is a pillared hall in the center which is reckoned as the Ranga Mandapa. In case you are an international traveler, you have to register yourself at a police outpost with all your essential details. Mostly, this temple remains crowded in December; whereas it celebrates its annual festival in February and it is one of the best places to visit in Hampi.

Vijaya Vittala Temple

Vijaya Vittala Temple or Vijaya temple of Hampi amongst the ancient Places to Visit In Hampi worthy of visiting. There are fantastic stone structures all around, and the pillars here appear as if they are playing music. This is true architectural excellence of Hampi as it exemplifies remarkable creativity and the beauty of architecture's imagination. The architecture of this temple dates back to the Dravidian era and reflects South Indian traits. Three towering gateways are encircling the temple along with high compound walls. Maha Mantapa, Stone chariot, musical pillars are amongst the tourist attractions of this Vijaya Vittala Temple.

Lotus Mahal

Lotus Mahal or Kamal Mahal exhibits an explicit architectural design amongst all the other Hampi tourist places. It is so called as it more or less resembles the shape of a lotus flower.

Central dome of this Mahala resembles the bud of lotus and the balcony and passages as petals. The roof illustrates a multi-layered design reflecting an Indo architectural style. There are around 24 pillars to provide excellent support to the arched windows of this palace.

Yantrodharaka Hanuman Temple

Yantrodharaka Hanuman Temple is present at a distance of around 2km from the famous Virupaksha temple. This



temple is a part of a cave standing at the peak of a hill and is dedicated to the Hindu deity Lord Hanuman.

Also, the Tungabhadra river flows through the steps of this hill. Here, you can find Lord Hanuman indulged in a state of deep meditation. Within a distance of five minutes from here, you can find another temple dedicated to Lord Srinivasa. In case you feel hungry, you can approach small stalls nearby selling either mangoes, biscuits or cucumbers.

Hippie Island

Another area which is amongst the most visited Places to Visit In Hampi is Hippie Island, named after its vibrant culture. Virapapur Gadde is a small island located across the Tungabhadra River. Known to be a backpacker's delight, this island is stunning and is popular amongst the locals as well as tourists for its laid back ambience and cosy lodges.

Tourists can spend their time relaxing at one of the many cafes and shacks, like Green Garden Restaurant, Laughing Buddha Café, etc. while gorging on great food, and soaking in the view of beautiful rice paddies. This location is also known to be a centre for people to conduct sunset jam sessions with musical instruments for a fun party-like atmosphere.

Queen's Bath

Reckoned as a large bath of Hampi, Queen's Bath exemplifies the Vijayanagara's architectural excellence. It lies close to one of the most awful places to visit in Hampi- the Royal Enclosure. Although built around 500 years ago, this magnificent structure still remains intact in its construction. It's simplest exterior perfectly blends with an ornate interior to embrace its overall appearance. It a rectangular building admeasuring around 30 square



meters and has a large sunken bath at its center. It may interest you to find arched corridors all around this Royal bath.

Matanga Hill

Out of all the places to visit in Hampi, Matanga Hill is the one which is most talked about. It represents the highest point of Hampi, and it's a picturesque destination for the travel photographers

to capture some aerial vies of Hampi.

North portion of this hill terminates into Tungabhadra river where you have another religious place to visit-Kodanda Rama temple. Towards the south of this hill, you have a twisting valley with a zigzag Turthu canal. Low-lying Northern section exhibits a trekking trail that connects straightaway to Hampi bazaar.

History This Week NOV 21 - NOV 27

NOVEMBER 21

November 21, 1920 - The IRA (Irish Republican Army) shot and killed 14 British soldiers in Dublin in what became known as "Bloody Sunday."

November 21, 1992 - The Anglican Church of Australia voted to allow women to become priests. The largest of the dioceses voted against the bill, however, it still received the required two-thirds approval.



Birthdays - French author and philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778) was born in Paris (as Francois-Marie Arouet). He was an advocate of human rights who published the landmark Philosophical Letters in 1734. Other writings include; Zadig, The Century of Louis XIV, The Russian Empire under Peter the Great, The Philosophical Dictionary, and Essay on Morals.

NOVEMBER 22

November 22, 1935 - Trans-Pacific airmail service began as the China Clipper, a Pan American flying boat, took off from San Francisco, reaching the Philippines 59 hours later. The following year, commercial passenger service began.

November 22, 1943 - The Cairo Conference occurred as President Franklin D. Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and Chinese Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek, met to discuss the war in the Pacific against Japan.

November 22, 1963 - At 12:30 p.m., on Elm Street in downtown Dallas, President John F. Kennedy's motorcade slowly approached a triple underpass. Shots rang out. The President was struck in the back, then in the head. He was rushed to Parkland Memorial Hospital where fifteen doctors tried to save him. At 1 p.m., John Fitzgerald Kennedy, 35th President of the United States, was pronounced dead. On board Air Force One, at 2:38 p.m., Lyndon B. Johnson was sworn in as the 36th President.



November 22, 1975 - Juan Carlos was sworn in as King of Spain, following the

death of General Francisco Franco who had ruled as dictator since 1939.

November 22, 1990 - British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced she would resign after 11 years in office, the longest term of any British Prime Minister in the 20th century.

Birthdays - Charles De Gaulle (1890-1970) was born in Lille, France. He led the Free French against the Nazis during World War II and later became President of France, serving from 1958-69.

Birthdays - Barnstorming aviator Wiley Post (1898-1935) was born in Grand Plain, Texas. He was a self-taught pilot who became an international celebrity in the 1930s and co-authored Around the World in Eight Days. In 1935, Post and his friend Will Rogers began a flight to the Orient, however, the plane crashed near Point Barrow, Alaska, killing both of them.

Birthdays - British composer Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, England. Best known for his operas including Peter Grimes and his choral works A Ceremony of Carols and War Requiem.

NOVEMBER 23

Birthdays - Wild West outlaw Billy the Kid (1859-1881) was born in New York City (probably as Henry McCarty, better known as William H. Bonney). He was a ruthless killer who escaped from jail and a sentence of hanging at age 21. He was recaptured at Stinking Springs, New Mexico, but escaped again. At Fort Sumner, on the night of July 14, 1881, he reportedly asked, "Who's there?" only to be shot twice through the heart by Sheriff Pat Garrett.



Birthdays - Horror film actor Boris Karloff (1887-1969) was born in London (as William Henry Pratt). Best known for appearing in the title role in Frankenstein and The Bride of Frankenstein.

NOVEMBER 24

November 24, 1969 - The U.S. Army announced that Lt. William L. Calley had been charged with premeditated murder in the massacre of civilians in the Vietnamese village of My Lai in March of 1968. Calley was ordered to stand trial by court martial and was later convicted and sentenced to life in prison. However, his sentence was later commuted to three years of house arrest by President Richard Nixon.

November 24, 1989 - In Czechoslovakia, mass demonstrations resulted in the resignation of the entire presidium and secretariat of the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

November 24, 1992 - The U.S. military departed the Philippines after nearly a century of military presence. In 1991, the Philippine Senate had voted to reject a renewal of the lease for the American military base.



November 24, 1998 - Britain's Queen Elizabeth II opened a new session of Parliament by announcing a bill to do away with the centuries-old right of aristocrats to sit in the House of Lords, thereby taking membership and voting rights away from 759 Dukes, Earls and other hereditary nobles with titles dating as far back as the Middle Ages.

Birthdays - Zachary Taylor (1784-1850) the 12th U.S. President was born in Orange County, Virginia. Nicknamed "old rough and ready," he won the presidency as a result of his heroics in the Mexican War of 1846-48. He served as President from March 4, 1849 to July 9, 1850, when he died in the White House after becoming ill.

Birthdays - American composer Scott Joplin (1868-1917) was born in Texarkana, Texas. Best known for his piano rags including Maple Leaf Rag and The Entertainer.

Birthdays - German Field Marshal Erich von Manstein (1887-1973) was born in Berlin. His plan for the German invasion of France in 1940 involved staging a surprise attack through the Ardennes Forest, and was a stunning success. He went on to achieve several important victories over the Russians in the East, but was dismissed by Hitler in 1944 following a series of arguments over military strategy.

Birthdays - Motivational lecturer Dale Carnegie (1888-1955) was born in Maryville, Missouri. Best known for his 1936 book How to Win Friends and Influence People which sold millions of copies and was translated into 29 languages.

NOVEMBER 25

November 25, 1936 - Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, an agreement to collaborate in opposing the spread of Communism.

November 25, 1963 - Three days after his assassination, John F. Kennedy was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.

November 25, 1974 - Britain outlawed the IRA (Irish Republican Army) following the deaths of 21 persons in a pub bombing in Birmingham.

November 25, 1992 - The parliament in Czechoslovakia voted to divide the country into separate Czech and Slovak republics.

November 25, 1995 - By a margin of less than one percent, Ireland voted to legalize divorce, the closest vote in the nation's history.

Birthdays - American financier Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) was born in Dunfermline, Scotland. He emigrated to America, made his fortune in steel, then became a major philanthropist. Among his gifts; over 2,500 libraries, Carnegie

Hall, Carnegie Foundation, and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He once wrote, "The man who dies rich dies disgraced."

Birthdays - American temperance leader Carry Nation (1846-1911) was born in Garrard County, Kentucky. She was famed as a hatchet-wielding smasher of saloons.



Birthdays - Pope John XXIII (1881-1963) was born in Sotto il Monte, Italy (as Angelo Roncalli). He became the 261st Pope of the Roman Catholic Church in 1958 and served until his death in June of 1963. During his reign, he convened the Second Vatican Council which modernized the mass and increased openness to other religions and denominations.

Birthdays - Chilean military leader Augusto Pinochet (1915-2006) was born in Valparaiso, Chile. He overthrew President Salvador Allende in 1973 and remained in power until he lost the elections in 1990.

NOVEMBER 26

November 26, 1940 - During the Holocaust, Nazis began walling off the Jewish Ghetto in Warsaw, sealing in 400,000 inhabitants while denying them adequate food, sanitation and housing.

November 26, 1979 - After an absence of 21 years, the International Olympic Committee voted to re-admit China

November 26, 1992 - British Prime Minister John Major announced Queen Elizabeth II had agreed to pay taxes on her personal income.



November 26, 1998 - In Dublin, Tony Blair became the first British Prime Minister to appear before the Irish Parliament, which had been created 80 years earlier in defiance of the British government.

NOVEMBER 27

Birthdays - Israeli statesman Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952) was born near Pinsk, Byelorussia. He helped bring about the British government's Balfour Declaration, which called for the establishment of a national home for Jews in Palestine.

Birthdays - Czech leader Alexander Dubcek (1921-1992) was born in Uhrovec, Slovakia. In 1968, as first secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, he attempted to achieve "socialism with a human face" and loosen Soviet Russia's control of his country.

2nd Test: 'Pitched battle' on cards as India aim to draw level

GUWAHATI (TIP)

Rishabh Pant will walk into an immensely challenging leadership exam in the absence of Shubman Gill as India face the uphill task of restoring parity against a well-prepared South Africa on a surface that is expected to offer appreciable turn in the second and final Test starting here on Saturday, Nov 22.

An even tougher test looms for head coach Gautam Gambhir, whose often perplexing calls have left the dressing room and think-tank grappling for clarity.

The aura of invincibility while playing at home that accompanied the Indian teams of last three decades has vanished for the current one, which is looking vulnerable.

For the first time in many years, India are going into a home Test match as underdogs and not favourites. Ask any player worth his salt and he would say that it is not a happy place to be.

If the New Zealand spin duo of Ajaz Patel and Mitchell Santner tore the perception of invincibility to shreds in 2024, Simon Harmer and his other colleagues are making a young Indian side look even more vulnerable. The lack of a proper technique to handle spinners is apparent and jarring.

Adding to it, a massive shift in mindset on tracks that implode has made matters worse.

While Gambhir, with support of men who matter in the BCCI, is perfectly safe when it comes to his job, a 0-5 home record against two SENA countries will damage his coaching legacy forever and no amount of ICC Trophies would be enough to paper over that aspect.

And in these trying circumstances, Pant will take up leadership in the absence of Gill. He would know quite well that his batting on a red soil Barsapara track would be as important as his decision-making.

That Gill was never in contention to play the second Test after suffering from neck spasms was always clear but the Indian team management and the BCCI, true to their nature of avoiding clarity till the last minute, denied the inevitable till it became undeniable. According to reliable sources, the 26-year-old has left the city to rest and recuperate.

Sai Sudharsan looks to be the most likely candidate to take Gill's place although whether he bats at No.3 or Washington Sundar is allowed to continue remains to be seen.



When it comes to captaincy experience, Pant led an Indian T20 team against the same opponents a few years back when Rohit Sharma was rested.

But there isn't enough data on his red-ball decision-making skills.

Pant did lead a Delhi side to a Ranji Trophy final back in 2017 losing to eventual champions Vidarbha.

However, what would keep experts more interested is the calls he took on the second evening and third morning of the opening Test in Kolkata.

By stumps on second evening, India had reduced South Africa to 93 for 7 with help of spinners. What left a lot to be desired was Pant's eternal wait before handing the ball to Mohammed Siraj and Jasprit Bumrah on the third morning.

By that time, Temba Bavuma had added the additional 60 runs which became decisive. While Pant, the lively chatter box behind the stumps, is an incentive for the bowlers, it is Pant the skipper, who will have to convince his coach to make some prudent calls when it comes to team selection.

With too many left-handers in the line-up, as many as seven, off-spinner Simon Harmer might just have a field day if the covering of grass that was seen on the track on Thursday, is shaved off by BCCI curators Taposh Chatterjee and Ashish Bhowmick.

India drops to worst FIFA ranking in almost a decade after Bangladesh loss

India's slide in international football has reached another uncomfortable milestone, with the men's national team dropping to 142nd in the newest FIFA rankings released on Wednesday. The fall is the latest sign of a prolonged slump and comes on the back of a winless and forgettable campaign in the AFC Asian Cup 2027 qualifiers.

The lowest point arrived in Dhaka earlier this week, where India were edged out 0-1 by Bangladesh — a result that stunned fans and marked a rare but painful moment in recent history. It was the first time in over two decades that India had been beaten by Bangladesh, making the defeat even harder to digest. Instead of reviving confidence, the match only reinforced the growing sense of disappointment around the team. That loss followed another damaging setback last month in Goa, where India went down 1-2 against Singapore, a result that officially ended their hopes of reaching the Asian Cup. In total, the Blue Tigers went through five qualifying matches without a single victory — a run that has seen them tumble 40 places since December 2023, when they were placed at 102 in the world rankings.

The current position is India's worst since October 2016, when they were ranked 148th globally. Within Asia, India now stands 27th out of the 46 nations featured in the rankings, well behind traditional heavyweights such as Japan, Iran, South Korea, Australia and Uzbekistan.

Greatest return catch: Mitchell Starc's age-defying effort in Ashes 1st Test

PERTH (TIP)

Mitchell Starc has been conjuring up magic in the first Ashes Test in Perth. After rattling England with seven wickets on Day 1, the left-arm quick produced a sensational return catch that dominated headlines on Saturday at Optus Stadium. Starc pulled off a scarcely believable grab to dismiss England opener Zak Crawley for 0, striking in the first over of an innings for the second time in the match.

Starc pitched it full and Crawley, feeling the pressure of still being without a run in the Test, threw his hands at the drive. The ball took an inside edge and popped up.

Starc, completing his follow-through, flung out his left hand and clung on. Losing his balance, he tumbled to the turf but kept the ball securely off the ground.

The bowler's delight was immediate. Starc tossed the ball skywards to signal a clean catch, although the umpires referred it upstairs to be sure. Replays confirmed the catch was legitimate.



Mitchell Starc completed a sensational return catch to dismiss Zak Crawley in Ashes Test in Perth. (AFP Photo)

Social media lit up in praise of the Australian, with many wondering whether it might be one of the greatest return catches ever taken.

The wicket gave Starc his eighth of the match and provided Australia with an early breakthrough after they had conceded a 40-run first-innings deficit.

It completed a pair for Crawley, who had fallen for 0 in the first innings when edging Starc to the slips.

Remarkably, it was also the first time in Test history that the opening partnerships in the first three innings of a match all failed to register a run. Crawley's two ducks bookended another 0 at the top of the order — Australia debutant Jake Weatherald bowled by a blistering Jofra Archer yorker.

At 35, Starc has been asked to shoulder the pace attack following the absences of captain Pat Cummins and veteran Josh Hazlewood. The senior seamer, who retired from T20Is to prioritise Test cricket, responded superbly, tearing through England on Day 1. He reached 100 Ashes wickets and recorded the second-best innings figures by an Australian fast bowler in an Ashes Test.

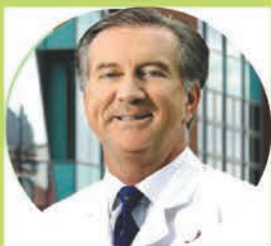
Despite Starc's seven-wicket haul that bowled England out for 172, the visitors secured a 30-run lead as Australia's batting faltered. Ben Stokes claimed five wickets, while Brydon Carse and Jofra Archer shared the remaining five to dismiss Australia for 132.



An Eye Institute in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh combating avoidable blindness in children.

On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MD. I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautiful facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses, and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion.

Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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