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Israeli Cabinet approves 'outline' of deal to release hostages held by Hamas

The sides appeared closer than they have been in months to ending a war that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, reduced much of Gaza to rubble, brought famine to parts of the territory and left dozens of hostages, living and dead, in Gaza



People in Israel (Left) and Gaza celebrate after the news that Hamas has accepted the terms of the ceasefire deal. -Photo credit: AFP

OCTOBER 10, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): Israel's Cabinet early on Friday, October 9, 2025, approved President Donald Trump's plan for a ceasefire in the Gaza Strip and the release of all the remaining hostages held by Hamas, a key step toward ending a ruinous two-year war that has destabilized the Middle East, AP reports.

A brief statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the Cabinet approved the "outline" of a deal to release the hostages, without mentioning other aspects of the plan that are more controversial.

The broader ceasefire plan included many unanswered questions, such as whether and how Hamas will disarm and who will govern Gaza. But the sides appeared closer than they have been in

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Beyond proposed \$100,000 mandatory filing US



President Donald Trump displays a signed executive order on gold card visa in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, September 19, 2025.

File photo / Reuters

OCTOBER 10, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): The Donald Trump administration is moving forward with plans to significantly overhaul the H-1B visa programme, aiming to impose stricter rules on how employers can use the visa and who qualifies for it.

Beyond the proposed \$100,000 mandatory filing fee, new immigration restrictions are also being considered.

The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has listed a proposed rule in its regulatory agenda titled "Reforming the H-1B Nonimmigrant Visa Classification Program." The proposal includes a range of changes, such as:

Reviewing eligibility for cap exemptions

Increased scrutiny of employers who have violated programme rules

Tighter regulations on third-party placements

Enhanced oversight and compliance mechanisms

According to the DHS, these reforms aim to "improve the integrity of the H-1B program and better protect US workers' wages and working conditions." The proposed rule is expected to be published

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Cuomo climbs 10% in new poll, but still trails Mamdani after Adams' NYC mayoral race exit

OCTOBER 9, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): Mayor Adams' exit from this year's race for City Hall is benefitting independent candidate Andrew Cuomo, though the ex-governor still trails Democratic front-runner Zohran Mamdani by double digits, according to a new poll released Thursday, October 9, says Daily News.

The Quinnipiac University poll, the first major survey to analyze the state of the mayoral race since Adams' Sept. 28 campaign exit, found Cuomo pulling 33% support among likely New York City voters. That's up from the 23% Cuomo netted in a Quinnipiac survey from early September, when Adams was still in the race and polling at 12%.

Still, Cuomo, who resigned as governor in 2021 amid sexual and professional misconduct accusations he now denies, remains well behind Mamdani, the Democratic mayoral nominee who scored 46% support in the



From left, Mayor Eric Adams, Zohran Mamdani and Andrew Cuomo.

- Credit : Barry Williams / New York Daily News latest Quinnipiac poll, up one point from the September survey.

"Andrew Cuomo picked up the bulk of Adams' supporters cutting into Zohran Mamdani's lead, but Mamdani's frontrunner status by double digits stays intact," said Mary Snow, an assistant polling director at Quinnipiac.

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Maria Corina Machado : 2025 Nobel Peace Prize winner -File photo

Venezuela's Maria Corina Machado wins 2025 Nobel Peace Prize

OCTOBER 10, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): Reuters reports that Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado has won the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday, Oct 10, for promoting democratic rights in her country and her struggle to achieve a transition to democracy, the Norwegian Nobel Committee said.

"When authoritarians seize power, it is crucial to recognize courageous defenders of freedom who rise and resist," it said in its citation.

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COMMENT

Between Hope and History: The Elusive Promise of Peace in Gaza

By Indrajit Saluja



Hope springs eternal in human breast. Palestinians gathered at the Nuseirat refugee camp celebrate with Palestinian flags after the announcement of the ceasefire agreement in Gaza on October 09, 2025

Credit: Moiz Salhi/Anadolu

It is with cautious hope that we welcome the announcement of the first phase of a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Hamas, brokered under the auspices of U.S. President Donald Trump. After years of bloodshed, displacement, and renewed cycles of violence, any pause in hostilities is worth acknowledging-even if only as a tentative crack in a seemingly unbreakable pattern of conflict.

A HISTORY OF CEASEFIRES AND THEIR BETRAYALS

The Middle East has seen too many ceasefires, truces, and "temporary pauses" - each promising relief, each eventually unraveling. In the recent Gaza wars, ceasefires reached in 2014, 2018, and more recently in the cycles of 2023-2025 have repeatedly failed to hold. Each time, one side or the other-often both-has accused the counterpart of violations, triggering renewed violence. The most recent ceasefire efforts earlier in 2025 illustrate how fragile the peace can be: the 60-day truce proposals faltered over disagreements about what comes next, the terms of withdrawal, disarmament, and hostage release.

Moreover, critics have accused previous U.S. brokers (including the current one) of tacitly accepting Israeli escape clauses or even endorsing renewed operations when the truce seemed inconvenient.

Thus, though we greet today's announcement with relief, we cannot gloss over the long record of betrayal, backtracking, and the "ceasefire trap." The past teaches that a ceasefire is the easy part; making it durable, equitable, and a foundation for real peace is exceedingly hard.

THE NEW PEACE PLAN: PROMISE OR POLITICAL THEATER?

Reportedly, this new initiative involves a 20-point peace plan (or "Gaza peace plan") that includes the immediate cessation of hostilities, the release of all Israeli hostages, the withdrawal of Israeli troops to agreed lines, and the entry of humanitarian aid.

Also on the table is a transitional governance mechanism for Gaza, disarmament of Hamas, and the prospect of reconstruction under international supervision.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India was among the first world leaders to welcome the breakthrough, praising the "first phase" of the plan and expressing hope it might pave the way for lasting peace.

His relatively enthusiastic response stands in contrast with the measured or muted reactions of many Western and United Nations actors.

Yet we must ask: is this new scheme a genuine breakthrough, or a polished political gambit? Donald Trump has long sought a signature foreign-policy achievement-something that would elevate his mantle as a peacemaker. In a region where decades of bloodshed has defied all diplomatic resets, the temptation to shape an agreement that can be packaged and proclaimed as a "historic success" is strong.

It would be naïve to ignore that both Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu might prefer a façade of peace over the messy, uncertain work of real reconciliation. Peace would imply

compromises: territorial concessions, recognition of rights, guarantees for Palestinian self-rule. Historically, the Israeli leadership has shown far greater appetite for military superiority and security control than for relinquishing sovereignty or permitting strong rival institutions. If that remains unchanged, the so-called peace plan may be better understood as a public relations maneuver than a genuine roadmap.

WHY IS SO MUCH SKEPTICISM JUSTIFIED?**AMBIGUOUS ENFORCEMENT AND EXIT CLAUSES**

Many prior truce agreements contained loopholes-clauses permitting reprisals if "security conditions" were alleged, or threshold standards so vague they invite interpretation. Without strong international guarantors and mechanisms to enforce violations, the ceasefire is always at risk of collapse.

DISARMAMENT AND POLITICAL LEGITIMACY

The question of how (and whether) Hamas will disarm or transform into a purely political actor remains central and unresolved. If Hamas remains militarized or clandestine, the security argument used by Israel to re-enter Gaza can always be resurrected. A peace plan that fails to address the political legitimacy and participatory role of Palestinians is dangerously incomplete.

ABSENCE OF BROADER REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Ceasefires are local pacts; durable peace requires regional embedding, involving Egypt, Jordan, the Arab states, the Palestinians in the West Bank, and even global powers. Without that integration, any accord may wither in isolation.

UNRESOLVED FINAL STATUS QUESTIONS

Sovereignty, boundaries, status of Jerusalem, refugee return or compensation, control of Gaza's borders, and water rights - these issues remain untouched or deferred. A ceasefire that postpones them indefinitely may simply defuse the flames temporarily, without resolving the root causes.

ASYMMETRY IN POWER AND INCENTIVES

In this conflict, the stronger party (Israel, supported by the U.S.) retains a large margin of coercive capability. The weaker party (Hamas/Gaza) lacks full external backing. In many past ceasefires, the stronger side has exploited this asymmetry - quietly rearming, building underground assets, or slowly restoring pressure. Any peace that fails to balance power will remain vulnerable to relapse.

A MOMENT WORTH HONORING, BUT NO GUARANTEE

So yes - we welcome the fact that guns may fall silent, that hostages may be freed, that wounded civilians may taste relief, even if fleeting. We wish this ceasefire every chance to succeed. The suffering of Palestinian and Israeli civilians alike, the mountains of grief and displacement, cry out for an end to violence.

Yet as history shows, only time will tell whether this moment becomes a turning point or a footnote. The promise of peace must be tested by months, years, not by press releases alone.

We have a right - indeed a duty - to be skeptical. The silence from the United Nations (beyond tepid statements) is notable; many pro-U.S. nations are refraining from assertive commentary. The regional actors most proximate to the conflict are hedging their tone. All of this suggests that powerful interests are watching, waiting, and may yet undercut an accord.

Let us pray that this initiative endures, that the infrastructure of peace is built, that displaced families return, that children breathe without fear; that dialogue replaces bombs. But let us also hold leaders to their promises, demand accountability, and remember that in this region, peace has often been promised and rarely delivered.

In the end, it is not declarations but lived justice, not exhibits of diplomacy but the daily freedoms of ordinary people, that will show whether this ceasefire was history's quiet hinge - or just another broken pause in a tragic, unending struggle.

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HINDI DIWAS 2025 COMMEMORATED AT THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS



Leader of the Indian Parliamentary delegation, Shri P. P. Chaudhary remarked that Hindi is not just a language; it symbolizes India's spirit, identity, and unity.



Permanent Representative of India, Ambassador P. Harish stressed India's rich multilingual tradition and reiterated that India was one of the leading voices to support multilingualism in the UN

OCTOBER 9, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations (UN), New York organized the annual commemoration of Hindi Diwas at the UNHQ on 09 October 2025. The event was attended by the visiting delegation of Members of Parliament (MPs) from India, Permanent Representatives (PR), Deputy Permanent Representatives (DPR) and diplomats of Girmitya and friendly countries and several UN personnel.

Speaking at the event, leader of the Parliamentary delegation, Shri P. P. Chaudhary remarked that Hindi is not just a language; it symbolizes India's spirit, identity, and unity. Outlining

Hindi's appeal across different countries and regions, he mentioned that the language is spoken by nearly 600 million people. Further, he also noted the instrumental role of Hindi in India's freedom struggle and outlined the current efforts undertaken by the Government of India to popularize the language in different parts of the globe.

PR of India, Ambassador P. Harish highlighted that Hindi Diwas is celebrated to commemorate adoption of Hindi as the official language of India, besides English. He stressed India's rich multilingual tradition and reiterated that India was one of the leading voices to support multilingualism in the UN. He recalled that India was also a co-

sponsor of previous Resolutions on this subject. As regards the status of Hindi as a non-official language in the UN, India is popularizing its use, including through financial support for the Hindi@UN project.

PR of Nepal, Ambassador Lok Bahadur Thapa highlighted the popularity of Hindi in his country and described its role in strengthening the social, cultural and linguistic linkages between the countries. PR of Suriname, Ambassador Sunil Algram Sitaldin mentioned that Hindi has been preserved for five generations in his country. In addition, he spoke about the seamless blending of Hindi into the local

culture in his country.

PR of Mauritius, Ambassador Milan Meetarbhan reiterated the deep cultural and diaspora connection between the two countries and the central role of Hindi on these fronts. PR of Andorra, Ambassador Joan Rovina emphasized that India is a strong partner in efforts related to multilingualism in the UN. Both India and Andorra are jointly working together in this regard under the umbrella of Group of Friends on multilingualism.

PR of Trinidad and Tobago, Ambassador Neil Parsan described Hindi as being not just a language, but the voice of a nation; it is poetry, it is history and it is an emotion.

DPR of Guyana, Ms. Trishala Simantini Persaud outlined the deep imprint of Hindi on the daily lives of Guyanese people. DPR of Burundi Mr. Landry Sibomana, who was also an ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) alumnus, fondly recalled his days in India, which he described as his 'second home'. Speaking in Hindi, Mr. Sibomana highlighted that he was proficient in various Indian languages. DPR of Micronesia, Ms. Universe Lawrence projected the strong connections between her country and India.

Director, UN Department of Global Communications, Ms. Nanette Braun said that Hindi is a priority in UN's multilingual endeavors.

MPs from India felicitated winners of various Hindi competitions organized by the Permanent Mission of India and handed over certificates on the occasion.

The Parliamentary delegation led by Shri P.P. Chaudhary is visiting New York from 08-14 October 2025. Other members of the delegation are Shri N.K. Premachandran, Dr. Nishikant Dubey, Smt. Poonam Ben Maadam, Shri Vivek Tankha, Captain Brijesh Chowta, Shri Gaddam Vamsi Krishna, Shri Mathukumilli Sribharat, Shri Rajeev Rai, Smt. S. Phangnon Konyak, Dr. Medha Vishram Kulkarni and Shri Ujjwal Deorao Nikam.



Attendees included the visiting delegation of Members of Parliament (MPs) from India, Permanent Representatives (PR), Deputy Permanent Representatives (DPR) and diplomats of Girmitya and friendly countries and several UN personnel.

Indian origin girl rescued from Muscat

MP Balbir Singh Seechewal's efforts expose human trafficking networks in Cambodia, Myanmar

OCTOBER 8, 2025

NEW YORK / CHANDIGARH (TIP): A young girl from Jalandhar district, who had gone to Oman dreaming of improving her family's financial condition, endured months of exploitation before being rescued and brought home safely by the intervention of MP Sant Balbir Singh Seechewal. Her painful account has shed light on the alarming rise of human trafficking networks exploiting Indians abroad.

The girl, who had gone to Muscat on June 15, on the assurance of a friend, said she realized soon after arrival that she had fallen prey to a fraudulent recruitment racket. She was confined to the four walls of an office-like building, where more than 10 other Indian women were being held in deplorable condition. "They made us work for 12 hours a day without rest and anyone who made even a small mistake was mercilessly beaten up," she recounted.

Food was scarce and the victim revealed she survived for an entire month on nothing but water. "It was like living in hell," she said, adding that her passport and mobile phone were confiscated immediately upon arrival, leaving her with no way to contact her family. She further revealed that many women were deceived with promises of high-paying jobs, only to be coerced into illegal or immoral activities after their visas expired. Those who resisted were subjected to severe physical and mental abuse.

The girl's mother reached out to Seechewal, who



MP Balbir Singh Seechewal with victim(left) and a woman

promptly took up the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Indian Embassy in Oman. After weeks of coordinated efforts, she was finally rescued and safely repatriated to India.

Speaking on the incident, Seechewal expressed concern over the growing menace of human trafficking and urged people to be cautious before accepting job offers abroad. "Before travelling to Gulf or other foreign countries, always check whether the visa is a legitimate work visa or a tourist visa," he said, warning that several agents send unsuspecting women abroad on tourist visas, leading to exploitation once they reach their destination.

In a related revelation, a youth from Jalandhar, who was recently rescued from Cambodia through Sant Seechewal's efforts, disclosed that Indians there are being forced into illegal cyber-related activities. He stated that agents lure young men with promises of high-salary jobs in Thailand, but then sell them to companies in Cambodia, where they are made to carry out cyber frauds. "Those who refuse are beaten up brutally," the youth reported.

Seechewal's humanitarian efforts have previously resulted in the safe return of four Indian youths from Myanmar, who had similarly fallen victim to transnational trafficking and fraud networks.

Seechewal emphasized that while poverty and unemployment push many young people to seek opportunities overseas, it is crucial for the government to tighten regulation of travel and recruitment agents to prevent such tragedies. "We must protect our youth from being exploited by these criminal syndicates operating under the guise of foreign employment," he said.

The Muscat survivor's return stands as both a personal triumph and a grim reminder of the dark underbelly of human trafficking that continues to trap vulnerable Indians abroad. Thanks to timely intervention and cross-border cooperation, another life has been saved - but the growing pattern of exploitation calls for urgent and coordinated action at both national and international levels.

2 Indian tourists sentenced to jail for robbing, assaulting sex workers in Singapore hotels



Photo for representational purpose only.

iStock

OCTOBER 4, 2025

SINGAPORE (TIP): Two men from India, accused of robbing and assaulting two sex workers in hotel rooms while holidaying in Singapore, were each sentenced to five years and one month in prison, along with 12 strokes of the cane on Friday, October 3.

Arokkiyasami Daison, 23, and Rajendran Mayilarasan, 27, pleaded guilty to voluntarily causing hurt while robbing the victims, reported The Straits Times.

The court heard that Arokkiyasami and Rajendran arrived in Singapore from India on April 24 for a vacation. Two days later, while walking in the Little India area, an unknown man approached them and asked if they were interested in hiring prostitutes for sexual services.

The man then provided them with the contact information for two women before leaving.

Arokkiya told Rajendran that they needed money and suggested they contact the women and rob them in a hotel room, to which Rajendran

agreed. They arranged to meet one of the women in a hotel room around 6 pm that day.

Once inside the room, they tied the victim's hands and legs with clothing and slapped her. They robbed her of her jewelry, SGD 2,000 in cash, her passport, and her bank cards.

Later that night, around 11 pm, they set up a meeting with the second woman at another hotel. When she arrived, they dragged her by her arms to rob her, and Rajendran covered her mouth to prevent her from screaming.

They stole SGD 800 in cash, two mobile phones, and her passport, threatening her not to leave the room until they returned.

The actions of Arokkiyasami and Rajendran were exposed when the second victim confided in another man the following day, prompting the police to be called.

During mitigation, both men, who were unrepresented, pleaded with the judge for leniency and a lighter sentence.

Arokkiyasami, speaking through an interpreter, stated, "My father passed away last year. I have three sisters, one of whom is married, and we have no money. That is why we did this."

Rajendran added, "My wife and child are alone in India, and they are financially suffering." Those who voluntarily cause injury during a robbery can be sentenced to between five and 20 years in prison and face a minimum of 12 strokes of the cane, according to the report by the Singapore daily.

Indian dental student from Hyderabad shot dead at gas station in Dallas

The victim, Chandrashekar Pole, had completed BDS in India before moving to Dallas for further studies

OCTOBER 4, 2025

DALLAS (TIP): A 27-year-old Indian student was shot dead at a gas station in the US state of Texas during an alleged robbery, authorities said on Saturday, October 4.

Chandrashekar Pole, who hailed from Hyderabad, was reportedly working part-time at the gas station in Dallas, where the shooting occurred on Friday, October 3. He was pursuing a master's in data Analytics at the University of North Texas, Denton.

The Dallas Police Department said an investigation is ongoing in the case.

"We are actively investigating the circumstances surrounding this tragic incident and working to bring clarity to the case," a police spokesperson said.

The Dallas County Medical Examiner's Office is conducting a post-mortem examination. It is yet to release the official cause of death or issue a death certificate, a necessary document before the body can be released for repatriation.

Local media reported that the shooting occurred during a robbery.

The Consulate General of India (CGI) in Houston, which oversees Texas and nearby states, is coordinating with local authorities and the victim's family.

"We are providing all possible consular assistance to the family, including facilitating communication with local authorities and expediting necessary paperwork," a CGI official said.

The investigation is ongoing, and the consulate has assured continued support to the family during this difficult time.



Chandrashekar Pole

Photo: X/@BRSHarish

Repatriation of mortal remains requires completion of legal formalities, including issuance of a death certificate and No Objection Certificates from the consulate.

The incident has brought attention to safety concerns for international students working part-time jobs in the US, especially in roles that may expose them to risks during late hours.

Past incidents involving Indian students in the US, including shootings and unexplained deaths, have underscored safety concerns and the complexities involved in repatriation.

Cases such as the killings of Sai Teja Nukarapu in Chicago and Praveen Kumar in Wisconsin have seen Indian consulates actively assisting families, often after lengthy legal and bureaucratic processes.

In Hyderabad, from where Chandrashekar Pole hailed, BRS MLA T Harish Rao said he and other party leaders visited the bereaved family here and offered condolences.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian origin Jyoti Gondek, Calgary's Mayor, seeks re-election viewing growing power of Punjabi vote

OCTOBER 8, 2025

CALGARY (TIP): Jyoti Gondek, Calgary's first female mayor of Punjabi origin, is seeking re-election as Calgary Mayor, with the election scheduled for October 20.

Gondek, who made history in 2021 by becoming the first woman to lead the city, is now vying for a second term with a campaign focused on public safety, economic revitalization, and balanced growth across Calgary's communities.

Gondek's re-election platform emphasizes restoring downtown vibrancy, expanding housing affordability, and addressing concerns about addiction and safety. She has pledged to continue collaborations with provincial and federal governments to secure Calgary's share of infrastructure funding while focusing on long-term sustainability.

Her campaign speeches have underlined her commitment to making Calgary a safer, more inclusive, and future-ready city. Born Prabhjote Kaur Grewal to Punjabi parents in London and raised in Canada, Jyoti Gondek's journey to City Hall embodies the story of immigrant determination and multicultural success. Before becoming mayor, she represented Ward 3 as a councilor from 2017 to 2021 and worked in academia and consulting.

Her Punjabi heritage and deep community engagement have made her a familiar and respected figure among Calgary's diverse population. This year's municipal elections also reflect the growing influence of Calgary's Punjabi community, with as many as seven Punjabi-origin candidates contesting city council seats.

The community, which has steadily increased its civic



Jyoti Gondek

-Photo/X

participation, is now emerging as a powerful voice in local politics. Among the notable candidates are Reet Mushiana and Raj Dhaliwal from Ward 5, both active community figures with strong local ties.

They are joined by Harinder (Harry) Singh Purba, Gurpreet Dhillon, Tarlochan Singh Sidhu, Taran Dhillon, and Jaspriya Johal, who are contesting across different wards. Many of these candidates have focused their campaigns on improving local infrastructure, ensuring equitable city services, and creating safer, more vibrant neighborhoods.

Political observers note that Ward 5 and Ward 10, which have significant South Asian populations, will be among the most closely watched battlegrounds.

A strong showing by Punjabi-origin candidates could mark a new chapter in Calgary's civic landscape, showcasing the growing representation of immigrants in the city's decision-making bodies.

The Punjabi community's engagement in Calgary politics mirrors its rising participation at the federal and provincial levels, where several Punjabi-origin leaders have already made their mark. Analysts believe this expanding political presence reflects both the community's demographic strength and its growing confidence in shaping policy conversations within the city.

While the mayoral race remains tightly contested, with recent polls showing Gondek among the frontrunners, the final outcome is expected to hinge on voter turnout and key issues like public safety, taxes, and city planning. For Gondek, a victory would reaffirm her leadership and strengthen her vision of a progressive, inclusive Calgary.

For the Punjabi community, these elections represent not only a chance for broader representation but also a milestone in their ongoing journey of civic empowerment in Canada's energy capital. While another prominent Punjabi figure and sitting Edmonton Mayor Amarjeet Sohi is not seeking re-election for this upcoming term.

In 2025, he announced a return to federal politics, saying that he would run as the Liberal candidate in Edmonton Southeast; he was defeated by Conservative candidate Jagsharan Singh Mahal. Following his loss, Sohi announced that he would not seek re-election as mayor in the 2025 municipal election.

(Source: Live Matches)

Indian origin Veterinarian's book exposes racism in Canada's veterinary industry

The book is a gripping account of resilience, justice and the fight for equity in the face of institutional bias

OCTOBER 9, 2025

VANCOUVER (TIP): An Indian-origin veterinarian in Canada has penned a book on racism in Canada.

In the memoir, titled 'Underdog: A Veterinarian's Fight Against Racism and Injustice', Dr Hakam Singh Bhullar, hailing from Sangrur (Punjab), chronicles his 13-year battle against systemic racism in Canada's veterinary profession.

The book is a gripping account of resilience, justice and the fight for equity in the face of institutional bias.

Dr Bhullar's journey began in 1995 when he opened Vancouver's first low-cost animal clinic, a groundbreaking initiative to make veterinary care accessible to families in need, the homeless, and animal welfare groups. As the first Indo-Canadian veterinarian to launch such a venture, he also mentored new immigrant veterinarians, challenging the profit-driven norms of the industry. However, his success drew fierce opposition from the British Columbia Veterinary Medical Association (BCVMA), which unleashed a campaign of discriminatory licensing barriers, surprise inspections, and relentless complaints.



Dr Hakam Singh Bhullar

What followed was the longest human rights trial in Canadian history, exposing deep-seated racism within the veterinary profession. Dr. Bhullar's fight culminated in a landmark ruling and a rare public apology from the BCVMA. "This book is not just about my story-it's about the power

of persistence, the importance of community, and the belief that justice can prevail, even when the odds are stacked against you," Dr Bhullar said.

"Underdog" reveals shocking details, including surveillance footage capturing a senior BCVMA official stating, "Gone are the days when you can go there with a torch and burn the place down. Quicker way." The book serves as a reminder of how institutional bias can weaponize systems of power to suppress those advocating for equity.

Dr. Bhullar told The Tribune that more than a memoir, "Underdog" is a call to action, urging readers to confront systemic inequities and champion fairness. As racial disparities continue to challenge societies across North America, Dr. Bhullar's story offers both a warning and a beacon of hope.

Dr. Hakam Singh Bhullar, an Indo-Canadian veterinarian, was born in the

Indian man killed outside his motel in Pennsylvania by guest staying there with woman, child for 2 weeks

The gunman, identified as 37-year-old Stanley Eugene West, was a guest at the motel and had been staying there for about two weeks with a woman and a child

OCTOBER 8, 2025

PENNSYLVANIA (TIP): Rakesh Ehagaban, a 51-year-old motel owner of Indian origin, was shot dead on Friday in Pennsylvania after he stepped out to investigate a disturbance outside his property.

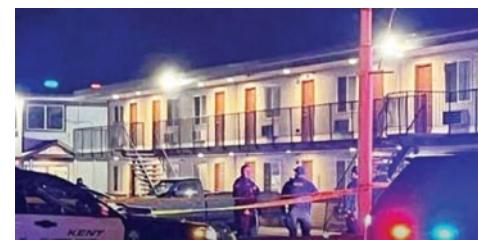
The incident occurred when Ehagaban reportedly asked the suspect, "Are you alright, bud?" - prompting the man to fatally shoot him in the head.

The gunman, identified as 37-year-old Stanley Eugene West, was a guest at the motel and had been staying there for about two weeks with a woman and a child.

Prior to Ehagaban's death, West allegedly shot a woman - believed to be his partner - in the neck while she was sitting in a car with a child in the parking lot. Despite her injuries, the woman managed to drive to a nearby auto repair shop, where she was found and rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

Suspect fled, later engaged police in shootout

After killing Ehagaban, West reportedly walked to a nearby U-Haul van and drove away. He was later tracked down by police to the East Hills



Indian-American motel owner fatally shot by guest in Pennsylvania

Photo: @ddmetronews/X

neighborhood of Pittsburgh. A shootout followed, during which a Pittsburgh detective was injured. West was also wounded and taken into custody.

West now faces multiple charges, including criminal homicide, attempted homicide, and reckless endangerment. Police are continuing their investigation and reviewing surveillance footage.

This deadly attack comes less than a month after another Indian-origin motel manager was killed in Texas. The victim was reportedly beheaded during a dispute over a washing machine. The attacker, a co-worker, was arrested and charged with capital murder.

Kerala Center to honor seven Indian American Malayalees at its 33rd Annual Award Ceremony

OCTOBER 9, 2025

NEW YORK (TIP): The Indian American Kerala Cultural and Civic Center, Inc. (The Kerala Center) will honor seven Indian American Malayalees for their outstanding achievements in their fields of specialization and for their service to the society, at its 33rd Annual Awards Dinner to be held on October 25, 2025. Public officials and leaders from the USA and India are expected to attend this prestigious event.

"The Kerala Center has been honoring outstanding achievers since 1992. Every year we invite nominations, and the Award Committee makes a unanimous choice for a candidate in a category to receive the award, and this year is no different from previous years in terms of their achievements," said Dr. Thomas Abraham, Kerala Center's Trustee Board Chairman and Award Committee Member.

"Kerala Center is very happy to honor American Malayalees who excel in their professions and who work for social progress -- their examples should be an inspiration for others," said Dr. Madhu



Kerala Center 2025 Keynote Speaker and Awardees: Top Row: From L. to R. Keynote Speaker Dr. Suresh U. Kumar, Awardees Diya Mathew Esq., Inspector Shibu Madhu, Joharath Kutty. Bottom Row: Dr. Nandini Menon, Koshy O. Thomas, Dr. Priscilla Samuel and Jayan Varghese.

Bhaskaran, Chairman of the Board and Award Committee.

This year's honorees and their categories of recognition are: Inspector Shibu Madhu - Govt. and Public Service; Diya Mathews - Legal Service; Priscilla Samuel - Nursing; Jayan Varghese - Pravasi Malayalam Literature; Koshy O.

Thomas - Community Service; Nandini Menon - Education; and Joharath Kutty - Engineering.

The keynote speaker is Dr. Suresh U. Kumar, a 5 x INC 500 ranked serial entrepreneur, professor of entrepreneurship at New Jersey Institute of Technology, ex-President of TIE-New Jersey, member NJ-India

commission and author of Amazon #1 Bestselling novel, "The Girl in Scarlet Hijab."

The awardees will be honored on Saturday, October 25, 2025, at 5:30 PM at the Kerala Center, 1824 Fairfax St., Elmont, New York. There will be variety entertainments and a fabulous dinner for the evening.

Other members of the Award Committee are: Varkey Abraham, Daisy P. Stephen and Marilyn George.

Kerala Center President Alex K. Esthappan said that the Center has recognized over 190 American Malayalees in the last 32 years and it is great to see them continue to rise higher in their careers and serve the society. All are invited to join this Annual Awards Dinner. Please contact the Kerala Center to reserve your seats at: 516-358-2000 or at email: kc@keralacenterny.com.

For further information, please contact: Alex Esthappan, President, 516 503 9387, Raju Thomas, General Secretary, 516 434 0669, G. Mathai, Program Chair, 516 816 4915.

Amani Harris and Bill Kawaka Named 2025 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholars

The Middlesex College students and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society members were selected based on leadership potential and will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship

OCTOBER 6, 2025

MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ (TIP): Middlesex College students Amani Harris of North Brunswick and Bill Kawaka of Sayreville have been named 2025 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholars, each receiving a \$1,000 scholarship as well as the honor of this prestigious title.

The Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholarship Program helps new Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society members afford educational expenses while enrolled in associate degree programs. Phi Theta Kappa is the first honor society recognizing the academic achievement of students at associate degree-granting colleges, comprising more than 4.4 million members across 11 countries. Harris and Kawaka were chosen for this award out of the over 600 applications received, with a total of \$220,000 being awarded through the program this year.

"I am honored to receive this award, especially as a full-time student and full-time worker," said Harris. "Balancing these responsibilities can be overwhelming, especially while adjusting to inflation and the responsibilities of young adulthood."

Harris is studying business administration, with the hope to one day own her own business. Besides being a Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, Harris is involved with the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) and serves as secretary for the Justice Reform Club. She also has a deep connection to the College through her sister, last year's Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar and the Class of 2024 valedictorian, Alexandra



Amani Harris and Bill Kawaka

Badaway.

Kawaka will graduate in 2026 with a degree in computer science.

"Receiving the Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholarship has meant so much to me, not only for the financial assistance but for the confidence it has given me," said Kawaka. "It has shifted my mindset, showing me that previously unattainable goals are very much within reach."

Kawaka is involved in several programs on campus including EOF, the National Society of Leadership and Success, and Computer Science Club, where he serves as vice president. In 2024, Kawaka was awarded the Dr. Fannie Lockhart Gordon Award, named after the first Black counselor in the EOF program at Middlesex College.

The funds provided by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation not only aid in college completion but also give students the opportunity to engage in Society programs and develop leadership skills to become future leaders in their communities.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

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Main Feature in Diwali special: Diwali and the psychology of why we crave illumination

Emmy-Nominated Film Maker Tirlok Malik Brings Bharat to Life at New York's Grand Diwali Celebrations

October 7, 2015

NEW YORK (TIP): Emmy-nominated filmmaker, actor, and Happy Life Yoga speaker Tirlok Malik will once again bring his artistry and passion to the stage this Diwali season, portraying Bharat in two of the most prestigious celebrations in New York-the AIA Diwali Festival at Overlook Beach, Long Island and the Times Square Diwali Celebrations.

Malik has been playing Bharat under the direction and choreography of Pandit S.N. Charkha, Founder of the East-West School of Dance and disciple of Padma Vibhushan Pandit Birju Maharaj, for many years, including seven consecutive years at the Museum of Metropolitan Art's annual Diwali celebrations in New York to packed audiences. "Pandit Charkha ji has dedicated his life to dance and the arts. To be under his direction is a blessing. When I perform Bharat, I feel completely immersed, almost in a trance, especially during the coronation scene of Lord Rama," says Malik.

For Malik, Bharat-the devoted brother of Lord Rama in the Ramayana-represents the highest ideals of love, respect, devotion, and sacrifice. "To portray Bharat is not just acting; it is stepping into values that have timeless relevance," he explains.



Emmy-nominated filmmaker, actor, and Happy Life Yoga speaker Tirlok Malik

The AIA Diwali Festival, now in its 38th year, is the oldest and most respected celebration of its kind in America, led this year by President Bina Kothari and National President Gobind Munjal. The festivities at Overlook Beach will feature fireworks, music, and a spectacular dance drama directed by Pandit Charkha with Malik as Bharat.

The celebrations will continue with the Times Square Diwali Festival, marking its 10th year, created and led by Neeta Bhasin, who has given Diwali a global stage at the very heart of New York City. "What Neeta Bhasin ji has



Tirlok Malik as Bharat (third from the left), and the Ramayana Team with Director-Choreographer Pandit S.N. Charkha

achieved is remarkable-she has made Diwali a part of the world's most iconic square. Performing Ramayana at Times Square is a historic experience, and it sends a powerful message about the universality of our traditions," says Malik.

For Malik, the essence of these performances is to bring the message

of the Ramayana to audiences in America. "In today's world, the values that Ramayana represents are needed more than ever. By bringing these stories to New York audiences, we are not just celebrating Diwali-we are reminding ourselves and our children of the values that sustain humanity."

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The course ahead for Trump's Gaza ceasefire plan

The plan can be seen in two ways - as a statement of intentions on how to end the Gaza war, or an instrument of surrender



By T.S. Tirumurti

Shortly before the second anniversary of Hamas's attack on Israel (October 7, 2023), United States President Donald Trump unveiled his 20-point plan for a Gaza ceasefire. Hamas has reacted positively but has indicated that it will need to renegotiate parts of the plan. This has set the cat among the pigeons. Mr. Trump has hailed this as an opportunity to bring peace to West Asia while Israel is unhappy with the conditions attached to Hamas' acceptance. Skepticism over progress on the plan is understandable given what happened in January this year when the ceasefire that was negotiated by U.S. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff, which was detailed, sequenced and agreed to by both sides, was torn up unilaterally by Israel after the first step. But this time around, all the major players, including Mr. Trump, want this plan to succeed as a last chance for peace in Gaza - except perhaps the Israel government.

IN A NUTSHELL

The 20 points include everything that the U.S. would like to see happen in Gaza in the foreseeable future; and, no, the Palestinian state is not one of them. The plan is at best a statement of intentions on how to end the Gaza war and bring normalcy to Palestinians in their destroyed land - and at worst, an instrument of surrender.

Except for one solitary timeline, where Israeli hostages would be released by Hamas within 72 hours of the ceasefire, everything else needs fleshing out to become a road map. The details of what should be done by the Palestinian side are spelt out - hostages (release within 72 hours); Hamas (disarm and/or quit Gaza); Palestinian Authority (reform or perish); governance of Gaza (deradicalization, demilitarization and technocrats' rule under an International Board of Peace headed by Mr. Trump), and security (international destabilization force in Gaza). However, there are a few details of Israeli obligations (when does fighting stop), territory (how much will remain with Israel and till what time), and the future role of the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) (no timelines for withdrawal from Gaza). Of course, the plan is silent on the West Bank.

The plan is designed to capitalize on the war fatigue of the Palestinians and pressure Hamas. Whether one agrees with its content or not, it covers aspects relating to security, economic development, governance and international involvement. Ethnic cleansing of Gaza has been ruled out. An international stabilization force could be a positive factor if the mandate is clear and regional and the other players involved play a committed role. Israel will get its security with a demilitarized Gaza and a disarmed and deradicalized Hamas.

Unfortunately, a lack of clarity on timelines and sequencing converts the framework into a mere statement of disjointed intentions rather than a credible pathway for withdrawal of Israel from Gaza and restoring normalcy. It is not even a full ceasefire deal since, under the plan, fighting can continue side by side with the implementation. This is what Hamas has serious reservations about. This infirmity could be fatal if the U.S. and major regional players do not do the heavy lifting vis-à-vis Israel. This is why Mr. Trump's call to Israel to stop the bombing of Gaza is important. Of course, it is not as if Israel has listened to the U.S. now or in the past.

To state the obvious, the focus of the plan has been on the release of all Israeli hostages, dead or alive, since Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been under tremendous domestic pressure to get them released. Once that is done within 72 hours of the ceasefire, the only arbiters of Palestinian destiny become the U.S. and Israel, which is incidentally the reality now. Every progress, or the lack of, by the Palestinians towards fulfilling the conditionalities



'The 20 points include everything that the U.S. would like to see happen in Gaza in the foreseeable future'

Photo Credit: AFP

will be decided by these two. There is no monitoring mechanism.

Further, while the release of 250 Palestinian life prisoners and 1,700 Palestinian detainees in exchange for Israeli hostages is welcome, with the revolving door policy of Israel to arrest, imprison and release Palestinians at will, this stipulation in the plan may not have any practical value on the ground. To get a sense of this equation, at least 18,000 Palestinians have been arrested by Israel only in the West Bank since October 7, 2023.

BURDEN SHIFTS TO HAMAS, THE PALESTINIANS

Given the above, this plan removes the international pressure on Israel on its daily killings in Gaza, by shifting the burden of stopping the war to the implementation of the plan by Hamas and the Palestinians. If they are seen not to implement it, then Israel's continued presence in Gaza is legitimized and its continued attacks will be justified. When Mr. Netanyahu has declared that the IDF will remain in Gaza, entrusting Israel to decide on its exit from Gaza is a non-starter.

Effectively, the plan puts governance and security under international control through its Board of Peace and International Stabilization Force. This can be a potential stop-gap arrangement provided the regional players remain committed and, where necessary, not hesitate to use their clout with the U.S. to stop Israeli violations. So far, the involvement of the Gulf countries in the Gaza war has been minimal since they have given priority to diminishing the threat of Iran and its proxies, which Israel helped them achieve. They are equally reluctant to compromise their larger interests in the region i.e., the Abraham Accords, their military ties with the U.S. and a newfound Syrian bonhomie, on the altar of an elusive two-state solution.

Once Gaza comes under international control, the plan does not chart out any pathway to elections or to a representative governance structure except a possible reformed Palestinian Authority's role sometime in the future. Ironically, the last legislative elections in the occupied territories, in 2006, were won by Hamas, which secured 44.45% of the vote share and 74 out of 132 seats, while Fatah won 41.43% and 45 seats. This led to a division in the Palestinian leadership and the eventual disconnect between Gaza and the West Bank. Now, the plan envisages a

technocratic committee with 'Palestinian and international experts', with municipal jurisdiction working under international governance and a security framework, directly under Mr. Trump. Hamas had agreed to step aside from the governance of Gaza and to a Palestinian technocratic committee. But under this plan, the Palestinians will not control their future. Hamas has called this unacceptable and said that a decision on governance should be taken by broader Palestinian consensus in which Hamas will also participate.

MORE A REHASHED 'RIVIERA' PLAN

The self-styled 'Trump' economic plan is possibly a rehash of the idea to make a 'Riviera' out of the Gaza seafloor and build 'modern miracle cities' to pull 2.3 million Palestinians in Gaza out of poverty, while thousands in the West Bank are being uprooted from their cities, land and livelihood and driven to poverty.

Earlier, one had argued that process usually trumped substance for negotiating a Palestinian state. This time there is not even a process except a solitary reference to self-determination in the plan which, both the U.S. and Israel know, is a point so distant that it may never be reached. Mr. Netanyahu has sworn never to concede a Palestinian state. His far-right partners have sworn to annex the West Bank this year. Therefore, it is no surprise that the plan does not base itself on international law or United Nations Security Council resolutions or even the recent International Court of Justice judgment on the 1967 borders to establish a Palestinian state. In fact, it goes in the opposite direction.

Consequently, how long will the ceasefire hold after the exchange of hostages? If it does not, how much capital will the U.S. and Gulf players spend to restrain Israel from further attacks? The larger question of the Palestine state has been set aside - as it has been time and again. The rapidly changing ground realities in the West Bank, with marauding Israeli settlement construction and eviction of Palestinians from their land, is now out of the syllabus.

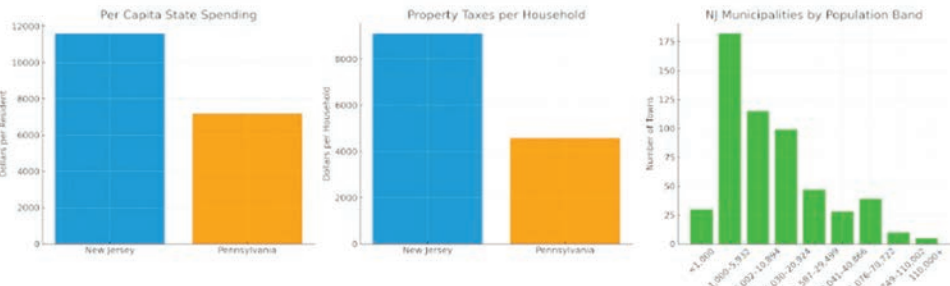
[T.S. Tirumurti was Ambassador/Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, New York (2020-22) and the first Representative of India to the Palestinian Authority in Gaza (1996-98)]

New Jersey 2025: World's Most Over-Governed and Corrupt State?



By Dave Makkar

Even pre-independence India, with 450 million people and 12.6 million square miles, had around 600 princely states. Modern New Jersey, with 9.3 million people and 8,722 square miles, has 564 princely fiefdoms - each with its own local monarch. Call it home rule or over-rule, but New Jersey remains a bureaucratic circus running on taxpayers money.



New Jersey & Pennsylvania comparison of spending, tax, and population

AT A GLANCE

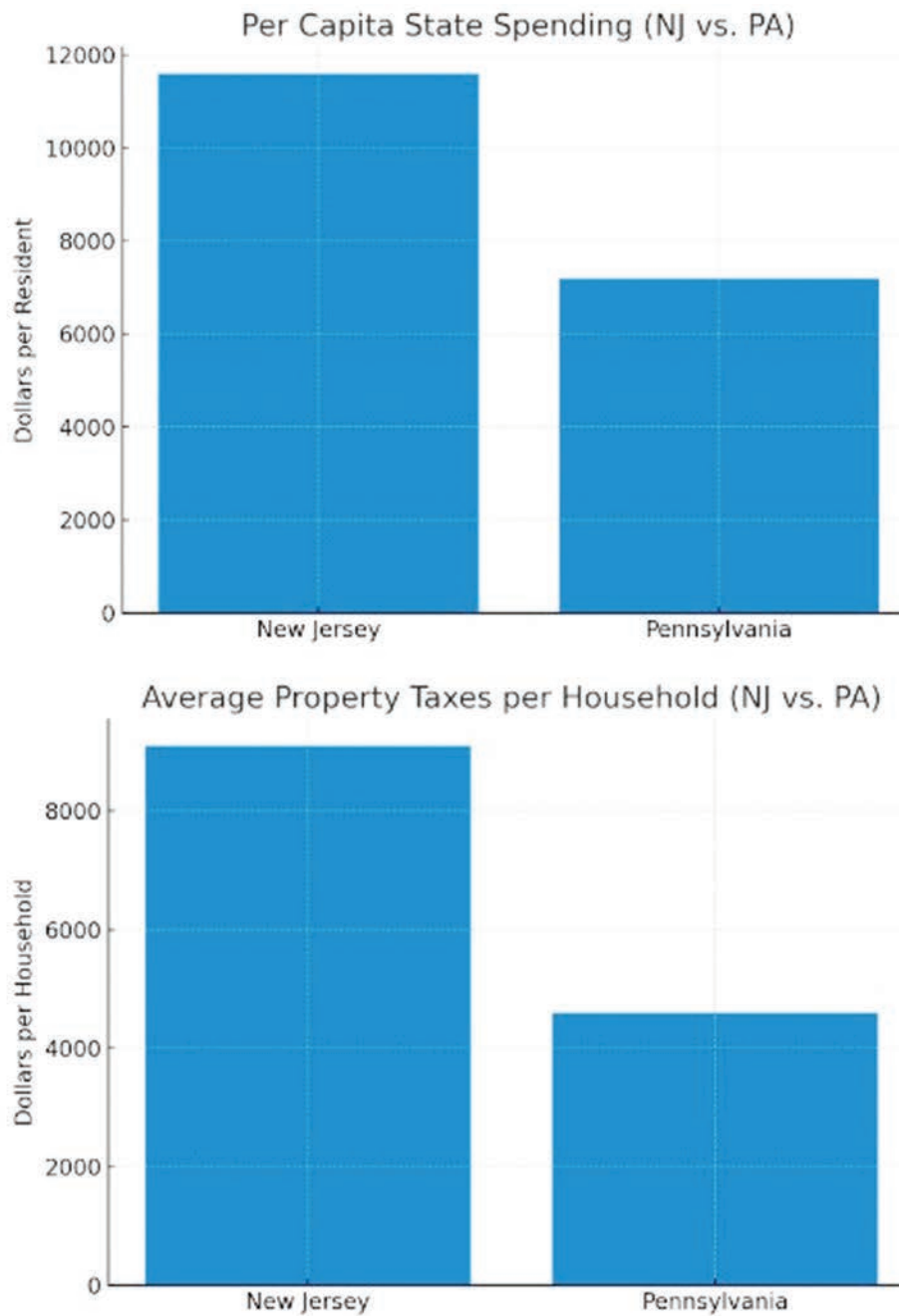
New Jersey by Numbers (2025)
Population: ~9.26 million (2024 estimate)
Land Area: 8,722 sq. miles
Municipalities: 564
FY 2025 State Budget: ? \$56.6 billion
Average Property Tax (2024): Over \$10,000 - highest in the U.S.
Licensed Attorneys: 39,311 (4.23 per 1,000 residents)
Dual-Office Holding: Banned for new officials since 2007 (loopholes remain)
A Tiny State with Too Many Governments
New Jersey is a small state - just 8,722 square miles, smaller than many American counties - yet it manages to support one of the most bureaucratically dense systems on Earth.
With 564 municipalities under 21 counties, serving 9.3 million people, every town insists on having its own mayor, council, police department, court, and school district.
The beloved "home rule" system, once a symbol of grassroot democracy, has in practice become a monument to duplication, inefficiency and waste.
?? New York City serves roughly the same population with one mayor, one police commissioner, and one school system. New Jersey does it with 564.
The result? Sky-high costs. Sky-high taxes. And bottom-shelf results.
A Budget That Outpaces Its Neighbors
For FY 2025, New Jersey enacted a \$56.6 billion budget - larger than Pennsylvania's, even though Pennsylvania has 43% more people and four times the land area.
Average Property Tax (2024): \$10,000+
A Decade Ago: \$7,200
Increase: Nearly 40% in ten years
We pay more, yet get less. Taxes in the Garden State have risen faster than almost anywhere in America.
Education: Spending More, Achieving Less
New Jersey ranks among the top spenders on public education - often over \$20,000 per student, compared to the U.S. average of \$14,000.
It has 695 Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) managing 2,506 public schools.
Despite this, outcomes remain uneven:
New Jersey ranks among the top spenders with over \$20,000 per student, compared to the U.S. average of \$14,000.
It maintains 695 Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to manage 2,506 public schools - a bureaucratic forest of superintendents, consultants, and boards.
Despite this lavish spending, outcomes remain uneven and disappointing.
Many students graduate lacking basic literacy and numeracy.
Newark spent \$26,280 per student (FY 2023); Camden, \$25,449 (FY 2022) - yet academic gains remain negligible.
Our education system mirrors our governance - expensive, layered, and unaccountable.
Lawyers Everywhere, Justice Nowhere
According to the American Bar Association, New Jersey had 39,311 active lawyers in 2024 - about 4.23 per 1,000 residents.
That rivals California's 4.3, a state with four times our population.
For a state this small, the legal saturation is staggering. Litigation seeps into every corner of life - from zoning and education to local governance. We've built a culture where bureaucracy thrives on endless lawyering.
For a state this small, the legal saturation is staggering. Litigation seeps into every corner of civic life - from zoning to schools to town hall politics.
We've built a state where government thrives not on efficiency, but on endless lawyering

and procedural paralysis.
The Double-Dipping Tradition That Refuses to Die
New Jersey outlawed dual-office holding in 2007 - but grandfathered in incumbents who already held multiple posts. The result?
The same old abuse continues under new legal cover.
Example: Nicholas Sacco, North Bergen power broker
Mayor since 1991
State Senator since 1994
Township Commissioner since 1985
Assistant Superintendent of Schools on top of it all
Few states would allow this concentration of power. In New Jersey, it's just another Tuesday.
In any other state, this would raise eyebrows and legal challenges.
In New Jersey, it raises pensions.
Why New Jersey Costs So Much
Let's connect the dots:
564 municipalities
21 counties
Hundreds of overlapping school boards
39,000 lawyers
619,000 government employees
Property taxes exceeding \$10,000 per household
Add it up, and you have America's most expensive and over-governed state.
Let's have a comparison between New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
Unlike Pennsylvania, where large areas remain unincorporated, every inch of New Jersey is incorporated. Every town has its own mini-bureaucracy - its police, public works, clerk's office, attorney, and school board.
Some towns have fewer than 1,000 residents - yet still operate as full-fledged municipal governments.
The Township Patchwork
Here's the municipal breakdown:
30 towns under 1,000 residents
182 towns with 1,000-6,000 residents
115 towns with 6,000-11,000
99 towns with 11,000-21,000
47 towns with 21,000-30,000
39 towns with 40,000-70,000
10 towns between 71,000-110,000
Top Five Cities: Newark, Jersey City, Paterson, Lakewood, Elizabeth
That's 564 "mini-kingdoms," each with its own royal court of mayors, clerks, attorneys, and chiefs - funded by the taxpayer.
The Home Rule Illusion : Supporters of "home rule" say it brings government closer to the people. In reality, it brings bureaucracy closer to your wallet.
Each town guards its turf and budget like a feudal estate. What we have is not participatory democracy, but a collection of fiefdoms for politicians and bureaucrats.
Every inch of New Jersey is incorporated. Every square mile is ruled by a mini-bureaucracy - with its own police, attorney, and clerk. Some towns have fewer than 1,000 residents yet operate like full-fledged governments.
This isn't home rule. It's job security for politicians and bureaucrats.
As I often say in Hindi:
"Netaji aur Sarkar Chalane Walon ke Liye Rozgar Yojana."
(A government employment scheme for politicians and bureaucrats.)
Even pre-independence India, with 450 million people and 12.6 million square miles, had around 600 princely states.
Modern New Jersey, with 9.3 million people and 8,722 square miles, has 564 princely fiefdoms - each with its own local monarch.
Call it home rule or over-rule, but New Jersey remains a bureaucratic circus running on taxpayer money.
New Jersey vs. Pennsylvania: A Tale of Two States

METRIC (2025)	NEW JERSEY	PENNSYLVANIA
LAND AREA	8,722 SQ MI	~46,055 SQ MI
POPULATION	9.26 MILLION	13.25 MILLION
MUNICIPALITIES	564	FAR FEWER
STATE BUDGET	\$56.6B	~\$47.6B (GENERAL FUND)
AVG. PROPERTY TAX	~\$10,000	~\$4,600
PER CAPITA SPENDING	~\$11,600	~\$7,200
DUAL OFFICE HOLDING		BANNED (WITH LOOPHOLES) RARE

Despite being one-fifth the size, New Jersey spends like an empire. Trenton operates a larger budget than its bigger neighbor while delivering no better services - just more layers of officials.

CONTD FROM PAGE 9



New Jersey & Pennsylvania comparison of State spending and Taxes

Salem County (population 56,874) - 15 municipalities in 338 sq miles.

Bergen County (population 978,641) - 70 municipalities in just 234 square miles!
That's bureaucracy on steroids.

The Cost of Keeping 585 Governments Running

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2024):

Government Employees (NJ Total): ~619,000

State Employees: ~152,500

Average Compensation: \$63.94/hour (wages + benefits)

That's roughly \$76.7 billion in annual payroll - more than the entire state budget.

Add in 13,000+ elected and appointed officials, whose salaries and benefits push the total cost near \$500 million annually.

Add 13,000+ elected and appointed officials, and taxpayers are on the hook for roughly \$500 million annually in salaries and benefits just for the rulers.

No wonder residents feel like they're paying for the privilege of being governed.

New Jerseyans aren't citizens - they're the paying customers of a political monopoly.

Democracy or Legalized Extortion?

What we have in New Jersey isn't functional democracy - it's a political protection racket.

Residents are treated as the ATM for a bloated, self-replicating system.

This isn't democracy in action. It's a legalized extortion - a political protection racket disguised as government.

Pennsylvania shows that larger, more complex states can spend less and deliver more. New Jersey proves that corruption and inefficiency are bipartisan traditions.

Trenton remains the heart of this cartel - where outdated laws protect political dynasties, and public money fuels private ambition. Until someone cuts through this structural fat, we'll keep paying Cadillac taxes for Chevy-level governance.

.....Chevy-level governance - by dishonest, unethical, and immoral politicians hiding behind century-old laws.

A State That Serves Itself : New Jersey is rich, urbanized, and strategically located. Yet, it's governed by a system that exists to serve itself.

Let's recap:

\$56.6 billion State budget

\$76.7 billion in government payroll

\$500 million in elected & appointed payroll

564 municipalities

\$10,000 average property tax

619,000 total government workers

39,000 lawyers

Rampant legalism and inefficiency

I've lived here since 1996 - long enough to conclude that the Garden State's most reliable crop isn't tomatoes - it's bureaucrats and politicians.

Perhaps psychiatrists, not voters, can best explain why New Jerseyans keep tolerating it.

(This article was first published in The Indian Panorama on September 5, 2011, and updated for 2025 with new data and analysis.)

Sadly, political and bureaucratic corruption in New Jersey has only grown more refined - and more shameless.

Compiled and updated by: Dave Makkar

An inmate of the world's most corrupt state since December 1996

(The author can be reached at davemakkar@yahoo.com / phone: 973-416-1600)

Counties Within Chaos

New Jersey's 21 counties add yet another layer: each has its own commissioners, sheriff, clerk, and surrogate.

INDIA REAFFIRMS GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IN WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY



At UN Security Council, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish Highlights India's Pioneering Role in Empowering Women Peacekeepers -File photo

OCTOBER 6, 2025

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): India has reaffirmed its historic and continuing leadership in advancing the role of women in peacekeeping and global security, calling their full and equal participation "a necessity for lasting peace." Speaking at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) on Monday, October 6, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, underscored that gender

equality in peace operations has been integral to India's approach to global peace for decades - long before the adoption of the landmark UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000.

"India's commitment to this principle predates the resolution by several decades," Ambassador Harish said. "We recognized early that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without women."

The debate, convened under the presidency of the Russian Federation, marked the 25th anniversary of Resolution 1325, which recognized women's vital role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and post-conflict reconstruction.

Harish noted that as early as the 1960s, India deployed women medical officers to Congo, one of the first instances of female participation in UN peacekeeping. The country's pioneering spirit, he said, reached a milestone in 2007, when India deployed the first-ever all-female Formed Police Unit (FPU) to Liberia - a mission that not only reduced crime and

enhanced local security but also inspired Liberian women to join law enforcement and nation-building efforts. "This initiative was a game changer," he said.

India's leadership in advancing women's participation has continued ever since. The appointment of Dr. Kiran Bedi, India's first woman police officer, as the first female Police Adviser and head of the UN Police Division in 2003, was another historic step. Currently, more than 160 Indian women peacekeepers serve in UN missions worldwide, including all-women engagement teams in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Abyei (Sudan), and South Sudan.

Ambassador Harish highlighted the global recognition accorded to Indian women officers: Major Suman Gawani, who won the UN Military Gender Advocate Award in 2019 for her service in South Sudan, and Major Radhika Sen, honored in 2024 for her contributions in the Democratic Republic of Congo. "It is no longer a question of whether women can do peacekeeping," Harish declared.

"Rather, it is whether peacekeeping can do without women."

He described women peacekeepers as "builders of trust, protectors of the vulnerable, and role models for change." Citing External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, he added that women peacekeepers are true "messengers of peace."

India has also become a global center for capacity-building in peacekeeping, especially for the Global South. The Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) in New Delhi, established by the Indian Army, now trains over 12,000 troops annually. In 2016, it launched a flagship course for female military officers, training women from 39 countries in leadership, protection of civilians, and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. India has also deployed mobile training teams to several nations to strengthen women's operational capacity in the field.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



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The Shrinking Middle Class, Trade Wars, and the India-U.S. Paradox



By George Abraham

"India, too, must think creatively and adapt to the changing global trade dynamics. For decades, its high tariff walls were justified to protect domestic industries under the Five-Year Plans envisioned by Jawaharlal Nehru. That strategy worked: India built everything from safety pins to airplanes, became self-reliant, and transformed from a food-deficient to a food-exporting nation. How, then, can we fault others for pursuing similar protectionist policies today? It's time for India to rethink its strategies and find a balance between protectionism and global trade."

There is an ongoing discussion these days about whether the Indian diaspora has remained silent on tariffs and other U.S. policies that have hurt India. The Trump administration's imposition of nearly 50% tariffs on most Indian goods imported to the United States has had a devastating effect on sectors such as textiles, shrimp, and cut diamonds. The recent \$100,000 fee on new H1B visa issuance has only added fuel to the controversy.

Although domestic political considerations may have driven these tariff policies, their application worldwide appeared to be without clear policy standards, often arbitrary, abrupt, and inconsistently justified. Economist Jeffrey Sachs has argued that many of the tariffs imposed by the Trump administration exceeded the president's lawful authority, calling them "delusional" and unlikely to reduce either trade or budget deficits in any meaningful way.

Nevertheless, tariffs are here to stay, and nations around the world, whether they like it or not, must learn to navigate them. Export-driven economies, including America's closest allies, have been hit hard. The European Union, Japan, and South Korea reluctantly reached trade deals with Washington despite deep dissatisfaction, reflecting the leverage the U.S. still commands in global commerce.

India, too, had an early opportunity to negotiate a similar agreement that might have averted the present predicament, but instead chose to walk a diplomatic tightrope. Understandably, India had to

protect its farmers and guard against U.S. agricultural imports that could undermine its rural economy. Yet, in every negotiation, there must be give and take, and perhaps India underestimated the Trump administration's resolve to reshape global trade on what it viewed as a more level playing field.

More than anything else, the situation exposes the shortcomings of the Modi-Jaishankar statecraft, which has failed to advance India's interests on the world stage. The recent Indo-Pak conflict revealed a sobering truth: in times of crisis, India stands largely alone. Despite global condemnation of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, only Israel offered unequivocal support, while most nations maintained diplomatic silence.

India and US are struggling to restore a balance which imposition of US tariffs has disturbed.



India's ambiguous stance within BRICS, a group that includes Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, may also complicate its strategic relationship with the United States. Although New Delhi insists it does not seek to undermine the U.S. dollar, Washington remains wary of BRICS-level financial initiatives led by China and Russia that aim to reduce dependence on the dollar. India advocates gradual reforms, such as local currency settlements, without challenging the dollar's dominance, yet the rhetoric emerging from BRICS summits continues to unsettle U.S. financial circles. This ambiguity in India's stance within BRICS, balancing its relationship with the U.S. and its aspirations for a more multipolar world, poses a challenge for its foreign policy.

Today, around 58-60% of global foreign exchange reserves remain denominated in U.S. dollars, compared to less than 3% in Chinese yuan. The dollar's dominance is rooted in America's economic scale, deep capital markets, and the global trust in its institutions: a legacy of the Bretton Woods system. Yet beneath that veneer of stability, the U.S. faces sobering

economic realities. As of September 2025, the national debt has soared to \$37.85 trillion, while the 2024 trade deficit stood at \$918.4 billion. Mounting interest payments consume an ever-larger share of the federal budget, limiting investments in infrastructure, education, and defense. Persistent deficit spending fuels inflation and erodes living standards, raising questions about long-term fiscal sustainability.

The Indian diaspora in the United States, a testament to human resilience, has long sought opportunity and a higher standard of living and has largely achieved it through hard work and discipline. Naturalized citizens of Indian origin have pledged allegiance to their adopted homeland, yet their emotional

self-reliant, and transformed from a food-deficient to a food-exporting nation. How, then, can we fault others for pursuing similar protectionist policies today? It's time for India to rethink its strategies and find a balance between protectionism and global trade.

Meanwhile, America's Midwest has become a rust belt of ghost towns - a haunting monument to its industrial past. Rows of shuttered factories, silent assembly lines, and empty main streets mark the decline of the middle class that once anchored American stability. Much of that industrial wealth has since migrated offshore, fueling growth in distant economies even as it hollowed out communities at home. Economic gains now accrue largely to the wealthy,

ties to India remain strong. They send back nearly one-third of India's total remittances each year, a lifeline for millions.

However, unlike Non-Resident Indians in the Gulf, these immigrants are not looking back. Their U.S.-born children rarely share the same depth of attachment to their ancestral land. Their primary concern is the economic stability of America. When multinational corporations exploit the H1B visa system to import low-wage labor at the expense of local graduates, disillusionment grows. The unemployment rate among computer science graduates, at 6.1%, underscores this frustration. In the 1970s and 1980s, U.S. tech companies routinely trained domestic graduates, even those without engineering degrees; today, they depend on lottery-based recruitment abroad.

India, too, must think creatively and adapt to the changing global trade dynamics. For decades, its high tariff walls were justified to protect domestic industries under the Five-Year Plans envisioned by Jawaharlal Nehru. That strategy worked: India built everything from safety pins to airplanes, became

while younger generations struggle for the security once taken for granted. The resulting sense of insecurity fuels populist anger on both the left and the right, deepening divisions and eroding the democratic center that long kept the nation balanced.

Amidst these challenges, the United States and India still share many commonalities. Both are large, pluralistic democracies rooted in constitutional principles and the rule of law. Both share a restless entrepreneurial spirit and a belief in the power of innovation. These shared values form the foundation for a relationship that transcends transactional politics. Let both nations build on this strategic partnership and friendship, overcome temporary differences, and work together to reach a trade agreement that is not just quick but also fair and equitable, reflecting the principles of justice and fairness in international relations.

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

20 years on, US Senate formally ends Iraq war authorization to government

Votes to repeal the resolution that authorized the 2003 US invasion, following a House vote last month that would return the basic war power to Congress

OCTOBER 9, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): The Senate voted on Thursday, October 9, to repeal the resolution that authorized the 2003 US invasion, following a House vote last month that would return the basic war power to Congress, AP reports.

The amendment by Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine, a Democrat, and Indiana Sen. Todd Young, a Republican, was approved by voice vote to an annual defense authorization bill that passed the Senate late Thursday - a unanimous endorsement for ending the war that many now view as a mistake.

Iraqi deaths were estimated in the hundreds of thousands, and nearly 5,000 US troops were killed in the war after President George W. Bush's administration falsely claimed that then-President Saddam Hussein was stockpiling weapons of mass destruction.

"That's the way the war ends, not with a bang but a whimper," Kaine said after

the vote, which lasted only a few seconds with no debate and no objections. Still, he said, "America is forever changed by those wars, and the Middle East is too."

Supporters in both the House and Senate say the repeal is crucial to prevent future abuses and to reinforce that Iraq is now a strategic partner of the United States.

The House added a similar amendment to its version of the defense measure in September, meaning the repeal is likely to end up in the final bill once the two chambers reconcile the two pieces of legislation. Both bills also repeal the 1991 authorization that sanctioned the US-led Gulf War.

While Congress appears poised to pass the repeal, it is unclear whether President Donald Trump will support it. During his first term, his administration cited the 2002 Iraq resolution as part of its legal justification for a 2020 US drone strike that killed Iranian Gen. Qassim Soleimani. It has otherwise been rarely

used.

Young said after the vote that he thinks Trump should "take great pride" in signing the bill after campaigning on ending so-called "forever wars," especially because he would be the first president in recent history to legally end a longstanding war.

He said the vote establishes an important precedent.

"Congress is now very clearly asserting that it is our prerogative and our responsibility not only to authorize but also to bring to an end military conflicts," Young said.

The bipartisan vote, added to the larger bipartisan defense measure, came amid a bitter partisan standoff over a weeklong government shutdown. Young said the quick vote was an "extraordinary moment" that he hopes "will help some people see that we can still do consequential things in the US Congress." The Senate also voted to repeal the 2002 resolution two years ago



Photo for Representation only

-iStock

on a 66-30 vote. While some Republicans privately told Kaine that they were still opposed to the measure, none objected to the unanimous vote on the floor Thursday evening.

A separate 2001 authorization for the global war on terror would remain in place under the bill. While the 2002 and 1991 resolutions are rarely used and focused on just one country, Iraq, the 2001 measure gave President George W. Bush broad authority for the invasion of Afghanistan, approving force "against those nations, organizations, or persons" that planned or aided the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States.

Passed in September 2001, it has been used in recent years to justify US military action against groups - including al-Qaida and its affiliates, such as the Islamic State group and al-Shabab - that are deemed to be a threat against America.



California officially declares Diwali a state holiday

The Assembly Bill 268 would authorize community colleges and public schools to close on Diwali, as specified

OCTOBER 8, 2025

SACRAMENTO (TIP): California's Governor Gavin Newsom on Tuesday, October 7, officially added Diwali to the state's list of holidays by signing Assembly Bill 268 into law.

The Bill would authorize community colleges and public schools to close on "Diwali," as specified. It would authorize state employees to elect to take, and would authorize certain community college and public school employees to be given, time off with pay in recognition of "Diwali," as specified.

The Bill would authorize public schools and educational institutions throughout the state to include exercises acknowledging and celebrating the meaning and importance of Diwali, as specified.

Ajay Bhutoria, former advisor to President Biden for AANHPI Commission, a prominent Silicon Valley entrepreneur, philanthropist, and dedicated advocate for the Indian American community, lauded the judgement.

In a post on X, he said, "Thank you Gavin Newsom, Governor for Making Diwali a California State Holiday by signing AB 268 Huge thanks to Assembly member Ash Kalra and Darshana Patel for championing this bill and taking to finish line, celebrating light, unity and our diverse communities."

Thank you @GavinNewsom Governor Newsom for Making Diwali a California State Holiday by signing AB 268

Huge thanks to Assembly member @Ash_Kalra & @DrDarshanaPatel for championing this bill and taking to finish line, celebrating light, unity & our diverse communities. pic.twitter.com/KSojMoavVC

- Ajay Jain Bhutoria (@ajainb) October 7, 2025

"Today marks a radiant milestone in California's journey toward true inclusivity and cultural celebration. As Governor Newsom signs AB 268 into law, we honor the tireless leadership of Assembly member Ash Kalra and Assembly member Darshana Patel, whose vision and bipartisan collaboration have illuminated the path for this historic achievement.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

Pentagon beard ban sparks outrage among Sikhs

OCTOBER 5, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP): In a jolt to Sikh soldiers serving in the US army, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has announced a strict new grooming policy that effectively bans most kinds of beards in the US military, allowing exceptions only for elite special forces. The September 30 directive calls for all military branches to return to "pre-2010 standards" for grooming that disallow facial hair waivers.

The move has drawn sharp criticism from civil rights groups, veterans and advocates for religious freedom who say it may force service members from communities such as Sikhs, Muslims, Jews and Black troops with skin conditions, etc. to choose between military careers and religious beliefs/health needs.

While officials of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and the Akal Takht, citing lack of clarity on the matter, say they will comment once they go through the order and consult serving Sikh soldiers in the US army, former Jathedar Giani Harpreet Singh, president of a SAD faction, has demanded restoration of the provisions, recalling the services of soldiers from the community during the two world wars.

VIOLATES RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: NAPA

The North American Punjabi Association has called on the Trump administration to halt the implementation of the Pentagon directive. "Asking a Sikh soldier to shave his beard is the same as asking him to give up his religion,"



In 2022, a federal court ruled in favor of Sikh recruits keeping their beards and turbans in basic training.

AI generated image for representation.

said executive director Satnam Singh Chahal, adding it amounted to violation of religious freedom.

The North American Punjabi Association (NAPA), expressing "deep concern" at the Pentagon's directive, has termed it a "betrayal of trust" of those who have fought for years to gain religious accommodation in the armed forces. NAPA executive director Satnam Singh Chahal says the new rules will create serious implications for Sikhs, Orthodox Jews, Muslims, and other religious minorities whose faith requires them to maintain beards and other articles of faith.

"This decision is not about discipline or lethality - it is about stripping away the dignity and religious identity of devout soldiers who serve this country with loyalty and honor," says Chahal, emphasizing that keeping unshorn hair ("kesh") is a non-negotiable religious mandate for Sikhs.

NAPA has called on the Trump administration, members of the Congress and civil rights organizations to immediately intervene and halt the implementation of the directive.

An attorney from the Sikh Coalition says: "For Sikh soldiers, shaving is like cutting off a limb." In 2022, a federal court had ruled in favor of Sikh recruits keeping their beards and turbans in basic training.

In his speech at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Hegseth had said: "If you want a beard, join special forces. If not, shave. We don't have a military full of Nordic pagans." He added that the era of "rampant and ridiculous shaving profiles" - waivers for medical or religious reasons - is over.



Satnam Singh Chahal, Executive Director, NAPA

Canada gets tough on the Temporary Foreign Worker Program



---> By Prabhjot Singh



Recent Canadian Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) changes focus on reducing overall numbers through measures like a moratorium on low-wage applications in high-unemployment areas, stricter workforce caps, and limited Spousal Open Work Permits (SOWPs).

Photo / courtesy Stepwise

OCTOBER 6, 2025

OTTAWA (TIP): Canada is getting tough on the Temporary Foreign Worker Program as the federal government is focused on building lasting economic strength.

The Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). In fiscal year 2024-2025, ESDC conducted 1,435 employer compliance inspections, of which 10% of employers were found non-compliant. During the same period, penalties more than doubled from \$2,067,750 to \$4,882,500 and resulted in 36 employers being banned from the TFW Program, a threefold increase from last year.

The strict enforcement of the program has impacted all those employers who were trying to exploit the facility. A vast majority of those affected by the continuous surveillance allegedly come from the South Asian community, especially those who had tried to sneak into the system by paying huge amounts to the agents and the greedy employers.

In September, the ESDC hit the headlines when an employer in the fish and seafood

sector was issued a penalty of \$1 million and a 10-year ban from the Program for failing to provide proper wages and working conditions, failing to comply with federal and provincial labour laws, and failing to provide a workplace that was free of abuse.

To date, this is the biggest penalty ever issued by the Department, because any mistreatment of workers or misuse of the Program will not be tolerated. Employers who are found to be non-compliant with TFW Program conditions are also listed on a public-facing website managed by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

Between April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, an employer in the agriculture sector was fined \$212,000 and banned from the TFW Program for 2 years for failing to provide proper working conditions and for not providing the required documentation to inspectors.

Another employer in the residential building construction industry was fined \$161,000 and banned from the TFW Program for 5 years for failing to provide

proper wages and working conditions, and lack of compliance with federal and provincial labour laws.

Yet another employer in the long-haul trucking industry was fined \$150,000 for failing to genuinely operate a business and for not providing the required documentation to inspectors.

In a statement, the ESDC held that the "Canadians are always first in line. To be clear, the Temporary Foreign Worker Program is a last resort option for employers who cannot find qualified Canadians and permanent residents to fill job vacancies.

"There's a stringent process in place to ensure that Canadian workers are always prioritised first. All employers seeking to use the Temporary Foreign Worker Program must demonstrate that genuine attempts to recruit workers from within Canada were unsuccessful. They must also continue recruiting for the position while the application is pending. Workers under the TFW Program represent approximately 1% of the Canadian workforce and play important roles in key sectors such as agriculture, food processing, construction and health care.

In the context of the tightening labour market in September 2024, several measures were implemented to reduce reliance on the TFW Program, resulting in a 50% reduction overall in applications to the Program and 70% in the low-wage stream.

Employers who hire temporary foreign workers are also required to provide safe, healthy and dignified working conditions. The Government has a strong compliance regime to help ensure that the health and safety of temporary foreign workers are protected.

The employer compliance regime aims to verify employers' adherence to program requirements and conditions through inspections. Employers who do not respect these could be issued administrative monetary penalties (AMPs) of up to \$1

million per year and be temporarily or permanently banned from the Program.

In fiscal year 2024-2025, ESDC conducted 1,435 employer compliance inspections, of which 10% of employers were found non-compliant. During the same period, penalties more than doubled from \$2,067,750 to \$4,882,500 and resulted in 36 employers being banned from the TFW Program, a threefold increase from last year.



Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario

Patty Hajdu, Minister of Jobs and Families and Minister responsible for the Federal Economic Development Agency for Northern Ontario, says: "Building a stronger Canada means protecting those who work tirelessly, day in and day out. Workers in Canada deserve safe workplaces where their rights are protected from bad actors. The TFW Program is a last resort measure for businesses - it is no substitute for Canadian talent, and its misuse will never be permitted. Strengthening our inspection practices to weed out employers who misuse the program puts workers at the forefront and safeguards their well-being while we build, together, one Canadian economy that will benefit all generations."

Jail, not Bail, fails in the House of Commons

OCTOBER 6, 2025

OTTAWA (TIP): After an animated debate over the growing incidence of violence, especially by repeat offenders, Conservatives suffered yet another political reverse when their Bill C-242 fell through for want of support.

The Bill put to a vote on Monday, October 6, was defeated 196-142 as the Conservatives failed to get any support from members of other Opposition parties - Bloc Québécois and NDP.

Pursuant to Standing Order 45, the House on Monday proceeded to the taking of the deferred recorded division on the motion of Arpan Khanna (representing Oxford) and seconded by Eric Melillo (Kenora-Kiweinoong).

It said:

(a) violent crime is up 55% under the Liberal government, and repeat offenders continue to be released because of Liberal catch and release laws; and

(b) The Liberal government promised to

pass criminal justice reform six months ago, but has failed to do so;

to keep repeat offenders in jail and keep Canadians safe, the House thinks that Bill C-242, an Act to amend the Criminal Code and the Department of Justice Act, also known as the Jail Not Bail Act, must pass and is committed to sitting extended hours, holding an expeditious committee study and undertaking such other procedural measures as may be necessary to pass it at the earliest opportunity.

The question was put on the motion, and it was negatived on the following division, as it got only 142 votes in its support while 196 opposed.

Earlier, last week, another Bill moved by the Conservatives also fell through for want of majority support.

Brought in by John Barlow, Conservative MP representing Foothills in Alberta, to demand an exemption on food taxation, also saw Bloc Québécois and NDP siding with the Liberals, to defeat it when the

motion was put to a vote.

In his Bill, John Barlow held that since the Prime Minister said Canadians would judge him by the cost at the grocery store, and that,

(i) Food inflation was 70% above the Bank of Canada's target,

(ii) food prices were up 40% since the Liberals took power,

(iii) Daily Bread Food Bank expected 4 million visits to its food banks in 2025, and

(iv) Food bank use in Canada was up by 142% since 2015,

The House calls on the Liberal Prime Minister to stop taxing food by eliminating:

(a) the industrial carbon tax on fertilizer and farm equipment;

(b) the inflation tax (money-printing deficits);

(c) carbon tax two (the so-called clean fuel standard); and

(d) The food packaging tax (plastic ban and packaging requirements).

There was a wide-ranging debate on the



Credit / Conservative Party of Canada

Bill as both the Treasury and the Opposition Benches took sides in reacting to the rising prices of groceries in the country.

Finally, when the motion was put to a vote, it got only 138 votes in support while 194 went against it.

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

Regulator launches pan-India crackdown on cough syrup makers after child deaths

OCT 10, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): In the wake of children's deaths allegedly caused by the consumption of contaminated cough syrups, the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has launched a pan-India drive to test, inspect and audit cough syrup manufacturers. The CDSCO has also directed all states and union territories to submit a list of cough syrup manufacturing companies for auditing.

Sources said no state has so far fully complied with the Corrective and Preventive Action (CAPA) guidelines introduced to ensure safety and maintain standards in pharmaceutical products.

In Madhya Pradesh, two more children died of kidney infections allegedly linked to the consumption of contaminated cough syrup, bringing the toll to 22.

Meanwhile, the CDSCO has informed the World Health Organisation that cough syrups Coldrif, RespifreshTR and ReLife were recalled and manufacturers ordered to stop their production, though none of the products were exported from India, sources said.

So far, 18 state drug control authorities have onboarded the Online National Drugs Licensing System (ONDLS), aimed at streamlining drug licensing and regulatory compliance. More states are expected to join. Sources said, "Once states adopt the ONDLS fully, firms such as Sresan Pharmaceuticals, which previously escaped the Centre's radar,



will be caught if their licences are up for renewal."

Government officials said Tamil Nadu-based Sresan Pharmaceuticals, manufacturer of Coldrif cough syrup, was issued a manufacturing licence by the state government in 2011, renewed in 2016. However, Central authorities were not informed.

An official said, "The firm was not in the Centre's radar. It is a small company. The state audit recorded 364 violations, of which 38 were critical."

Nineteen samples of cough syrups were tested — 13 by the Madhya Pradesh Government and six by the CDSCO.

An official said, "We analysed six

samples, all of which were found clean. Of the 13 tested by the state government, three were initially found toxin-free."

Testing by Tamil Nadu revealed that the Coldrif sample contained 48.6 per cent Diethylene Glycol (DEG).

The official added, "Once the Madhya Pradesh Government learnt that Coldrif was the most consumed cough syrup and the manufacturer was based in Tamil Nadu, they requested the state government to conduct tests and site inspections."

The CDSCO has asked the Tamil Nadu government to initiate criminal proceedings against Sresan Pharmaceuticals. (Reuters)

PM TO LAUNCH RS
42,000-CRORE AGRI
SCHEMES ON OCT 11,
SAYS SHIVRAJ

OCT 10, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch two major agricultural initiatives — the PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana and the Self-Reliance in Pulses Mission — on October 11 at Pusa Campus in New Delhi, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced on Thursday.

The event will also see the inauguration and foundation laying of over 1,100 projects worth Rs 42,000 crore in the agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries and food processing sectors.

Chouhan said the new initiatives aim to improve farm productivity, enhance food security and reduce India's dependence on pulse imports.

Under the Self-Reliance in Pulses Mission, the government aims to expand the pulse cultivation area from 27.5 million hectares to 31 million hectares by 2030-31, and to raise production from 24.2 million tonnes to 35 million tonnes. Productivity is targeted to increase from 880 kg per hectare to 1,130 kg per hectare.

To support this expansion, the government will distribute 1.26 crore quintals of certified seeds and provide 88 lakh free mini seed kits to farmers. Around 1,000 processing units will be established in pulse-growing regions, each eligible for a subsidy of Rs 25 lakh, to encourage local value addition. Central agencies will also procure 100 per cent of registered farmers' produce at the Minimum Support Price (MSP) under the mission.

Chouhan said a research and development plan has been prepared to develop high-yielding, pest-resistant and climate-resilient pulse varieties and ensure their timely distribution.

"India is the world's largest producer and consumer of pulses but continues to depend on imports. This mission is a step toward bridging that gap," he said.

The PM Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana will target 100 low-productivity districts across India to raise yields to at least the national average. The programme will focus on irrigation coverage, crop diversification, credit access and better storage infrastructure.

Chouhan said the model draws inspiration from the Aspirational Districts Programme and will be monitored through a dashboard by NITI Aayog.

"If the productivity of low-performing districts improves, national production and farmers' incomes will rise," he said.

On the day of the launch, the PM will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for over 1,100 agriculture-related projects nationwide. These include initiatives under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund and projects in dairy, fisheries and food processing. (PTI)

Air India expands UK services, adds Delhi-London flights

OCT 10, 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): Air India on Thursday announced a major expansion of its United Kingdom network under the Northern Winter 2025 schedule, increasing its Delhi-London (Heathrow) frequency from 24 to 28 flights a week and restoring its Amritsar-London (Gatwick) service with three flights weekly, effective October 26.

The expansion strengthens the airline's footprint across five Indian cities — Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Amritsar — and three UK destinations — London Heathrow, London Gatwick and Birmingham, airline officials said.

The announcement came as both Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Keir Starmer reaffirmed their commitment to deepening India-UK aviation ties, noting that discussions are underway to renew the India-UK Air Services Agreement. A joint statement issued on Thursday said the development "creates an opportunity for closer cooperation across the aerospace sector".

According to airline officials, the additional daily flight boosts Air India's capacity on the high-demand Delhi-London route by nearly 1,200 seats each way, with operations to be handled by the



airline's new Airbus A350-900 and Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft.

Air India, already the largest carrier between India and the UK, currently operates 61 flights per week and offers more than 18,000 seats one-way — translating to nearly 1.7 million seats annually. The expanded schedule further consolidates its dominance while improving connectivity for both business and leisure travellers.

Alongside the new Delhi-London frequency and the Amritsar-London (Gatwick) restoration, Air India has reinstated several key routes that were

temporarily altered earlier this year. Bengaluru-London (Heathrow) service returns to a full seven flights weekly, Ahmedabad-London moves back to Gatwick with thrice-weekly operations and Mumbai-London (Heathrow) maintains its double-daily schedule. Delhi-Birmingham resumes thrice a week and Amritsar-Birmingham continues with three flights weekly.

The Indian diaspora forms about 1.8 million of the UK's population. Indian and British companies employ more than 6,50,000 people in each other's countries. (TNS)

ARMED MEN STORM HOUSE, OPEN FIRE, ABDUCT PREGNANT WOMAN IN GWALIOR VILLAGE

OCT 10, 2025

GWALIOR (TIP): The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to take up on Friday a PIL seeking a court-monitored CBI probe into deaths of children in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan allegedly due to consumption of toxic cough syrups.

A Bench led by Chief Justice of India BR Gavai agreed to hear the PIL after petitioner advocate Vishal Tiwari mentioned it saying it needed an urgent hearing.

Tiwari also demanded systemic reforms in drug safety mechanisms and constitution of a national judicial commission or expert committee headed by a retired Supreme Court judge to identify the regulatory failures that allowed substandard medicines to reach market.

The PIL urged the top court to transfer all FIRs and investigations with regard to the deaths of children allegedly caused by toxic cough syrups across states to the CBI for a thorough probe under the supervision of a retired Supreme Court judge to ensure fairness and uniformity.

Separate state-level investigations have led to fragmented accountability, enabling repeated lapses that allow hazardous formulations to reach the market, he submitted.

The petition, which came amid reports of deaths of children from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan after they allegedly consumed cough syrup produced by a particular company, urged the court to mandate toxicological testing of all suspect products through NABL-accredited laboratories before any further sale or export was permitted. (PTI)

FAKE ARMY PERSONNEL ARRESTED AT ROORKEE MILITARY CANTONMENT IN UTTARAKHAND

OCT 10, 2025

HARIDWAR (TIP): Police arrested an alleged fake Army personnel who was roaming around in uniform at the Roorkee Military Cantonment in Uttarakhand's Haridwar on Thursday, a police officer said. In a joint operation by Army intelligence, local intelligence agencies and the police, 18 bank debit cards, an Army uniform, a nameplate, a fake Army identity card, and a fake joining letter were allegedly recovered from the possession of the fake Army personnel, police said. Police and intelligence agencies are investigating the motive behind his visit to the military complex. Haridwar Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Pramod Dobhal said that after finding the activities of the accused in the Roorkee Military Cantonment complex suspicious, the Army intelligence informed the Roorkee police. (PTI)

'Shameful': Congress slams PM Modi for praising Bibi

OCT 10, 2025

NEW DELHI, (TIP): The Congress on Thursday criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his "unqualified praise" of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu while welcoming the first phase of US President Donald Trump's West Asia peace plan.

The party described Modi's remarks as "shameful and morally atrocious", accusing him of ignoring the plight of Palestinians and remaining silent on the expansion of Israeli settlements.

Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, said it was "deeply disturbing" that the Prime Minister had expressed admiration for Netanyahu, whom he accused of "unleashing a genocide in Gaza over the past twenty months".

"The Prime Minister has welcomed the new developments regarding Gaza and hailed President Trump. That eagerness is not surprising. But what is shocking,



shameful and morally atrocious is Modi's unqualified praise for the Israeli PM Mr Netanyahu," Ramesh said in a statement.

He added that Modi's silence on the future of an independent and sovereign state of Palestine, recognised by India since November 1988 and supported by

over 150 countries, was a "betrayal of India's long-standing foreign policy position".

Ramesh's comments followed Modi's post on X, in which the PM welcomed the agreement on the first phase of Trump's peace plan, under which Israel and Hamas have agreed to pause fighting in Gaza.

Modi described the deal as "a reflection of the strong leadership of PM Netanyahu".

"We hope the release of hostages and enhanced humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza will bring respite to them and pave the way for lasting peace," Modi added.

The agreement, brokered by the Trump administration, includes a temporary ceasefire and the exchange of hostages and prisoners by both sides, marking the most significant diplomatic breakthrough in the two-year-long Gaza conflict. (TNS)

Modi's remarks on 26/11 attack 'terribly wrong': Chidambaram hits back

10 OCT 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): A day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused the UPA government of being too soft on Pakistan, Congress leader and former Union Minister P Chidambaram responded on Thursday, saying that PM Modi's attack on him was a figment of imagination.

In a post on X, Chidambaram said, "It is disappointing to read that the Hon'ble prime minister of India imagined the words and attributed them to me." The statement has three parts, and each one of them is terribly wrong, said Chidambaram.

"I quote his words: ...has said India was ready to respond after 26/11, but



because of the pressure exerted by some country, then the Congress government stopped India's armed forces from attacking Pakistan. It is disappointing to read that the prime minister of India imagined the words and attributed them to me," he wrote.

Modi on Wednesday attacked Congress, demanding it disclose to the

nation who prevented India from mounting a military response following the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, which were linked to Pakistan. Speaking at a function in Mumbai, Modi blamed Congress-led UPA government for weakening the fight against terror, which he alleged had "paid a heavy price" on the nation.

In a veiled reference to the comments made by former Union Home Minister P Chidambaram during a podcast, Modi said, "A Congress leader, who has also been Union Home Minister, has said a country prevented India's military retaliation post-26/11 Mumbai terror attacks in 2008. The party should clarify." (ANI)

Sex education must be from young age, not from Class IX: Supreme Court

10 OCT 2025

NEW DELHI (TIP): Sex education should be provided to children from a younger age, not from Class IX onwards, the Supreme Court held. "We are of the opinion that sex education should be provided to children from a younger age and not Class IX onwards.

It is for the authorities concerned to apply their mind and take corrective measures, so that children are informed of the changes that happen after puberty, and the care and cautions to be taken in relation thereto," said, the bench.

A two-judge bench made these observations while granting bail to a 15-year-old boy accused of offences under sections 376 (Rape) and 506 (Criminal intimidation) of the IPC (Indian Penal Code) and Section 6 (Aggravated penetrative sexual assault) of the



Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Earlier, the SC had directed release of the appellant-juvenile on terms and conditions to be fixed by the Juvenile Justice Board concerned, considering the fact that the boy was just fifteen years old.

Besides, the court had asked the UP

government to file an additional affidavit, informing the court as to how sex education is provided as a part of the curriculum in higher secondary schools in the state, so that adolescents are aware of hormonal changes that come with puberty.

Waqf REGISTRATION PLEA TO BE HEARD SOON

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear an application filed by AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi seeking an extension of the deadline for the mandatory registration of all Waqf properties, including Waqf-by-users, on the UMEED portal. After hearing the submissions from lawyers, the CJI said, we will list it. "Let it be listed, listing does not mean granting," the CJI added. (PTI)

India in history this Week

OCTOBER 10 TO OCTOBER 16

10 OCTOBER

1756 The British army led by Governor General Robert Clive recaptured Calcutta.

1910 The first All India Hindi Conference was organized in Varanasi under the chairmanship of Madan Mohan Malaviya.



1906 Indian novelist RK Narayan was born.



1954 Famous Indian actress Rekha was born.

11 OCTOBER

1902 The veteran socialist leader Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan was born.

1916 Social worker Chandika Amritrao Deshmukh was born.



1942 Bollywood emperor and century great Amitabh Bachchan was born in Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh.

1987 India's Peace Army launched Operation Pawan in Sri Lanka. The campaign was waged to liberate Jaffna by destroying the LTTE's occupation.

1737 An earthquake in Calcutta (now Kolkata) killed 3 lakh people, half the city was devastated by this natural disaster.

2001 Trinidad-born Indian-born British writer Vidyadhar Suraj Prasad Noyyal was announced to be awarded the 2001 Nobel Literature Prize.

1930 Jawaharlal Nehru was released from Naini Central Jail.

2008 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh flagged off from Naogaon station and flagged off the first train to run in the valley of Kashmir.

12 OCTOBER

1967 Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia, a fighter, fierce thinker and socialist politician of India's freedom struggle died.

1968 Equatorial Guinea, a country located in Central Africa, gained independence from Spain and this day was declared the national day of this country.

2008 Sister Alphonsa of Kerala became the first female saint of India.

1888 First revolutionary and later Gandhiji's follower Perrin Ben was born.

13 OCTOBER



1987 Evergreen actor, singer Kishore Kumar, died.

1895 The first Test captain of India's cricket team, C.K. Naidu was born.

1999 Atal Bihari Vajpayee became the Prime Minister of India for the third time.

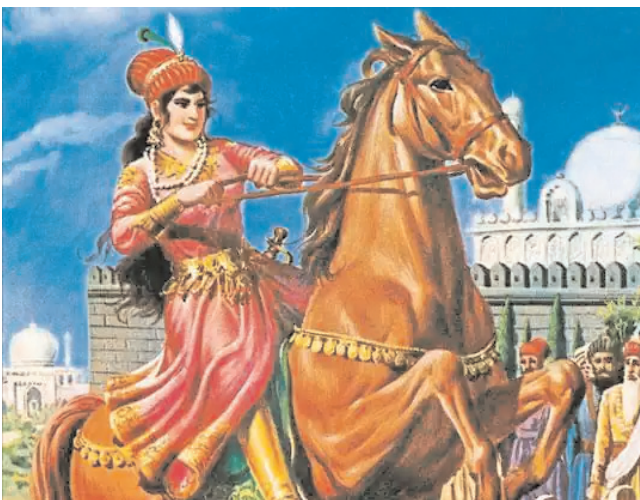
2013 A stampede in Datia district of Madhya Pradesh killed 109 people.

2011 Instructions have been given to use the words of Urdu, Persian, general Hindi and English instead of the difficult words of Hindi used in offices.

14 OCTOBER

1882 The University of Punjab was established in modern Pakistan.

1956 Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar accepted Buddhism in Nagpur with 3,85,000 followers.



1240 Razia Sultan, the first female ruler of India, died.

1643 Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah I of Delhi (India) was born.

1953 The Estate Duty Act came into effect in India.

2008 The Reserve Bank of India announced the release of an additional 200 billion rupees to meet the needs of mutual funds.

2010 The 19th Commonwealth Games in the capital Delhi ended.

15 OCTOBER



1931 11th President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam was born.

1932 The Tata Company airplane took its first flight. After the acquisition by the Government of India, this company was called Air India.



1997 Arundhati Roy was selected for Britain's most prestigious Booker Prize for her novel 'The God of Small Things'.

1949 The state of Tripura was included in India.

1988 Ujjwala Patil became the first Asian woman to travel the world through the sea.

1998 India's Fatima B was awarded the United Nations Award for the Eradication of Poverty.

1686 The Mughal ruler Aurangzeb signed a peace deal with Bijapur.

16 OCTOBER

1861 The sale of federal postage stamps began.



1948 India's famous actress and Bharatanatyam dancer Hema Malini was born.

1968 Bharatvanshi Hargovind Khurana was awarded the Nobel Prize in medicine for medicine and physiology.

1959 National Women's Education Council established.



The Association of Indians in America - New York



38th Deepavali Festival - Live Fireworks

Saturday October 11, 2025

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IAAC CELEBRATES DIWALI LIGHTS AND SEASONAL BONDS HONORING TRAILBLAZERS AT ANNUAL GALA

BY MABEL PAIS

The Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC) will hold its annual gala honoring Jyoti Menon and Deepak Raj in its Historic First on October 26, 2025.

JYOTI MENON, Vice President at Bread Financial and Trustee of Barnard College, and DEEPAK RAJ, Chairman of the India Philanthropy Alliance, are honorees at the 2025 IAAC Gala in a historic first for the organization. These two trailblazers will be celebrated together for their extraordinary contributions to finance, philanthropy, and the Indian-American community. The gala will take place on Sunday, October 26, 2025, from 5:00 PM onwards at the Union League Club, New York City.

The IAAC Gala is the organization's premier annual fundraiser, bringing together leaders, philanthropists, artists, and community members to celebrate creativity, connection, and cultural excellence. Proceeds directly support IAAC's year-round programming across film, dance, literature, and music, empowering artists and showcasing the rich diversity of Indian arts and culture.

Honoring Two Inspiring Leaders

JYOTI MENON

Jyoti Menon is a distinguished strategy leader with more than two decades of experience delivering transformative financial services products. She is currently Vice President at Bread Financial, where she oversees product strategy and delivery. Previously, she held senior leadership positions at Citi and American Express. Beyond her professional achievements, Jyoti is a Trustee on Barnard College's Board of Trustees and serves on the Board of Shanti Bhavan, a school in India dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty through world-class education.

"Jyoti Menon exemplifies the perfect blend of professional excellence and community commitment," said Vice Chairman Rakesh Kaul. "Her remarkable achievements in financial services and her dedication to education through her work with Barnard College and Shanti Bhavan demonstrate the values we celebrate at IAAC. Following in the distinguished footsteps of her visionary parents, Sreedhar and Saroj Menon, she continues a legacy of service and leadership that

IAAC 2025 GALA HONOREES



Jyoti Menon



Deepak Raj

Honorees (left) Jyoti Menon & Deepak Raj -Credit : www.iaac.us.

inspires our entire community."

DEEPAK RAJ

Deepak Raj is a trailblazer in both finance and philanthropy. After a distinguished 24-year career at Merrill Lynch, where he served as Director of Global Equity Research, he founded the Raj Family Foundation to advance causes impacting India and Indian-Americans. A well-known philanthropist, he has served in leadership roles with organizations including Pratham USA and is the co-Founder of Indian-American Impact. In 2015, he and his wife Neera established the Deepak and Neera Raj Center on Indian Economic Policies at Columbia University. He is also Managing Director of Raj Associates, Chairman of the New Jersey State Investment Council, and a recipient of the Distinguished Alumnus Award from IIT Kanpur.

"Deepak Raj represents the very best of what it means to give back to one's community," said Chairman Dr. Nirmal Mattoo. "His transition from Wall Street success to philanthropic leadership demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to lifting others and strengthening the bonds between India and America. Through his work with the India Philanthropy Alliance and countless other organizations, he has created pathways for future generations to thrive."

MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

This year's gala will feature a special performance by musicians from the Grammy-nominated Berklee India Exchange, known for their groundbreaking cross-



Musicians. -Credit : www.iaac.us.

cultural collaborations that bridge Indian classical traditions with contemporary global music. Their uplifting, innovative performance will set the tone for an unforgettable evening of community and celebration.

A CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE AND IMPACT

This historic recognition of two exceptional leaders marks a milestone for IAAC as the organization continues to champion Indian arts and culture while celebrating the achievements of community members who embody excellence in their professional and philanthropic endeavors.

PROGRAM

WHAT: 2025 IAAC Gala
WHEN: Sunday, October 26, 2025 | 5:00 PM onwards
WHERE: The Union League Club, 38 East 37th Street, New York, NY 10016.
ENTERTAINMENT: Musical performance by the Berklee India Exchange ensemble
TICKETS

For more information and to reserve your table or ticket, visit iaac.us/annual-gala-2025.

All proceeds support IAAC's mission to promote, showcase, and build an awareness of the arts and artists of Indian heritage in New York City and beyond.

CELEBRATE DIWALI AT SEAPORT MUSEUM, NEW YORK

BY MABEL PAIS

Join the South Street Seaport Museum with Culture Tree for the Diwali Celebration at Seaport Museum on Monday, October 20, 2025 from 3–6pm.

There will be Festive activities to mark Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights. Diwali, named for the row (avali) of clay lamps (deepa) that light up homes to symbolize the inner light that protects from spiritual darkness, also marks the start of the Hindu New Year.

SCHEDULE

From 3pm to 6pm, decorate your own "diya lamp" — or in this case, a candle — on the cobblestones of Water Street outside of the Museum and float it in a special pool, symbolizing prosperity for the new year.

At 4pm, audience members will head into the Museum's first-floor Maritime City exhibition gallery for Diwali Puppet Storytime, where they will explore the significance and origins of Diwali and how it's celebrated



Diwali diyas. -Credit: www.theculturetree.com

worldwide. We'll also read stories like 'A Kids Book About Diwali,' perfect for children and families.

Following Storytime, at 5pm, the audience will jump into an interactive dance workshop and performance in

which they will experience and dance to popular Diwali songs, music, and stories. Attendees will learn mudras (hand gestures) from classical dance forms and dance to beautiful Diwali songs.

In addition to these exciting, all-ages activities, enjoy free access to the Seaport Museum's Maritime City exhibition and explore the unique letterpress printshop Bowne & Co., Stationers (southstreetseaportmuseum.org/bowne-co-stationers), which will even have something special to print using the Museum's 19th century printing press!

TICKETS

Preregistration is encouraged. Walkups will be accommodated as possible. Tickets are free and can be reserved at southstreetseaportmuseum.org/diwali.

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

WORLD FOOD MOVEMENT INAUGURATES ITS FEEDING MISSION IN THE USA



Chanchalapathi Dasa lights the lamp



Honored Guests - left to right: Dr. Patricia Ramsey; Consul General of New York, Shri Binaya Srikanta Pradhan; WFM Founder Shri Chanchalapathi Dasa; NJ Assemblyman Sterley S. Stanley.

BY MABEL PAIS

The World Food Movement (WFM), established to provide food assistance to students and communities in the United States of America, held its launch on September 28, 2025 at the Victoria Theatre of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) in Newark, New Jersey. This initiative is inspired by The Akshaya Patra Foundation, the world's largest NGO-run school lunch program serving fresh, nutritious meals to millions of children every day.

WFM will focus on addressing hunger and food insecurity among students and communities across the United States of America. It has commenced feeding in prominent areas like the Bay Area (California), New York and New Jersey. The organization will extend its reach to Boston, Washington, D.C, Seattle and other locations to benefit more communities. Earlier this year, WFM served over 7000 meals with a goal of serving 100,000 meals annually by 2027.

The vision behind this movement began in 1966 when Srila Prabhupada (founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness - ISKCON) - arrived in America, and personally cooked and fed sumptuous meals to youth in New York. Those humble beginnings sowed the seeds of an inspiring legacy of compassion that the WFM carries forward today.

WFM is led by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa and Sri Chanchalapathi Dasa, founders of The Akshaya Patra Foundation in India. The team will leverage the learning and expertise gained from over 25 years of feeding experience in its projects and initiatives.

HONORED GUEST-ATTENDEES

The launch was attended by Shri Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York; Dr. Patricia Ramsey, President of Medgar Evers College; and several dignitaries from across the US. Sri Chanchalapathi Dasa, Co-founder and Vice Chairman, World Food Movement, presided over the event.

The Honorable Mayor of Newark Ras J. Baraka, awarded a citation on the occasion, congratulating the World Food Movement and said that the organization will be a major power to address food insecurity and empower students and communities.

SPEAKER / ENTERTAINMENT CONTRIBUTORS

Abby V, an internationally acclaimed singer extended his support for the occasion, by rendering scintillating entertainment, blending classical and contemporary music styles.

Persistent Foundation US (persistentsystems.com), the US Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) arm of Persistent Systems, a global Digital Engineering and Enterprise Modernization leader; contributed to the initiative. The Wealth Planning Advisory Group (wealthplanning.com), a financial planning firm, partnered in organizing the event.

Shri Binaya Srikanta Pradhan expressed his appreciation and said, "World Food Movement is a wonderful initiative, inspired by Srila Prabhupada's vision of a hunger-free

Abby V performs at NJPAC. -Photos: www.wfmamerica.org

world, that will benefit communities across the United States. For the last 18 months, I have watched its founders shape a movement of dignity. Just listening to a food-insecure Harlem beneficiary say 'This meal is my breakfast, lunch and dinner' was moving and shows me the impact this program is having. Helping young people in this way is what the Indian ethic of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the world is one family, is all about. I have no doubt one million meals is a goal that will be met before 2030."

Shri Madhu Pandit Dasa said, "I am happy that (the) World Food Movement has been officially launched today to work towards a common goal, alleviating hunger and enhancing food and nutrition security in America. We will dedicate all our energies and resources to serve the people in this country, targeting a life of dignity, good health and happiness. I invite everyone to join us in our mission to build a hunger-free world."

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Chanchalapathi Dasa said, "I extend my gratitude to everyone present at the inaugural event of (the) World Food Movement. I wholeheartedly thank all our partners and well-wishers for making the event a success. We look forward to working with the government, college and university administrations, donors and all other stakeholders to serve the people of America. I am confident that with your support and encouragement, we can work towards fulfilling our vision that no one should go hungry."

From the NJ Statehouse, Assemblyman Stanley of New Jersey's 18th District released a joint resolution commending the World Food Movement. He said, "The program is already transforming lives on campuses across the state. It unites diverse communities." He added that he wanted the next generation of students to participate in giving to those less fortunate, since learning to give back is as important as nourishing the body.

Thanking the World Food Movement, Dr. Patricia Ramsey, President of Medgar Evers College, said, "People think of college students as living in luxury, but the reality is many are struggling just to eat. I myself know what it is like to stand in an Ivy League (a group of long-established colleges and universities in the eastern US having high academic and social prestige. It includes Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Dartmouth, Cornell, Brown, and the

University of Pennsylvania) dorm with only five dollars in my pocket. No person deserves to go hungry. Providing fresh food is part of ensuring dignity and academic success."

Sonali Deshpande, Chairperson of Persistent Foundation, said, "It is an honor for Persistent Foundation US to partner with (the) World Food Movement in their mission to ensure access to nutritious meals for students and communities. This collaboration aligns with our commitment to supporting education, community development, and sustainability, underscoring the importance of creating a healthier, more resilient society."

A few beneficiaries of the World Food Movement also attended the launch event.

Fatima, a single mother from Medgar Evers, expressed her gratitude for the organization's initiative and said that fresh, nutritious meals will help her stay focused on her education. Alia, another beneficiary, described the challenges students face every day and expressed her gratitude to the World Food Movement for providing healthy, delicious meals. She said that this initiative lifts the burden off students and gives them the strength to achieve their goals.

THE WORLD FOOD MOVEMENT (WFM)

The World Food Movement is a not-for-profit organization established in the United States of America in 2025 to serve the people of this country. This organization is being led by Sri Madhu Pandit Dasa and Sri Chanchalapathi Dasa, the founders of The Akshaya Patra Foundation, which is the world's largest NGO-run school lunch program.

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Founder-Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), envisioned a world where no one ever goes hungry. The World Food Movement is an initiative in pursuance of his great desire to feed people extensively.

Replicability and scalability are two vital attributes of Akshaya Patra's feeding programs. Its successful models will be replicated in the World Food Movement to serve the best quality of food to people. Kitchens are the heart of their feeding mission. State-of-the-art technology is used for cooking while maintaining the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness in the kitchens. Rigorous processes and systems are followed to ensure food safety and quality.

The World Food Movement's infrastructure and resources will also be used to undertake food relief efforts during emergencies, wherever necessary. The team will utilize the learning and expertise gathered from its feeding experience over the last 25 years in World Food Movement's projects and initiatives. The Board and Leadership are committed to ensuring transparency, accountability, good governance, and stakeholder satisfaction.

The World Food Movement is currently focusing on feeding students in community colleges and food-insecure individuals in various locations across the United States of America.

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

HOT SPRINGS DOC FILM FEST RETURNS FOR 34TH EDITION

BY MABEL PAIS

HONOREE: GEETA GANDBHIR RECEIVES 2025 IMPACT AWARD

Featuring

Director GEETA GANDBHIR's Feature 'THE PERFECT NEIGHBOR'

and Short Film 'THE DEVIL IS BUSY'

Director KARLA MURTHY's Feature 'THE GAS STATION ATTENDANT'

Director Ladkani's Feature 'YANUNI'

Director SOUID "JJO" DATTA's Short Film 'NOT YET'

Director ANURIMA BHARGAVA's Short Film 'TEACHING AMERICA'

And many more

The Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival (HSDFF) for its 34th edition has the lineup of films and honorees taking place, October 10 -18. Screenings will take place at Oaklawn's Event Center {307 Carpenter Dam Road, Hot Springs, AR 71901 - Phone: (501) 623-0020}.

HONOREES

GEETA GANDBHIR will be the recipient of this year's Impact Award and

JON ALPERT will receive the HSDFF Brent Renaud Career Achievement Award.

HSDFF Executive Director, Ken Jacobson, said, "In a world that seems, at times, on the verge of spinning out of control, I marvel at the fact that something as simple as a gathering of people to watch documentary films on a big screen can feel as miraculous and urgent as it does this year. For 34 years, the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival has brought the best in non-fiction filmmaking to Hot Springs. Our community has responded by welcoming filmmakers and other guests here to join with us in celebrating this remarkable art form. This year, I am struck by the sheer quality and dynamism of the filmmaking, the courage of those willing to share their lives with the filmmakers, and the emotional depths explored through these incredibly diverse stories. If this year's festival lineup tells us anything, it's that creativity and truth-telling still remain as vital as ever. From our Opening to our Closing Night and everything in between, I know that our audiences are in for a very special and unique experience."

Highlights

ADDITIONAL / SPECIAL EVENTS

Marking Indigenous Peoples' Day on Monday, October 13th, the festival features a stellar lineup of documentaries that celebrate Native and Indigenous stories and storytellers: 'Powwow People,' 'Remaining Native,' 'Drowned Land' and 'Yanuni.'

NATIONAL PARK COLLEGE (NPC) AND HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE SHORTS PROGRAMS

For the first time, HSDFF is expanding its program to the National Park College in Hot Springs for a specially curated package of short films intended to build connections between the festival and the NPC community. For the second year in a row, HSDFF brings its documentary programming to nearby Hot Springs Village for a curated shorts program.

The Emerging Filmmakers Program, a long-standing partnership between HSDFF and Arkansas PBS, is one of HSDFF's most cherished educational initiatives. This full-day experience welcomes middle and high school students from throughout the region to engage in thought-provoking screenings, interactive



Geeta Gandbhir, honoree



Jon Alpert, honoree



'Lost Wolves of Yellowstone,' Opening Night film



Indigenous film, 'Remaining Native.'

Q&A sessions, and hands-on workshops. Designed to immerse young storytellers in the craft of documentary filmmaking, the program features guidance from award-winning filmmakers and top industry professionals. Since its inception, the program has welcomed hundreds of students from more than 30 schools.

The Brent Renaud Mentorship Program is presented in partnership with Arkansas PBS. Working filmmakers join Peabody Award-winner Craig Renaud to offer a behind-the-scenes look at their creative processes and share practical guidance for building a sustainable career in filmmaking. This unique opportunity allows participants to gain an insider's perspective on the art and craft of documentary filmmaking.

THE FILMMAKER FORUM

Now in its third year, the HSDFF Filmmaker Forum is a three-day filmmaker/industry conference and convening to be held October 12 – 14 during this year's Festival. In this unprecedented year, in which federal government funding has been stripped from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and public media, there is no more urgent time for filmmakers and industry leaders to meet, discuss and raise critical questions about where the documentary field stands and where to go from here. The Forum offers dynamic programming focused on the art, craft and business of documentary storytelling with a focus on public media, and a wider lens on the nonfiction ecosystem as a whole.

TICKETS

For more information on purchasing and additional details on the Hot Springs Documentary Film festival,

visit: hsdffi.org.

2025 Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival Lineup

Thomas Winston's 'LOST WOLVES OF YELLOWSTONE' Opens the Festival
André Hörmann's 'THE COWBOY' is the Centerpiece selection, and
Elegance Bratton's 'MOVE YA BODY: THE BIRTH OF HOUSE' gets the closing slot.

FEATURES

There are about 38 Features.

SHORT FILMS

In the **HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE SHORTS PROGRAM**, there are 7 films.

In the **CREATIVITY UNBOUND** category, there are 5 films.

Learn more at hsdffi.org.

HOT SPRINGS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

Each year, with the help of a small staff and over 100 dedicated volunteers, Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival (hsdffi.org) attracts thousands of visitors to the 9-day multicultural and intergenerational event. Now approaching its 34th year as the oldest all-documentary festival in North America and one of the longest running non-fiction festivals in the world, the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival remains a prominent champion and protector of the documentary film genre.

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



Govinda hints at comeback: What's next for '90s icon

Bollywood actor Govinda, who ruled the roost in the 1990s, is gearing up for a fresh chapter in his career as he has said that he is “all set for a new inning”.

Hinting towards exciting projects on the horizon, Govinda took to Instagram, where he shared a picture of himself from a set in Film City.

In the image, the Bollywood's original entertainer, who is known for his impeccable comic timing and dance moves, is seen standing and smiling dressed in a bright yellow jacket with intricate patterns, paired with a white T-shirt, blue jeans, and brown shoes.

For the caption, Govinda, who goes by the Instagram handle “govinda_heronol” wrote: “All set for new inning”.

The actor did not share any details about the project. However, as per media reports, Govinda will return with a new concept-based show titled ‘Lane Den-It’s All About Business’.

The 61-year-old actor started as an action and dancing hero in the 1980s, his first film was 1986's Love 86, which turned out to be a hit. He then went on to be seen in films such as Ilzaam, Marte Dam Tak, Khudgarz, Dariya Dil, Jaisi Karni Waisi Bharni, Swarg and Hum.

The actor reinvented himself as a comic hero in the 1990s with films such as Raja Babu, Coolie No. 1, Saajan Chale Sasural, Hero No. 1, Deewana Mastana, Dulhe Raja, Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, Anari No. 1, Haseena Maan Jayegi and Jodi No. 1.

The actor then faced failure in the 2000s, after which he was seen in commercial hits such as

Bhagam Bhag, Partner and Holiday: A Soldier Is Never Off Duty. In 2015, Govinda became a judge in the reality show, Dance India Dance Super Moms.

Govinda was also a member of the Parliament of India from 2004 to 2009. As the Indian National Congress party member, he was elected as Member of Parliament (MP) from the Mumbai North constituency of Maharashtra, India in the Lok Sabha elections of 2004. In 2024, just before the Lok Sabha elections, he joined Shivsena.

Arbaaz Khan and Sshura Khan welcome first child, a baby girl

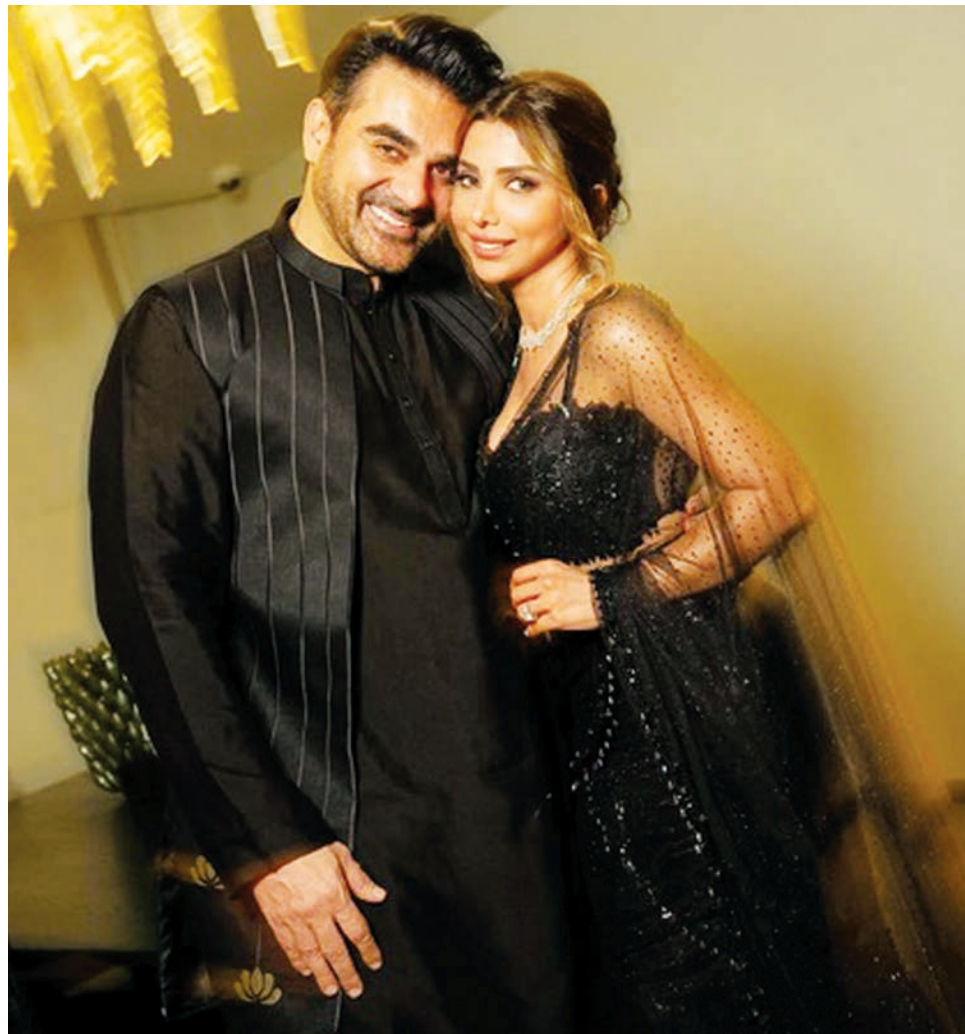
Actor Arbaaz Khan and his wife, Sshura Khan, have welcomed their first child. Sshura was reportedly admitted to PD Hinduja Hospital in Mumbai on October 4.

The couple have been blessed with a baby girl on Sunday, Oct 5. Salman Khan is also on his way back from the Panvel farmhouse to celebrate the happy occasion with his family.

Recently, the couple hosted Sshura's baby shower in grand style. Salman Khan, who is currently occupied with 'Bigg Boss 19' and filming 'Battle of Galwan', took time off to personally attend the celebration. Surrounded by close family members and friends from the industry, Salman made a striking entry, arriving with tight security. A video of the actor from the event soon went viral.

At the baby shower, Arbaaz and Sshura looked delightful in coordinated yellow ensembles. She dazzled in a flowing gown, while Arbaaz complemented her perfectly in a matching shirt paired with white trousers, together making a picture-perfect couple.

Arbaaz had confirmed Sshura's pregnancy back in June, sharing the happy news with Delhi Times. “Yes, it's true. I'm not denying it because it's already out there. My family knows, and now it's public knowledge. It's a very exciting time for us both. We're happy and looking forward to this new chapter,” he said.



Previously married to Malaika Arora, Arbaaz shares a 22-year-old son, Arhaan Khan, with her. The two parted ways in 2017 after 19 years of marriage but have

maintained a cordial co-parenting relationship. Arbaaz and Sshura got married in an intimate ceremony in December 2023.

Triptii Dimri's subtle gesture speaks volumes amid 'spirit' controversy

Triptii Dimri has made a subtle yet strong statement amid the ongoing controversy surrounding Spirit, director Sandeep Reddy Vanga's next film starring Prabhas. The actress, who replaced Deepika Padukone as the film's female lead, recently liked a social media reel that exposes “negative PR” and “false narratives” against Deepika. The move has sparked widespread discussion online, with many fans interpreting it as Triptii's gesture of solidarity toward the Pathaan star.

The reel in question features celebrity saree draper Dolly Jain, who praised Deepika Padukone's sheer dedication and resilience. In the video, Dolly recalled how Deepika performed the iconic “Nagada Sang Dhol” song from Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela barefoot, enduring bleeding and swelling on her feet due to the heavy 30 kg lehenga and intense choreography. Triptii's simple “like” on the post was enough to catch fans' attention, as it appeared to counter the online negativity surrounding Deepika since her exit from Spirit. Deepika Padukone was originally signed to star opposite Prabhas in Spirit, marking her first collaboration with Sandeep Reddy Vanga. However, the actress reportedly opted out after salary negotiations and scheduling demands could not be met. According to industry insiders, Deepika had requested limited working hours post-motherhood, a share of the film's profits, and a higher fee, conditions that didn't align with the production plan.



Michelle Pfeiffer recalls audition for Al Pacino starrer Scarface



Actress and film producer Michelle Pfeiffer recalled her audition process for Brian De Palma's directorial crime drama 'Scarface', also starring Al Pacino, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

She shared the moment when Pacino was convinced she was perfect for the role of Elvira in the 1983 film.

She recently appeared on the

SmartLess podcast, hosted by Will Arnett, Jason Bateman, and Sean Hayes, and recalled being part of the movie. Michelle said that while the filmmaker wanted her for the part, Pacino didn't initially feel the same way.

"Al will admit this," she said, "but he didn't really want me for the part," as quoted by The Hollywood Reporter.

She recalled meeting De Palma and the casting director and failing her initial audition for the film. However, "over the course of two months, I just got worse and worse and worse, because I'm just afraid. And by the end, I'm bad."

Pfeiffer admitted she didn't "blame" Pacino for his initial reaction. "He just was like, 'She's bad.' And Brian finally comes to me and says, 'You know, doll, it's just not gonna work out. I'm like, 'I know, man. I'm sorry.' Because Brian really wanted me," she said, as per the outlet.

"As disappointed as I was," the ace star continued, "I was so happy to be done with it. So, like, at least a month goes by, and I get a call, they want to bring me in to screen test. So I show up and I don't even give a shit, 'cause I know I'm not getting this part."

Pfeiffer recalled that the "restaurant scene where I explode at the end," ended up being "my best work of the film."

"I swipe the table of the dishes and glasses break, the dishes break, cut. There's blood everywhere. They all run over to me, to see where I've cut myself. Well, I didn't cut me. I cut Al," she recalled, adding that she "cut him in the finger or something," according to The Hollywood Reporter.

"I thought, 'Well, there goes that part.' But actually, I think that was the day [Pacino] was like, 'Yeah, yeah. I think, yeah, she's not bad,'" Pfeiffer added.

The 1983 crime classic follows determined, criminal-minded Cuban immigrant Tony Montana (Pacino), who becomes the biggest drug smuggler in Miami and is eventually undone by his own drug addiction. Elvira was Tony's troubled wife, a drug-addicted socialite, who was the former lover of his boss, Frank Lopez (Robert Loggia), according to The Hollywood Reporter.



Julia Roberts says Hollywood is still a male-dominated industry

Oscar-winning actress Julia Roberts feels Hollywood is a male-dominated environment after all her years in the film industry.

Roberts said that she can relate to her character Alma Imhoff in the new movie After the Hunt, who claims she had to be successful in a "deeply misogynist" world to become a professor at Yale University.

Asked if her experience mirrored Alma's, Roberts told The Sunday Times newspaper: "Well, it's still super-male! Make no mistake. But yes. Any woman in any job not populated in the majority by women can say Alma's speech."

"We've all had that experience. Any woman has. Because I often find myself sitting at a table and, maybe, there's only one other woman there," added the 57-year-old actress.

Roberts said she has had to be fearless to make herself heard in a male-dominated world, reports femalefirst.co.uk.

The "Ticket To Paradise" star said: "In those sort of environments. I am without fear." The actress said that she decided to accept a role in Luca Guadagnino's flick After the Hunt despite not being able to decide whether or not she liked the troubled university professor she portrays.

Ben Affleck-Jennifer Lopez reunite at premiere 9 months after divorce

Ex couple Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez reunited, albeit just for a night, at the New York premiere of 'Kiss of the Spider Woman', with Affleck showing support for his former wife. The duo, all smiles on the red carpet, chatted intimately and posed for photos, marking their first public appearance together since their divorce was finalised earlier this year.

Affleck, 53, who serves as an executive producer of the film alongside Matt Damon's Artist Equity production company, praised Lopez at the screening. "It's an honour to be here. This movie is exquisite. Jennifer, you're incredible. Bill, you did an amazing job. [Tonatiuh], you're phenomenal. Welcome to a lifelong stardom. Enjoy it. There's ups and downs, but here you are. It's really, truly a thrill and honour, and I'm just

proud of this movie. Thank you for letting me be part of it," he said.

Lopez, 56, turned heads in a dramatic gown with an exaggerated corset, while Affleck looked dapper in a navy suit and white button-up, wrapping his arm around Lopez as they posed for photographers. Their warm interaction on the red carpet has already sparked fan speculation about a possible reconciliation.

The premiere comes nine months after Lopez and Affleck settled their divorce, following two years of marriage. The former couple first dated in the early 2000s and were engaged before separating, only to rekindle their relationship and marry in 2022. Lopez cited April 26, 2025, as their official date of separation, and the divorce was quietly finalised in January this year.



TAIWAN LEADER VOWS STRONGER AIR DEFENCES TO COUNTER 'ENEMY THREATS'

10 OCT 2025,

TAIPEI (TIP): Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te vowed Friday to speed up construction of a multi-layered air defence system as part of efforts to counter "enemy threats".

Lai's government has been under US pressure to improve its ability to defend itself against a potential attack by China, which claims the island is part of its territory.

"We will accelerate our building of the T-Dome, establish a rigorous air defence system in Taiwan with multi-layered defence, high-level detection, and effective interception," Lai said during Taiwan's National Day celebrations.

Lai said Taiwan was determined to "maintain peace through strength" and called on China to "renounce the use of force or coercion to change the status quo across the Taiwan Strait".

Lai's speech followed a bruising 17 months for the president, a staunch defender of Taiwan's sovereignty who is loathed by Beijing.

A failed effort this year to unseat dozens of opposition lawmakers, which could have given Lai's Democratic Progressive Party a majority in the parliament, left the government weakened.

US tariffs on Taiwanese shipments and doubts over President Donald Trump's willingness to protect the island have also eroded confidence in the key relationship.

Lai reiterated on Friday plans to ramp up defence spending to more than three percent of gross domestic product next year and five percent by 2030, "showing our determination to safeguard the nation". (AFP)

POPE LEO BLASTS ECONOMY THAT MARGINALIZES POOR WHILE WEALTHY LIVE IN BUBBLE OF LUXURY

09 OCT 2025

VATICAN CITY (TIP): Pope Leo XIV blasted how the wealthy elite live in a "bubble of comfort and luxury" while poor people suffer on the margins, confirming in his first teaching document Thursday that he is in perfect lockstep with his predecessor Pope Francis on matters of social and economic injustice.

The Vatican on Thursday released the document, entitled "I have loved you," which Francis had begun to write in his final months but never finished. Leo, who was elected in May, credited Francis with the text, cited him repeatedly, but said he had made the document his own and signed it.

The 100-page document traces the history of Christianity's constant concern for poor people, from Biblical citations and the teaching of church fathers to the preaching of recent popes about caring for migrants, prisoners and victims of human trafficking. (AP)

Madagascar's Gen Z protesters clash with police as they call for president to step down

10 OCT 2025

ANTANANARIVO (TIP): About 1,000 protesters marched in Madagascar's capital on Thursday, clashing with police who used tear gas and stun grenades to disperse them in the third week of what has been the most significant unrest in years in the Indian Ocean island nation.

Police could be seen patrolling the streets of Antananarivo in armored cars and charging at protesters, most of them wearing masks. It wasn't immediately clear if there were any injuries.

The protests, led by a group calling itself "Gen Z Madagascar," are the latest in a series of demonstrations that the United Nations says have left 22 people dead and dozens injured. The government has disputed this number.

The protests were first sparked by water and power cuts but soon expanded to include frustrations over allegations of corruption and nepotism.

The protests led Madagascar's President Andry Rajoelina to fire his entire Cabinet, but this has failed to appease the young people, who are now calling on him to step down. They also rejected an invitation to have talks with Rajoelina on Wednesday.

During the clashes in the Anosy and Mahamasina districts near the Mahamasina Municipal Stadium,



protesters barricaded some of the streets with rocks and burning tires.

Authorities banned cars from driving at Democracy Square in Ambohitovo district and the surrounding area as police kept watch.

Madagascar, a large island of around 31 million people off the east coast of Africa with a history of political crises, has seen several leaders forced out in uprisings since it gained independence from France in 1960.

It struggles with severe poverty, which affects around 80% of the population, according to the World Bank.

Rajoelina, 51, was elected president in 2018 and reelected in 2023, a vote boycotted by opposition parties.

The latest protests have used as their most prominent symbol an image of a pirate skull and crossbones that was seen in the youth-led uprising in Nepal last month and other protests across the world. There have also been lootings during the demonstrations, authorities say.

The protest movement has mobilized over the internet and the protesters say they were inspired by the demonstrations that toppled governments in Nepal and Sri Lanka. (AP)

7.6-magnitude earthquake strikes off southern Philippines, may cause tsunami

10 OCT 2025

MANILA (TIP): An offshore earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.6 hit off a southern Philippine province Friday morning, prompting officials to order villagers to evacuate from nearby coastal provinces due to a possible tsunami.

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said the potential damage was being assessed and rescue teams and relief operations were being prepared and would be deployed when it was safe to do so.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said it was expecting damage and aftershocks from the earthquake, which was centered at sea about 62 kilometers (38 miles) southeast of Manay town in Davao Oriental province and was caused by movement in a fault at a shallow depth of 10 kilometers (6 miles).

Children evacuated schools in Davao city, which has about 5.4 million people and is the biggest city near the epicenter, about 250 kilometers (155 miles) west of Davao Oriental province.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Honolulu said hazardous waves were possible within 300 kilometers (186 miles) of the epicenter. It said waves up to 3 meters (10 feet) above normal tides were possible on some Philippine coasts, and smaller waves were possible in Indonesia and Palau.

Office of Civil Defense deputy



administrator Bernardo Rafaelito Alejandro IV warned that tsunami waves could hit six nearby coastal provinces from Davao Oriental up to two hours after the earthquake struck at 9:43 a.m. He asked people to immediately move to higher ground or further inland away from coastal areas.

"We urge these coastal communities to be on alert and immediately evacuate to higher grounds until further notice," Alejandro said in a video news briefing.

"Owners of boats in harbors and those in the coastal areas...should secure their boats and move away from the waterfronts," he said.

Indonesian authorities issued a tsunami warning for northeastern regions of Papua and North Sulawesi, about 275 kilometers (170 miles) from the epicenter. Indonesia's Meteorology,

Climatology, and Geophysics Agency said in a statement that residents in the area should be aware and stay away from beaches and riverbanks.

The Philippines is still recovering from a Sept. 30 earthquake with a magnitude of 6.9 that left at least 74 people dead and displaced thousands of people in the central province of Cebu, particularly Bogu city and outlying towns.

One of the world's most disaster-prone countries, the Philippines is often hit by earthquakes and volcanic eruptions because of its location on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," an arc of seismic faults around the ocean.

The archipelago also is lashed by about 20 typhoons and storms each year, making disaster response a major task of the government and volunteer groups. (AP)

Putin admits Russian role in 2024 crash of Azerbaijani jet that killed 38

09 OCT 2025

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday admitted for the first time his country played a role in the 2024 crash of an Azerbaijani passenger plane, describing it as a "tragedy".

The Azerbaijan Airlines flight crash landed in Kazakhstan on December 25, killing 38 of the 67 people on board, after being diverted from a scheduled landing in the southern Russian city of Grozny.

In a meeting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Putin said Russia had deployed two missiles to destroy Ukrainian drones on the morning of the incident, and that they exploded "a few meters away" from the aircraft.

"The two missiles that were fired did not directly hit the aircraft. If that had happened, it would have crashed on the spot," Putin said.

Russian air traffic controllers advised the pilot attempt a landing in the Russian city of Makhachkala, but he instead attempted to land at his home airport and then in Kazakhstan, where the plane came down, Putin said.

"Russia will do everything necessary



in such tragic cases to provide compensation, and the actions of all officials will be legally assessed," he said.

Aliyev previously accused Russia of attempting to conceal the true cause of the crash.

On Thursday, he thanked Putin for providing "detailed information about the tragedy", the Kremlin said in a



readout.

Initial statements by Russia's air transport agency suggested that the plane, an Embraer 190, was forced to divert after a bird strike.

Russia's handling of the incident dramatically soured relations with Azerbaijan, an oil-rich post-Soviet state with historically close links to Moscow. (AFP)

NORTH KOREA'S RULING PARTY TURNS 80 WITH FOREIGN LEADERS IN ATTENDANCE

09 OCT 2025

BEIJING (TIP): North Korea is celebrating Friday the 80th anniversary of the ruling party and different foreign dignitaries and leaders will be part of the commemoration.

The Workers' Party celebrations will serve to show once again how North Korea is trying to shore up its relations with some key global players and allies, such as China and Russia, who are sending high-level representatives.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has had in China his most important ally, and in recent years he has also built ties with Russia, a country Pyongyang has helped by sending troops to participate in its war against Ukraine.

In September, Kim Jong Un stood next to Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin as part of a visit to Beijing to attend a massive military parade marking the end of the World War II.

The plans of what will happen during the commemoration have not been revealed, but some foreign leaders have started arriving. (AP)

Hungarian writer László Krasznahorkai wins the Nobel Prize in literature

09 OCT 2025

STOCKHOLM (TIP): Hungarian writer László Krasznahorkai, whose philosophical, bleakly funny novels often unfold in single sentences, won the Nobel Prize in literature Thursday for his "compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art."

Several works including his debut, "Satantango" and "The Melancholy of Resistance," were turned into films by Hungarian director Béla Tarr.

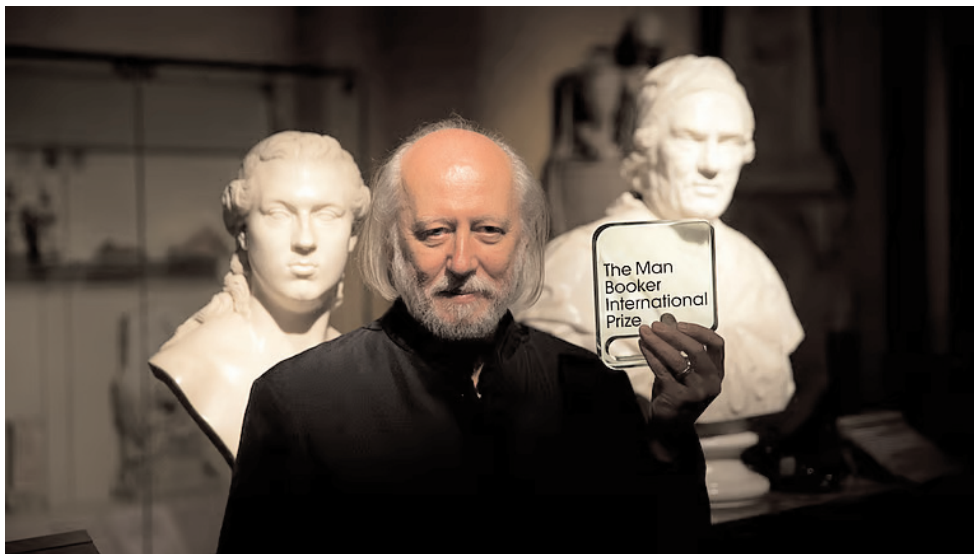
The Nobel judges praised his "artistic gaze which is entirely free of illusion, and which sees through the fragility of the social order combined with his unwavering belief in the power of art," Steve Sem-Sandberg of the Nobel committee said at the announcement.

"László Krasznahorkai is a great epic writer in the Central European tradition that extends through (Franz) Kafka to Thomas Bernhard, and is characterized by absurdism and grotesque excess," the Nobel judges said.

Other books include "The Melancholy of Resistance," a surreal, disturbing tale set in a small Hungarian town, and "Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming," the sprawling saga of a gambling-addicted aristocrat.

He has also written several books inspired by his travels to China and Japan, including "A Mountain to the North, a Lake to the South, Paths to the West, a River to the East," published in Hungarian in 2003.

Sem-Sandberg said that



Krasznahorkai had been on the Nobel radar for some time, "and he has been writing and creating one outstanding work after another." He called his literary output "almost half a century of pure excellence."

He was born in the southeastern Hungarian city of Gyula, near the border with Romania. Throughout the 1970s, he studied law at universities in Szeged and Budapest before shifting his focus to literature. According to the biography section of his website, he has traveled widely throughout Europe, Asia and the Americas, and has lived in many different countries.

Krasznahorkai has been a vocal critic of autocratic Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, especially his government's lack of support for

Ukraine after the Russian invasion. He said in an interview for the Yale Review this year: "How can a country be neutral when the Russians invade a neighboring country?"

But in a post on Facebook, Orbán was quick to congratulate the writer, saying: "The pride of Hungary, the first Nobel Prize winner from Gyula, László Krasznahorkai. Congratulations!"

Krasznahorkai has received many awards, including the 2015 Man Booker International Prize. The Booker judges praised his "extraordinary sentences, sentences of incredible length that go to incredible lengths, their tone switching from solemn to madcap to quizzical to desolate as they go their wayward way."

He also won the National Book Award for Translated Literature in the U.S. in

2019 for "Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming."

The American writer and critic Susan Sontag has described Krasznahorkai as the "contemporary master of the Apocalypse." He was also friends with American poet and writer Allen Ginsberg and would regularly stay in Ginsberg's apartment while visiting New York City.

Sem-Sandberg said that Krasznahorkai "has an outstanding ability to make his world, his literary world, come true to you. I mean, you're placed in the middle of everything that happens around you, and that is a great merit. Few authors are able to do that."

He's the first winner from Hungary since Imre Kertész in 2002. He joins an illustrious list of laureates that includes Ernest Hemingway, Toni Morrison and Kazuo Ishiguro.

The literature prize has been awarded by the Nobel committee of the Swedish Academy 117 times to a total of 121 winners. Last year's prize was won by South Korean author Han Kang for her body of work that the committee said "confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life."

The winner of the Nobel Peace Prize will be announced on Friday. The final Nobel, the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, will be announced on Monday.

Nobel Prize award ceremonies are held on Dec. 10, the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death in 1896. Nobel was a wealthy Swedish industrialist and the inventor of dynamite who founded the prizes.

Each prize carries an award of 11 million Swedish kronor (nearly \$1.2 million), and the winners also receive an 18-carat gold medal and a diploma. (AP)

'INDIA WAS UNITED ONLY UNDER AURANGZEB': PAKISTAN MINISTER KHAWAJA ASIF ISSUES PROVOCATIVE STATEMENT

OCT 08, 2025

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has once again resorted to aggressive rhetoric against India, saying the "chances of war with India are real" and claiming he was "not denying that possibility".

In an interview with Samaa TV, Asif made a series of provocative statements, including claims about India's history and Pakistan's unity in the face of conflict.

"I do not want escalation, but the risks are real and I am not denying that. If it comes to war, God willing, we will achieve a better result than before," said Asif.

He claimed that India was never a united nation, except briefly under Aurangzeb, and that Pakistan was created in the name of Allah. Asif said that Pakistanis argue and compete at home, but come together in the face of conflict with India.

His latest remarks come just days after he made similar threats following statements from Indian Army chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi, who warned Pakistan to stop backing state-sponsored terrorism if it wants to exist on the world map.

Asif's latest statement follows a series of provocative comments he made earlier this week, where he warned that any future Indian "aggression" would invite an even stronger response from Pakistan, as per Samaa TV.

EXPLOSION HEARD IN AFGHANISTAN'S KABUL; TALIBAN SAYS NO REPORTS OF DAMAGE

KABUL OCTOBER 10 (TIP): Afghan authorities reported an explosion occurred in the capital city of Kabul late on Thursday night, as reported by Dawn.

According to Dawn, the explosion occurred near Abdul Haq Square, where a Land Cruiser vehicle was reportedly hit. Afghan media outlet Tolo News cited local residents as saying that the Abdul Haq intersection was closed following the incident, leading to severe traffic congestion in the area.

Afghan Taliban spokesperson Zabeehullah Mujahid said, "The sound of an explosion was heard in the city of Kabul. However, no one should worry, it is all well and good, the investigation of the incident is underway, no report of any damage has been given so far." Afghanistan's acting Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, arrived in New Delhi for a week-long visit to India. Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, in a post on X announcing his arrival on Thursday, said, "We look forward to engaging discussions with him on bilateral relations and regional issues." (ANI)

Pakistan says fool proof security for Sikh pilgrims during Guru Nanak's birth anniversary

OCT 07, 2025

LAHORE (TIP): The Pakistani authorities have made fool proof security arrangements for Sikh pilgrims who will visit the country to celebrate the 556th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev next month, officials said on Tuesday.

A meeting was held at the Home Department of the Punjab Government on Tuesday to review the arrangements for Guru Nanak's birth anniversary.

The meeting was attended by the first Sikh minister of Punjab and president of Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) chairman Sajid Mahmood Chauhan, Secretary Home Department, Punjab, Ahmad Javed Qazi and senior police officers.

"The meeting was informed that fool proof security, medical facilities, transport and quality accommodation would be ensured for the yatris. Continuous supply of gas and electricity at Gurdwara Janam Asthan, Nankana Sahib, and all other gurdwaras would also be ensured," ETPB spokesperson Ghulam Mohyuddin said after the meeting.

The celebrations for Guru Nanak's birth anniversary will take place from November 4 to 14. The main ceremony is planned for November 5 at Gurdwara Janam Asthan in Nankana Sahib, 80 km from Lahore.

"Thousands of Sikh pilgrims from all



over the world, including 3,000 from India under the bilateral agreement, will participate in this religious festival," the meeting was told.

However, since the armed conflict between India and Pakistan in May last following the Pahalgam terror attack, no Indian pilgrim visited Pakistan because of the travel restrictions.

Earlier, Arora and the local Sikh body had appealed to the Indian government to allow the yatris to visit Pakistan to participate in religious events.

Arora directed all departments to complete the arrangements on time to ensure the best possible facilities for the pilgrims. He also directed the Federal Investigation Agency to establish

additional counters at the Wagah border to expedite the immigration process.

He said the sale of items prohibited in the Sikh religion would be banned in the vicinity of the gurdwaras.

ETPB head Sajid Mahmood Chauhan said that despite the prevailing tensions between Pakistan and India, the board will extend respect, love, and hospitality to Sikh guests. He also proposed that Pakistani Sikh doctors should volunteer their services to provide medical facilities to the pilgrims during the celebrations. ETPB looks after the holy places of minorities in Pakistan.

The yatris will also visit Kartarpur Sahib and other gurdwaras in Punjab. (PTI)

EARTHQUAKE OF MAGNITUDE 4.1 STRIKES AFGHANISTAN

OCT 07, 2025

KABUL (PTI): An earthquake of magnitude 4.1 struck Afghanistan on late Monday night, a statement by the National Center for Seismology (NCS) said.

As per the NCS, the earthquake occurred at a depth of 180km.

In a post on X, the NCS said, "EQ of M: 4.1, On: 06/10/2025 20:12:21 IST, Lat: 36.64 N, Long: 70.88 E, Depth: 180 Km, Location: Afghanistan."

Earlier on September 28, another earthquake of magnitude 3.9 struck the region at a shallow depth of 10km, making it susceptible to aftershocks.

In a post on X, the NCS said, "EQ of M: 3.9, On: 28/09/2025 04:16:13 IST, Lat: 34.62 N, Long: 70.84 E, Depth: 10 Km, Location: Afghanistan."

Shallow earthquakes are generally more dangerous than deep earthquakes. This is because the seismic waves from shallow earthquakes have a shorter distance to travel to the surface, resulting in stronger ground shaking and potentially more damage to structures and greater casualties.

On September 18, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, reaffirmed India's commitment to promote peace, stability and

development in the country.

Addressing the UN Security Council quarterly briefing on Afghanistan, Ambassador Parvathaneni emphasised India's priorities to provide humanitarian assistance and implement capacity-building initiatives for the Afghan people.

"We believe in the utmost importance of international and regional consensus and cooperation on key issues concerning Afghanistan and actively engage with all relevant parties to promote peace, stability and development in the country," Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni said.

"India's immediate priorities in Afghanistan include provision of humanitarian assistance and implementation of capacity-building initiatives for the Afghan people," he added.

He also reaffirmed India's commitment to the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

Ambassador Parvathaneni expressed gratitude to Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Roza Otunbayeva, for her briefing. (ANI)

Nepal welcomes Gaza peace deal; calls for immediate release of hostages, including Nepali national

KATHMANDU , OCTOBER 10 (TIP): Nepal has welcomed the peace agreement between Israel and Hamas for the implementation of the first phase of the peace plan and given a call for the immediate release of all hostages, including a Nepali national being held hostage by Hamas since 2023.

In a post on X on Thursday, Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, "Nepal welcomes the agreement reached between Israel and Hamas to implement the first phase of the 'Middle East Peace Plan' proposed by the President of the United States. We call for the immediate release of all hostages, including Nepali national Bipin Joshi, who has been held by Hamas since 7 October 2023."

It urged all parties concerned to implement the plan in its true spirit, to ensure the smooth flow of humanitarian assistance to the people of Gaza, and to pave the way for lasting peace in the region and beyond.

"Nepal commends the United States, Qatar, Egypt and Turkiye for their pivotal role in securing this much-awaited agreement", the post said.

Earlier in October, Times of Israel reported a video shot by Hamas of Bipin Joshi, a Nepalese agricultural student who was abducted Oct 7 attack. (ANI)



Suromurchhana
celebrates

80th Birth Anniversary

of
Living legend of tabla

Padma Shri

Pt. Swapan Chaudhuri



SATURDAY
25 OCT
2025
6 P.M.



Vocal: Sri Sanjoy Banerjee
Tabla: Pt. Swapan Chaudhuri
Harmonium: Sri Kedar Naphade



Vocal: Smt Namami Karmakar
Tabla: Sri Dibyarka Chatterjee
Harmonium: Sri Anirban Chakrabarty

at Scandinavia House, New York

58 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Tickets: \$100, \$75, \$50 & \$25

For tickets go to: www.suromurchhana.org
www.viewcy.com



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For Artists by Artists



Trends to update your home around Diwali

As Diwali-the festival of lights-approaches, homes across India come alive with a spirit of renewal, warmth, and festivity. This is the perfect time to revamp your interiors, declutter, and introduce design elements that reflect the joy and radiance of the season. Whether you want a subtle refresh or a full-scale festive makeover, here are some of the most inspiring interior trends to help you update your home this Diwali.

Go for Warm, Golden Hues

Diwali décor is all about creating an inviting and glowing ambience. Shades like saffron, mustard yellow, deep maroon, and burnt orange continue to dominate, while metallic accents in gold, copper, and brass add richness and warmth. Try accent walls in earthy tones or add gold foil artwork and brass light fixtures for an opulent festive touch.

Tip: Add gold-edged mirrors, metallic planters, or a statement chandelier to reflect light beautifully around your space.

Sustainable Festive Décor

Eco-conscious living is no longer a trend-it's a lifestyle. This Diwali, choose décor that blends aesthetics with sustainability. Opt for organic fabrics, bamboo and jute furniture, clay diyas, and upcycled craft pieces. Replace plastic fairy lights with energy-efficient LED or solar string lights to save power and add a soft glow.



Tip: Use dried flowers, twigs, and handmade torans (door hangings) for a natural and eco-friendly festive look.

Layered Lighting for a Radiant Glow

Lighting plays a central role in Diwali décor. Move beyond traditional diyas and experiment with layered lighting-combine ambient, accent, and task lights for depth and balance. Pendant lamps, lanterns, fairy lights, and candles all contribute to a multi-dimensional glow.

Trend Alert: Moroccan-inspired lanterns and geometric LED lamps are trending this season for their mix of tradition and modern flair.

Textured Fabrics and Luxurious Upholstery

Soft furnishings are an instant way to

refresh interiors. Replace light summer drapes with heavier, textured curtains in silk, velvet, or brocade. Cushions and throws in jewel tones-emerald, ruby, sapphire-add drama and richness to your living room. Traditional Indian prints like ikat, bandhani, and block prints can lend a handcrafted touch.

Tip: Mix patterns and textures thoughtfully; balance bold prints with neutral solids for a curated, elegant look.

Statement Corners and Accent Walls

Create a "wow" corner that becomes the highlight of your space. You can dedicate a wall to festive décor-try murals, metallic wallpaper, or a photo collage with family memories. Add floor lamps, plants, or brass sculptures to complete the look.

Trend Highlight: Many homeowners are turning pooja corners into artistic zones using wooden back panels, carved jaali designs, or subtle LED backlighting.

Mix of Vintage and Modern Elements

This Diwali, the design mantra is fusion-blend old-world charm with contemporary flair. Pair antique brass urli bowls with modern glass vases or combine traditional handwoven rugs with sleek furniture. The interplay of eras adds depth and storytelling to your home.

Tip: Use heirloom pieces-silver trays, old temple bells, or ancestral paintings-as conversation starters in modern settings.

Fragrance and Greenery for Fresh Energy

Aroma and nature elevate your festive décor. Bring in potted plants, marigold strings, and tulsi to infuse positive energy. Scented candles, incense sticks, and essential oil diffusers in sandalwood, rose, or jasmine enhance the festive vibe and purify the air.

Trend Update: Indoor gardens and vertical plant walls are increasingly popular for creating serene corners amid festive bustle.

Before introducing new décor, decluttering is essential. Diwali cleaning is both symbolic and practical-it makes space for fresh beginnings and positive energy. Organize your shelves, polish furniture, and store away non-festive décor to create a clean canvas for new additions.

Tips to avoid wrinkles around eyes

The eyes are often called the mirror of the soul, but they're also the first to show signs of stress, fatigue, and aging. The skin around them is thinner and more delicate than the rest of your face, making it prone to dryness, fine lines, and crow's feet. Over time, factors like sun exposure, lack of sleep, dehydration, and repetitive facial movements can deepen those lines. However, with consistent care and small daily habits, it's possible to maintain smooth, bright, and youthful-looking eyes for years.

The most important rule in preventing wrinkles is hydration. The under-eye skin lacks oil glands, so it dries out faster. Applying a good eye cream with hydrating ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, glycerin, or aloe vera twice a day can make a visible difference. Use your ring finger to lightly tap the product around the eyes instead of rubbing it in. This ensures absorption without stretching the skin. Drinking enough water is equally vital - internal hydration supports the skin's elasticity and prevents dryness that can lead to premature lines.

Sun protection is another key to youthful eyes. The ultraviolet rays of the sun break down collagen and elastin, the proteins that keep your



skin firm. Always use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher, even when indoors, as UV rays penetrate through windows. Complement sunscreen with large sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat when outdoors. Sunglasses not only protect your eyes but also prevent squinting, which over time contributes to fine lines around the corners.

A gentle approach to makeup removal is crucial. Rubbing or tugging at your eyes can weaken the skin's structure and cause wrinkles. Choose a mild micellar water or oil-based makeup remover to dissolve mascara and eyeliner easily. Soak a cotton pad, press it gently against your eyelid for a few seconds, and then wipe softly. Always follow up with a hydrating eye cream or serum to replenish lost moisture.

Sleep is your skin's natural repair mechanism. When you don't get

enough rest, cortisol levels rise, breaking down collagen and causing puffiness and dark circles. Aim for seven to eight hours of quality sleep each night. Try sleeping on your back with your head slightly elevated to prevent fluid buildup under the eyes. Using a silk or satin pillowcase can also minimize friction and creases on your skin.

Your diet plays a bigger role in skin health than you might think. A balanced intake of vitamins and antioxidants strengthens your skin from within. Vitamin C helps boost collagen production, while vitamin E and omega-3 fatty acids improve skin texture and elasticity. Include foods like citrus fruits, berries, leafy greens, nuts, seeds, avocados, and olive oil in your daily meals. Limiting sugar, processed foods, and alcohol will also slow down the aging process.

Avoiding habits that harm your skin is just as essential. Smoking restricts blood flow and oxygen supply to the skin, resulting in dullness and early wrinkles. Alcohol dehydrates the body and robs the skin of its natural moisture. Cutting back or quitting these habits can dramatically improve the texture and glow of your skin, especially around the eyes.

FOOD CORNER

Moong dal idli

Moong Dal Idli is a healthy twist on the traditional South Indian idli - soft, fluffy, and made without rice. It's light, protein-rich, and perfect for breakfast or a quick meal.

Ingredients

Yellow moong dal - 1 cup, Ginger - 1 tsp (grated), Green chilli - 1 (finely chopped), Curd - 2 tbsp, Eno fruit salt - ½ tsp, Salt - to taste, Water - as needed, (Optional: 2 tbsp semolina for texture)

Method

Wash and soak moong dal for 2-3 hours. Drain. Grind it with ginger, green chilli, and curd to make a smooth, thick batter. Add salt and mix well. Just before steaming, add Eno and mix gently. Pour into greased idli molds and steam for 10-12 minutes. Remove, cool slightly, and serve warm. Enjoy with coconut chutney, tomato chutney, or sambar.



Two minutes of aerobics exercise keeps your mind sharp & focused

Just two minutes of aerobic exercise a day can keep your mind sharp and focused. It may sound too simple to be true, but science now proves that even a short burst of physical movement can give your brain a remarkable boost. In a world where people are glued to screens for hours and struggle to find time for long workouts, this is great news. A couple of minutes of brisk walking, jogging in place, stair climbing, or dancing can actually improve focus, memory, and alertness while also uplifting your mood.



When you move, your heart rate increases and more oxygen-rich blood flows to the brain. This stimulates the release of powerful chemicals like dopamine, serotonin, and endorphins - the "feel-good" neurotransmitters that enhance concentration and mental clarity. Research from various universities shows that even short periods of aerobic activity trigger the production of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a protein that supports neuron growth and communication. This helps the brain process information faster and improves memory recall. In other words, movement literally wakes up your brain.

Most people believe that only long

hours of exercise can make a difference, but that's not true. The brain responds best to regular movement, not necessarily long workouts. Two minutes of consistent, moderate aerobic activity - such as marching, jogging, or jumping jacks - is enough to increase blood flow and oxygen supply, instantly recharging your mind. It's like pressing the "refresh" button in your brain, especially when you're feeling mentally exhausted.

The benefits go beyond just focus and energy. Regular short bursts of aerobic movement enhance memory, improve mood, and even protect the brain from long-term cognitive decline. They also help

you think creatively, make quicker decisions, and stay calm under pressure. Over time, these small movements can reduce your risk of dementia and Alzheimer's by strengthening the neural connections that keep your brain agile.

Fitting two minutes of aerobic exercise into your day is easy. You can do it right after waking up to feel energized, during work breaks to beat fatigue, or before meetings to boost alertness. Walk briskly around your room, climb stairs, or jog in place - anything that raises your heart rate counts. Even dancing to your favorite song or doing a few jumping jacks while watching TV can make a difference.

The real magic lies in consistency. Doing two minutes of exercise every day trains your brain to stay alert, focused, and positive. It's not about how long you move, but how regularly you do it. This small habit helps maintain good blood circulation, supports memory, and keeps your mind young. It's perfect for everyone - students can use it to sharpen focus during study sessions, professionals can fight mid-day brain fog, and seniors can use gentle movements to stay mentally active and balanced.



Poor sleep may make your brain age faster: Study

Humans spend nearly a third of our lives asleep, yet sleep is anything but wasted time. Far from being passive downtime, it is an active and essential process that helps restore the body and protect the brain. When sleep is disrupted, the brain feels the consequences - sometimes in subtle ways that accumulate over years.

In a new study, researchers examined sleep behaviour and detailed brain MRI scan data in more than 27,000 UK adults between the ages of 40 and 70. They found that people with poor sleep had brains that appeared significantly older than expected based on their actual age. While people grow chronologically older at the same pace, some people's biological clocks can tick faster or slower than others. New advances in brain imaging and artificial intelligence allow researchers to estimate a person's brain age based on patterns in brain MRI scans, such as loss of brain tissue, thinning of the cortex and damage to blood vessels.

In the study, brain age was estimated using over 1,000 different imaging markers from MRI scans. The experts first trained a machine learning model on the scans of the healthiest participants - people with no major diseases, whose brains should closely match their chronological age. Once the model "learned" what normal ageing looks like, they applied it to the full study population. Having a brain age higher than your actual age can be a signal of departure from healthy ageing. Previous research has linked an older-appearing brain to faster cognitive decline, greater dementia risk and even higher risk of early death. Sleep is complex, and no single measure can tell the whole story of a person's sleep health. The study, therefore, focused on five aspects of sleep self-reported by the study participants: their chronotype ("morning" or "evening" person), how many hours they typically sleep (seven to eight hours is considered optimal), whether they experience insomnia, whether they snore and whether they feel excessively sleepy during the day.

Foods that are damaging your heart

Diet Soda

Sugary sodas are fairly well-known as bad news. It's no secret that these are on the warning list of beverages that aren't great for your heart. Because of this, some may rightfully assume that a diet soda is a safer option.

Cold Cuts/Deli Meat

It's normal to get excited about a delicious toasted sub with slices of ham from the local deli and all of your favorite toppings. The bad news is that deli meat (or cold cuts) has been proven to greatly increase your risk of heart disease. A 2020 study found that eating processed meats just two times a week could heighten your risk by 3-7%.

Boxed Pasta

Pulling out a box of pasta at home is one of the easiest dinner options on those busy evenings. What you might not realize, though, is that processed carbohydrates are risky when it comes to damaging your heart health. Processed carbs like pasta, white bread, and white rice are all known as high GI foods (high glycemic index). Foods like these are known to raise the glucose levels in your body to dangerous amounts.

Energy Bars

Yes, some energy bars are healthier than others. But you need to be careful—just because a company advertises themselves as "healthy," it doesn't



always mean it's true. If you're going to reach for the energy bar, check out the back of the box to make sure you can read and pronounce the ingredients. Many energy bars are made with corn syrups, citric acids, and added sugars.

Red Meat

This one can be sad for all the steak lovers out there. For many years, red meat has been heavily debated on the subject of heart disease. Recently, a chemical called Trimethylamine N-oxide (TMAO for short) has been discovered as an ingredient in red meat that can cause damage to the heart and increase your risk of heart disease.

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More evidence suggests Saturn's moon Enceladus could support life

A fresh look at data collected by NASA's Cassini spacecraft has uncovered more evidence that Saturn's moon Enceladus may be able to support life, with additional complex organic molecules identified from the geyser-like jets of ice grains that spew into space from this small icy world's subsurface ocean.

Researchers re-examined in great detail data obtained when Cassini conducted its closest flyby of Enceladus in 2008, including when it flew directly through plumes of ice grains and gases erupting from the ice-encrusted moon's surface through fractures near its south pole. In doing so, they were able to gain a clearer picture of the moon's subsurface chemistry.

In addition to confirming the presence of certain organic molecules, including precursors for amino acids — the building blocks of proteins, the large and complex molecules essential for life — previously detected in the plumes, they found new classes of organic molecules not spotted before.

"We have found several categories of organic — meaning primarily carbon-containing — molecules that span a range of structures and chemical properties," said Nozair Khawaja, a planetary scientist at Freie Universität Berlin and lead author of the study published this week in the journal *Nature Astronomy*.

These are the type of molecules that could be involved under the right circumstances in the processes leading to the formation of more complex organic compounds that are essential components for life.

"Such compounds are believed to be intermediates in the synthesis of more complex molecules, which could be potentially biologically relevant. It is important to note, however, that these molecules can be formed abiotically as well without any interaction with life on Earth," Khawaja said.

Enceladus is considered one of the most intriguing places in our Solar System to look for possible life beyond Earth. Named after a giant in ancient Greek mythology, it is one of the innermost moons of the ringed gas giant Saturn, our Solar System's second-largest planet. It has a diameter of 504 km and orbits Saturn at a distance of roughly 2,38,000 km.

OpenAI puts popular apps like Spotify and Canva inside ChatGPT

OpenAI is taking another big leap with ChatGPT by allowing users to use some of their favourite apps directly inside the chatbot. The company has announced new integrations with services like Spotify, Canva, Coursera, Figma and Zillow, all of which can now be accessed through simple text prompts in ChatGPT. The update was revealed during OpenAI's DevDay event and is powered by the company's new Apps SDK, which allows developers to build and connect third-party tools to the AI platform.

ChatGPT now supports popular third-party apps

The idea behind this integration is to let users do more from within ChatGPT without needing to switch between different websites or apps. For instance, you can now ask ChatGPT to create a playlist on Spotify, design a poster on Canva, or look for rental listings on Zillow, all through a chat conversation. To use these tools, users will first need to connect their app accounts to ChatGPT. After that, they can start giving instructions naturally as part of their conversation. For example, you can say, "Spotify, make a playlist for my morning run," and ChatGPT will create one based on your preferences. Or you can tell it, "Canva, design a promotional post for my bakery," and the chatbot will instantly generate a design preview. Spotify said the experience is still evolving, noting, "It's early days, so while we might not be able to deliver on every request just yet, we'll continue to build, refine, and improve the experience over the coming weeks and months."

Canva, Coursera, Figma, and Zillow join the lineup

Among the apps now available, Canva stands out for its



creative capabilities. Inside ChatGPT, users can ask Canva to generate a design, preview it, and even make changes by typing simple instructions such as "make the text bigger" or "change the background colour." Once done, users can open the design in Canva for final edits.

Figma brings similar creative power, allowing users to create or modify diagrams, brainstorm layouts, and collaborate on designs. Coursera, on the other hand, makes learning easier; ChatGPT can now recommend online courses, videos, and study materials directly from Coursera's database based on what users are discussing.

Meanwhile, Zillow's integration focuses on real estate. Users can ask ChatGPT to find homes with specific requirements like "three-bedroom houses with a garden near Delhi," and the chatbot will show listings complete with prices, photos, and maps.

Nasa is closed: Here's why the American space agency is shut down

Nasa has announced that its operations are currently halted due to a lapse in government funding, with a notice on its website stating the agency is "closed" until further notice.

The development comes as the United States entered a government shutdown on October 1, 2025, after Congress failed to pass a budget or temporary funding measure.

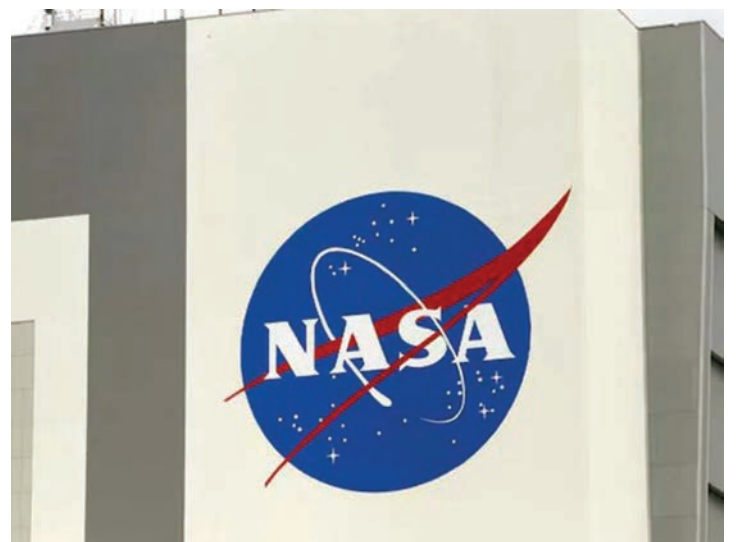
The shutdown, the first in nearly six years, has forced thousands of federal workers to be furloughed across government agencies, including Nasa. According to official guidelines, only essential staff required for the protection of life and property are continuing work, meaning most Nasa projects — from space science research to public outreach — have been paused.

Day-to-day communications from the agency have gone silent, with social media channels dormant and updates on ongoing missions delayed. Critical operations, however, remain active. This includes monitoring astronauts aboard the International Space Station (ISS), spacecraft currently in operation across the solar system, and planetary defense activities like asteroid tracking.

These efforts are considered vital to safety and are continuing with a limited workforce.

The shutdown could have wide-reaching consequences for Nasa's programs and future missions. Preparatory work for upcoming launches, such as the Artemis program's next steps toward returning humans to the Moon, may face delays.

Research projects supported by Nasa funding have been suspended, interrupting scientific studies and university collaborations that rely heavily on the agency's resources. Contractors working with Nasa could also experience disruptions if prolonged gaps in government funding



continue.

This is not the first time Nasa has faced such challenges. Previous shutdowns, including a significant one in 2018-2019, stalled progress on projects and created uncertainty for the agency's scientists and engineers.

The longer the standoff persists in Washington, the more difficult it becomes for Nasa to maintain momentum on ambitious goals like lunar exploration and Mars missions.

With no clear resolution in sight, Nasa's closure serves as a stark reminder of how political deadlocks directly impact science and space exploration. For now, the agency's vast workforce waits, while critical eyes remain on space — operating quietly to ensure the safety of both astronauts and spacecraft.

Gold, Bitcoin surge on concerns over global debt pile

NEW YORK (TIP)

The Bitcoin price has reached yet another all-time high, surging above US\$125,000 (AUD\$190,000) over the weekend as investors pile into assets viewed as hedges against currency debasement.

Gold is also glittering, flirting with a new record near US\$3,900 an ounce, while silver continues its 2025 rally. The twin rise has been driven by growing concern over fiscal deficits, falling real yields, and renewed doubts about the strength of the US dollar, which has slipped roughly 10% this year.

Together, these moves form part of what traders are now calling "the debasement trade"- a bet that scarce, hard assets will outperform fiat currencies in an era of mounting government debt and persistent inflation.

Why investors are chasing 'store-of-value' assets

The so-called debasement trade emerged late last year and has accelerated in recent months, according to strategists at major banks. With global debt ratios climbing and central banks cutting rates despite lingering inflation, many investors are rethinking their confidence in paper money.

This has reignited demand for traditional safe havens, such as gold, as well as digital alternatives like bitcoin-often referred to as "digital gold." At JPMorgan, analysts estimate that bitcoin could be undervalued by as much as 40% compared to gold on a volatility-adjusted basis, suggesting a theoretical upside of around US\$165,000 if current trends persist.

ETF inflows reflect that sentiment shift. After the approval of several spot bitcoin ETFs in early 2025, investment flows into both gold and bitcoin funds



have surged. JPMorgan's research shows that retail investors initially led the charge, but institutional buyers have since joined in, diversifying away from fiat currencies as a hedge against economic uncertainty.

Gold's enduring appeal and bitcoin's new role

While gold remains the go-to hedge for many conservative investors, bitcoin's growing mainstream acceptance has expanded the menu of store-of-value options. Both assets have benefited from what some analysts describe as a "loss of faith in currency stewardship", particularly as US deficits continue to run well above historical averages.

Veteran fund managers have noted that, unlike past cycles, this surge is not merely a reaction to short-term events, such as the current US government shutdown, but a broader, structural reevaluation of money itself.

How investors can participate

For those unwilling to hold physical gold bars or navigate the complexities of bitcoin custody, there are simpler ways

to gain exposure. Exchange-traded funds (ETFs) enable investors to participate in the price movements of both assets without requiring direct ownership.

For gold, popular options include exposure to miners and global bullion-backed ETFs, while spot bitcoin ETFs provide regulated access to the cryptocurrency's market price. These vehicles have been instrumental in broadening participation and reducing the friction traditionally associated with investing in alternative stores of value.

Foolish Takeaway

Bitcoin's rapid rise to new highs, alongside gold's record-breaking run, underscores a deepening investor appetite for scarcity in an era of monetary expansion. Whether this "debasement trade" continues depends on inflation trends, fiscal discipline, and investor confidence in central banks.

In the meantime, it's worth remembering that while these assets can serve as potential hedges, they also carry volatility. Continue to treat bitcoin as a risky asset and limit your exposure accordingly.

US pharma major Eli Lilly to invest \$1 billion in Hyderabad

US drugmaker Eli Lilly and Company will invest more than \$1 billion in India over the next few years, as it looks to expand manufacturing and strengthen supply chains for some of its key medicines.

The company will work with local contract manufacturers and set up a new Manufacturing and Quality hub in Hyderabad to oversee production.

Hiring for the Hyderabad facility will begin immediately, with roles open for engineers, chemists, analytical scientists and quality specialists. Lilly said the hub will support its wider global manufacturing network and ensure a steady supply of medicines for conditions such as diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's, cancer and autoimmune diseases.

Patrik Jonsson, president of Lilly International, said the investment was part of the company's effort to build global capacity. "We are making significant investments to increase manufacturing and medicine supply capacity around the world. India will play an important role in supporting our evolving portfolio," he said.

The move comes after Lilly launched its weight-loss and diabetes drug Mounjaro in India earlier this year, a treatment that has seen strong global demand. Analysts say the investment will help the company secure long-term supply at a time of intensifying competition in the obesity drug market.

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy welcomed the announcement, saying it highlighted Hyderabad's growing importance in global healthcare. Industries Minister Sridhar Babu also pointed to the state's focus on technology-led growth and ease of doing business as a draw for multinational drugmakers.

Some federal workers may not get back pay after shutdown

WASHINGTON (TIP)

The Trump administration is warning federal workers furloughed in the government shutdown that they may not get back pay once the funding impasse ends, which some lawmakers are decrying as illegal.

A memo prepared by the Office of Management and Budget says a 2019 law signed by President Donald Trump guaranteeing retroactive pay after a shutdown did not apply to employees who have been temporarily asked not to report to work.

Trump told reporters that back pay "depends on who we're talking about" and that some workers "don't deserve to be taken care of".

About 750,000 employees are currently foregoing their regular pay as the

shutdown nears the end of its first week.

The top Democrat in the US House of Representatives, Hakeem Jeffries, disagreed with Trump's interpretation.

"The law is clear — every single furloughed federal employee is entitled to back pay, period," he said on Tuesday.

The memo was prepared last week but was first reported by US media.

In it, the OMB said that once the shutdown ended the government was required to pay employees who were deemed essential, such as air traffic controllers, and had been required to show up to work.

But it said the government didn't have a duty to retroactively pay those who were furloughed, essentially sent home with no pay.

A 2019 law passed by Congress and signed by Trump during his first term "requires employees of the federal government or a District of Columbia public employer who are furloughed or required to work during a lapse in appropriations beginning on or after December 22, 2018, to be compensated for the period of the lapse."

The law was passed after the last major shutdown, which lasted more than a month.

The current shutdown began on 1 October. Republicans and Democrats in the Senate are currently locked in a standoff, each putting forward resolutions for reopening the government that have failed in multiple rounds of voting. Democrats want any resolution to address health care, while

Republicans want "clean" legislation that only deals with the federal budget.

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson told a news conference on Tuesday that he had not yet spoken to the White House about back pay, but new legal analysis was challenging the requirement to retroactively pay furloughed employees.

"It's true that in previous shutdowns, many or most of them have been paid for the time they were furloughed," he said. "There are some legal analysts who are saying that may not be appropriate or necessary."

If that analysis turned out to be valid, he added, then it would put pressure on Democrats to join Republicans and pass their resolution to reopen the government.

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - OCT 13, 2025 TO OCT 19, 2025

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA



ARIES

Ganesha says this week is a positive and encouraging time for Aries natives. There will be a flow of collective energy in your life, which will strengthen all kinds of relationships. If you wanted to reconnect with an old friend, this is the right time. A feeling of love and cooperation will awaken in your heart, which will also increase your social circle. Take the initiative to increase mutual understanding and harmony in relationships; this will increase the warmth between you even more. At this time, there will be an atmosphere of positivity around you, which will allow you to spend good moments with your loved ones. Some new friendships or relationships may also be formed, which will bring new happiness to your life. This week will give you a lot of happiness in terms of love, friendship, and social engagement. Recognize your inner feelings and do not hesitate to express them. Every day of this week will be full of hope and love for you. This is the time for you to deepen relationships.

TAURUS



Ganesha says this week is very positive and encouraging for Taurus natives. This is the right time to welcome new opportunities in your life. You will be able to strengthen relationships with people around you. Due to your sociability and friendly nature, you will actively participate in social activities, which will bring freshness to your relationships. During this week, focus on matters that can make your kinship deeper. Be it friendship or family relationship, your open style of communication will spread positivity everywhere. If you are thinking of starting a new relationship, then this time is favorable. Your feelings will be clear and strong, which will make you enjoy the company of your loved ones more. Keep in mind that the energy level of this week will help you to establish harmony with others, and this will result in an increase in mutual understanding and love. This week will bring you a chance for a new beginning, which will make your personal relationship even sweeter.

GEMINI



Ganesha says this week can be somewhat challenging for Gemini natives. During this period, you need to pay attention to your emotions and mental state. It will be important to maintain

composure in whatever situation you come across. You may feel a kind of restlessness inside you, due to which you will experience difficulty in thinking clearly. Social and personal relationships may be slightly hindered, which may make you feel insecure. This is the time for you to identify the truth and clarify your thoughts. Avoid hesitation in expressing your feelings; this may improve your situation. Taking some time for meditation and peace will also be beneficial. Communicate with your loved ones this week; this will make you feel more empowered. Overall, this week is about understanding and taking cognizance of your inner restlessness, so that you can move forward and strengthen your relationships.

CANCER



Ganesha says this week will be very wonderful overall for Cancer natives. A new positive energy will flow in your life, which will inspire you to strengthen your relationships. This time is ideal to spend with your close ones. You will be successful in strengthening your emotional bonds, which will give you security and satisfaction. You will feel happy in the company of your loved ones. Small things will make your heart happy. This week is a time of communication, where you will be able to share your feelings openly. By keeping transparency and clarity in relationships, you can eliminate any misunderstandings. Your sensitivity and understanding will bring stability in relationships this week. You will take time to establish a deep connection with your partner, which will make the mutual relationship even sweeter. Overall, this week will bring a positive change in your relationships.

LEO



Ganesha says this week, you may face some difficulties in relationships. You may feel that there are some communication issues going on in your relationships. This time shows the need for deeper communication with the people around you. Try to express your feelings openly, as this can reduce your worries. Maintain positivity and, most importantly, move forward with patience and empathy. Spending time with your loved ones will be very important for you this week, so that you will be able to understand and support each other. Share your concerns and seek their solutions wisely. During this period, avoid any kind of negativity and spread positive energy. You will continue to get the support of your loved ones, just maintain a little patience and understanding. This is the time for you to strengthen relationships.

VIRGO



Ganesha says this week, the overall situation looks very great for Virgo people. There is

a flow of positive energy around you, which will raise your morale and make you cheerful. This is the time when you will be inspired to share your feelings and thoughts with others. Your relationships will grow sweeter, and you will be able to connect more deeply with your loved ones. In love, your sensitivity and understanding will bring you closer to your partner. Mutual understanding and communication will make your relationship stronger. If you are in a new relationship, this is the right time to express your feelings. Your creativity and self-expression are going to be unparalleled this week. Embracing new ideas and imagination will allow you to reach new heights. All your efforts and relationships will see growth this week, which will bring you satisfaction and happiness. Go ahead, because this time is going to prove miraculous for you.

LIBRA



Ganesha says this week, the overall experience is going to be a bit challenging for Libra natives. You will feel that there may be some hindrances in the relationships around you. This is the time when there may be difficulties in communicating with your partner or loved ones. You are full of passion and enthusiasm, but the energy around you may bother you a bit. Be careful in conversations, as any matter can take a big form. You may face ups and downs in various relationships. Perhaps your emotions are a little unstable, which may affect your self-esteem. It is necessary to maintain harmony with the people around you. Establishing mutual interest and understanding should be the priority this week. Be patient and be ready to face some obstacles in love matters. Do not refrain from sharing your emotional thoughts and feelings; it will give you relief. Maintain a positive attitude; this time will also pass.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says this week can be a challenging time for Scorpions. Problems may arise in the surroundings, which may affect your mental balance. There are also chances of tension in personal relationships. This week indicates facing some difficulties in love and relationships. You may feel unable to express your feelings properly, which may increase misunderstandings. You should take care of your relationships with dedication and patience. Try to clarify things and be open in communication. Try to spend quality time with your partner; this can strengthen your mutual relationship. Although this time is challenging for you, keep being patient in exploring new opportunities. Adopt the right way to express your feelings this week, and try to deal with problems with a positive attitude. Remember, every difficulty can also be a learning experience.



SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says this week will be very positive and dedicated for Sagittarius natives. There will be a surge of enthusiasm and excitement in your life, which will enable you to bring more depth to your relationships. The bridges of communication will be strengthened at this time, and you will connect heart to heart by spending time with your loved ones. Due to the depth of feelings, you will be happier and satisfied with your friends and family members. This is a great time to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in the weekly period. There will also be an opportunity to enhance your creativity and self-expression, which will enable you to share a new experience with your partner. The more you spend this time strengthening relationships, the better the result you will get. Overall, this week will be very good for Sagittarius from a social and relationship point of view. Express your feelings openly and enjoy this beautiful moment.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says the overall situation is going to be extremely positive for Capricorn natives this week. There will be a flow of positive energy around you, which will help to lift your morale. You will experience harmony and understanding in your relationships. Spending time with family and friends will bring you happiness and satisfaction. During this time, your communication skills will improve, which will make your relationships even stronger. Your confidence will increase, and due to this, you will be able to express your feelings openly. This time is an opportunity for you to establish deep and meaningful relationships with those closest to you. Positive communication will bring new freshness to your relationships. By capitalizing on this feeling of connecting with each other, you will be able to make your life even more beautiful this week. So, stay away from negativity and welcome positivity. This week will be very pleasant and joyful for you from an overall point of view.

AQUARIUS



Ganesha says there may be many challenges and disruptions for Aquarius natives this week. You may feel that the situation around you is unstable, and this may disturb you mentally. Some differences may arise in relationships, due to which you may feel anxious. This is the time when you need to pay attention to your reactions. Avoid any kind of argument, as it may worsen the situation. Lack of mutual understanding and cooperation can also be seen in your social life. Be careful in communicating with your loved ones, so as not to give rise to any misunderstanding. Your creativity may

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : OCT 13 TO OCT 19 BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

OCTOBER 13

Ganesha says, although you have a pleasant disposition and are highly diplomatic, you need to curb your tendency to occasionally act spendthrift, fickle-minded, and restless. You may face unexpected issues at work that are to be expected. You must approach these issues with more poise and tact. Traveling during this time will not only provide you with crucial information but also guarantee financial rewards. Later in the year, some couples will tie the knot.

OCTOBER 14

Ganesha says you live each day to the fullest and have the potential to become a writer, philosopher, or thinker, but you need to learn to regulate your often restless and stubborn behavior. If you mingle with your coworkers, clients, and clients after work this year, you will build stronger relationships with all of them. Your investments will soar to new heights, and your financial situation will improve, causing you to spend more on comforts and luxuries. There will be nice romantic entanglements and good opportunities to form a marriage union.

OCTOBER 15

Ganesha says you'll face new problems this year, but your perseverance and the support of your friends and family will assure your success. With time, your financial situation will get better. Gains from investments and speculation are both possible. Being a responsible parent, you'll provide your kids with nothing but the best. Towards the middle of the year, some unsettling news from a faraway location is to be anticipated. A spiritual person offers consolation and mental calm.

OCTOBER 16

Ganesha says if you put your best effort forward, you can turn sand into gold. However, you need to curb your tendency to act vindictively, stubbornly, and moodily at times. Your international business activities will be very profitable and prosperous for you. Your financial situation will improve, and your confidence level will be at its highest if you find new sources of income. Professional modifications that are made in the middle of the year will be advantageous.

OCTOBER 17

Ganesha says if you have been

concerned about the lack of advancement in your professional career, now is the time to rejoice and celebrate. Your work will be much valued and will earn you the respect of your superiors, coworkers, and clients. Gains will also come from property-related issues. The home's renovation and other construction-related tasks will likewise be high on your priority list. Patients with chronic conditions need to pay closer attention to their health. At all costs, preventative medications shouldn't be ignored.

OCTOBER 18

Ganesha says you have a fantastic personality and may quickly make friends because of your helpfulness, but you need to curb your tendency to occasionally act gloomy, wasteful, and inconsiderate. Gains and rewards are guaranteed this year, but you must remain entirely committed to your objectives. You will suffer losses or suffer a great deal of embarrassment if you are unable to obtain appropriate and reliable information. Financial transactions will go much smoother during the second half of the year, but partnerships and joint ventures should be avoided.



VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA

OCTOBER 19

Ganesha says that although you have a fantastic imagination and can easily outsmart your competitors, you need to curb your occasionally vengeful, impulsive, and stubborn behavior. Gains in both health and wealth are anticipated in the upcoming year. There will be lots of praise and incentives for your achievements. Your self-assurance and tenacity will grow, helping you to complete challenging tasks with ease. You'll spend more money on entertainment at this time, and you'll also buy costly items for your home.

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also be affected, so you may find it difficult to come up with new ideas. This week, make self-introspection and sadhana your priority, so that you can recognize your inner strength. It will not be easy to overcome any negativity, but with self-confidence and patience, you can pass this week.



PISCES

Ganesha says this week, the overall experience for the Pisces natives appears to be a bit difficult. You may face some troubles during this time, especially at the level of your thoughts and feelings. Emotions may be a bit unstable, and you may get lost in some memories of the past. This may hurt your mental health, making you feel a little anxious. People and relationships around you may also experience some tension during this time. However, this challenging time will provide you with an opportunity to grow and understand

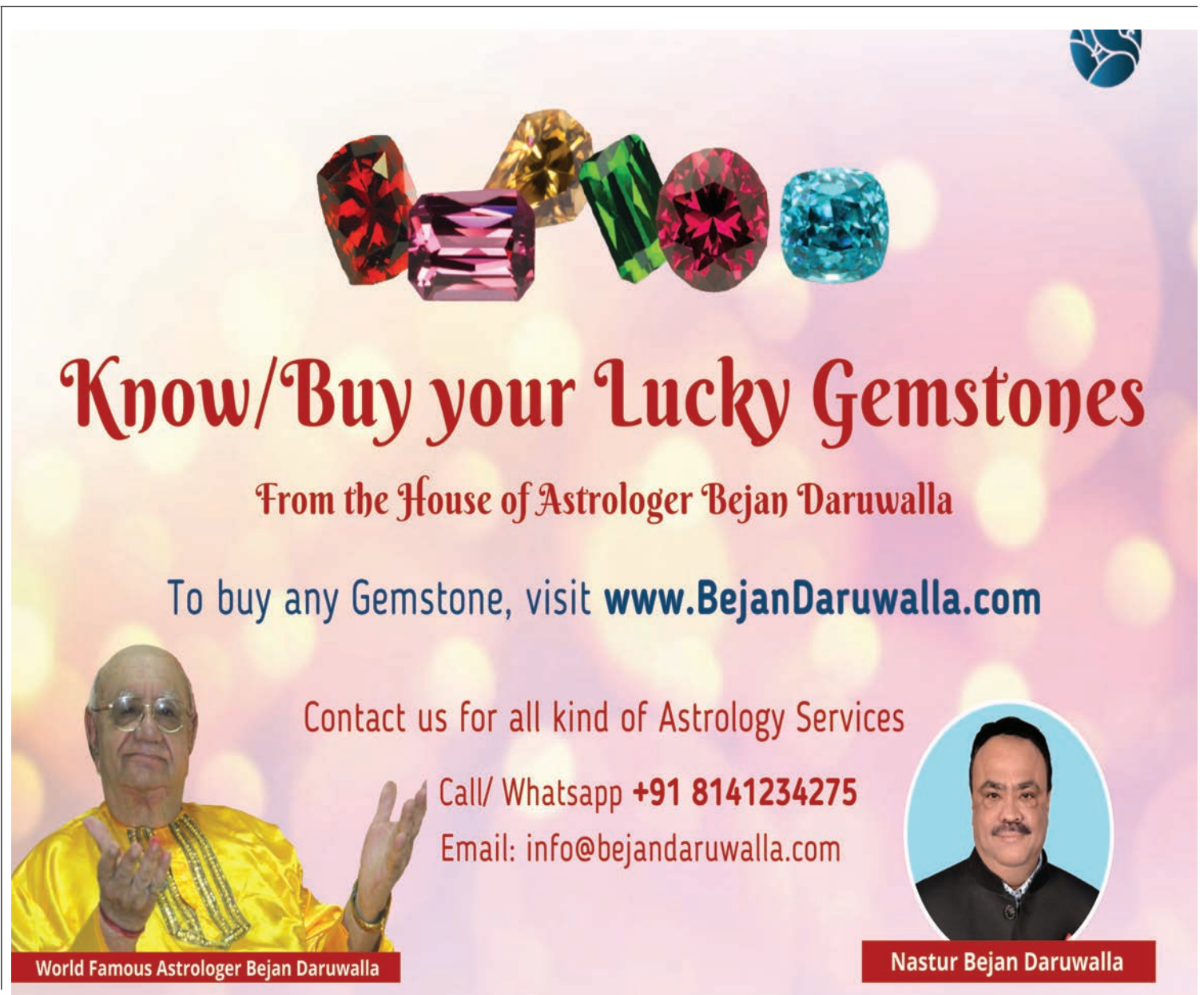
yourself. This period will make you feel the need for self-growth. If you take the time to understand your feelings, you can improve your situation. Remember

that this is also an opportunity to recognize your inner strength. Try to move forward with an open mind by stepping out of your assumptions. This

week's challenges can be an opportunity to take steps towards your personal growth.

AUTHOR BIO

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



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Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

Sikh History This Week

OCTOBER 10 TO OCTOBER 16

10th October

1946 Ishar Singh Mahjail moved a resolution, in the Indian house, for the creation of a Sikh State. The resolution was seconded by Sardar Swaran Singh.

11th October

1710 Khalsa army fought a pitched battle and captured Rahon.

12th October

1920 So called Low Caste Sikhs were denied entry into Harmandir Sahib.



1920 Sri Akal Takhat came under Panthic control of Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee. Bhai Teja Singh of Bhuchar made a sudden swoop on the Akal Takhat and took possession of the shrine.

13th October



1973 Sirdar Kapur Singh bestowed the honor, "National Professor of Sikhism" by Sri Akal Takht.

1979 President of Pakistan confers certain rights on Sikhs as a distinct entity, by signing a historical document on the occasion of official visit to Pakistan by an International Sikh Delegation.

14th October



1664 Guru Tegh Bahadur took formal possession of Guru's property.

1745 Sarbat Khalsa met at Sri Akal Takhat Sahib, Amritsar. Dal Khalsa was organized and distributed into 25 Jathas.

1944 Pritam Singh Gojran seeks a state for Sikhs in his Presidential address.

1983 Four Sikhs martyred in fake police encounters at Khadur Sahib.



1981 Giani Zail Singh declares the innocence of Bhindrawale.

15th October



1708 Bhog ceremony for Guru Gobind Singh.

The Bhog ceremony is a deeply significant event in Sikhism, marking the completion of the reading of the Guru Granth Sahib or commemorating important occasions related to the lives of the Sikh Gurus. In the context of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Sikh Guru, a Bhog ceremony is often held to honor his teachings,

sacrifices, and the profound spiritual legacy he left behind.

Guru Gobind Singh, born in 1666 in Patna Sahib, was not only a spiritual leader but also a warrior, poet, and philosopher. He played a pivotal role in shaping Sikhism, including founding the Khalsa in 1699, which emphasized courage, discipline, and devotion. Bhog ceremonies related to Guru Gobind Singh are thus occasions for reflection on his life, values, and enduring message of righteousness, equality, and spiritual resilience. The Bhog ceremony is more than a ritual; it is a moment to connect with the Guru's ideals, reflect on the lessons of courage, faith, and selfless service, and renew one's commitment to righteousness. For Sikh communities worldwide, these ceremonies also serve as a cultural gathering, reinforcing identity, unity, and devotion.



1981 Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale released unconditionally.

16th October



1670 Birth anniversary Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur).

1814 Diwan Mohkam Chand, of Maharaja Ranjitt Singh's darbar passed away.

1945 Saint Amir Singh of Gurbani Exposition School, passed away.

1955 All Party Convention at Amritsar demanded Punjabi Suba.

Ahoi Ashtami, one of the most significant fasting days observed by Hindu mothers, is a festival of devotion, maternal love, and faith. Celebrated eight days before Diwali and four days after Karwa Chauth, this sacred vrat (fast) is dedicated to Goddess Ahoi, an incarnation of Goddess Parvati. On this day, mothers observe a strict fast and offer prayers for the long life, prosperity, and happiness of their children. Deeply rooted in traditional values and emotions, Ahoi Ashtami symbolizes the strength of a mother's love and her unshakeable devotion to her family's well-being.

The Mythological Origin of Ahoi Ashtami

According to popular legend, there once lived a mother of seven sons. As Diwali approached, she went into the forest to bring soil to renovate her house. While digging, her spade accidentally killed a small cub of a lioness (or a hedgehog, as some versions say). The mother was heartbroken, but soon after, all her sons died mysteriously, one after another. Overwhelmed with grief, she sought forgiveness from the divine. Pleased with her sincere repentance, Goddess Parvati appeared before her and blessed her, reviving her sons and releasing the family from misfortune.

Since that day, women began observing Ahoi Ashtami Vrat to seek the blessings of Goddess Ahoi Mata and protect their children from harm and untimely death. The word Ahoi itself means "to spare" or "to forgive," and this fast embodies a mother's heartfelt plea for divine protection and forgiveness.

When is Ahoi Ashtami Observed?

Ahoi Ashtami is observed on the Ashtami Tithi (eighth day) of the Krishna Paksha in the month of Kartik (October-November) as per the Hindu lunar calendar. The festival occurs just before Diwali, often coinciding with the Sankashti Chaturthi Vrat observed by devotees of Lord Ganesha.

Women observe the fast from sunrise to the appearance of stars in the evening. In some regions, the fast is broken after sighting the stars, while others wait for the moonrise to perform the concluding rituals.

Rituals and Observances of Ahoi Ashtami

The day of Ahoi Ashtami begins early, as mothers wake up before sunrise, take a holy bath, and vow to observe the fast for their children's health and happiness. Traditionally, the fast is nirjala (without water), reflecting the depth of a mother's sacrifice and devotion.

During the day, women refrain from eating or drinking. They spend their time in prayer, decorating the Ahoi Mata's image on a wall or on paper using geru (red ochre) and kajal. The image usually depicts Goddess Ahoi, along with seven sons or seven small dots, representing her divine blessing upon children. Sometimes, the picture also includes animals like lioness and cubs, symbolizing fertility and protection.

In the evening, during puja muhurat, women place a kalash (holy pot) filled with water in front of the Ahoi Mata image. A silver pendant called Ahoi or

Ahoi Ashtami Vrat: A mother's prayer for her children's well-being



Ahoi Ashtami Vrat 2025

Monday, 13 October 2025

**Evening time to see the stars : 06:17 pm
Approx.**

**Ashtami Tithi Begins : 13 October 2025 at
12:24 pm**

**Ashtami Tithi ends : 14 October 2025 at
11:09 am**

Syau, often shaped like a porcupine or animal, is also placed near the idol and worshipped. Offerings of roli, rice, milk, sweets, and jaggery are made.

A thread with seven knots is tied around the kalash, and women listen to the Ahoi Mata Vrat Katha (story), which recounts the legend of the mother and her sons. After the puja, they look at the stars or the reflection of the moon in water, offer arghya (water offering), and then break their fast.

In many households, the eldest woman of the family blesses the younger mothers, and offerings are shared with other married women and children.

Ahoi Ashtami Puja Vidhi

- Purification: Take a morning bath and clean the puja area.
- Sankalp (Vow): Make a vow before the goddess to fast sincerely for the well-being of your children.
- Ahoi Mata Drawing: Draw or install an image of Ahoi Mata on the wall facing east or west. Depict stars, animals, and seven small dots or sons.
- Kalash Sthapana: Place a water-

filled kalash near the image with a thread tied around it.

- Lighting the Diya: Light a diya of ghee or mustard oil throughout the puja.
- Offerings: Present milk, rice, roli, and sweets as offerings.
- Story Reading: Recite or listen to the Ahoi Mata Vrat Katha with devotion.
- Star/Moon Sight: Once the stars (or moon) are visible, offer arghya and food to the goddess.
- Breaking the Fast: After offering prayers, eat prasada and break the fast.

Regional Variations and Traditions

In North India, particularly in Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab, Ahoi Ashtami is observed with great enthusiasm. Mothers often visit temples dedicated to Goddess Parvati or Ahoi Mata and light diyas near Ahoi Kunds (sacred ponds). In Maharashtra and Gujarat, the festival coincides with Ahoi Aatham and is observed in similar reverence.

Some women observe the fast for sons only, while others do it for both sons and daughters. The essence, however, remains the same - the mother's heartfelt prayer for her children's long life and happiness.

Spiritual Significance

Ahoi Ashtami is not merely a ritualistic fast; it's a celebration of motherhood and divine protection. It signifies a mother's selflessness and her deep emotional and spiritual bond with

her children. The festival also teaches the importance of repentance and forgiveness - as the legend shows, sincere remorse and devotion can wash away past sins.

Fasting is considered a way to cleanse the body and mind, allowing one to focus entirely on prayer and gratitude. The sighting of stars at the end of the fast represents hope and renewal - a mother's faith shining bright amidst the challenges of life.

Ahoi Mata: The Divine Protector

Goddess Ahoi, believed to be an aspect of Goddess Parvati, is revered as the divine protector of children. Her blessings are invoked to guard families from misfortune, illness, and premature death. Women worship her not only for their children's health but also for peace and harmony in the household.

Many devotees keep a silver Ahoi pendant at home and use it annually during the puja. It is considered auspicious and believed to bring prosperity and fertility.

Modern Relevance

Even in today's modern age, where life is fast-paced and technology-driven, Ahoi Ashtami continues to hold emotional significance. For many women, the day offers a moment of spiritual pause - a time to connect with tradition, express gratitude for their children, and strengthen family bonds. The ritual also serves as a reminder of the timeless truth that a mother's love and faith can move mountains.

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Israeli Cabinet approves 'outline' of deal...

months to ending a war that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, reduced much of Gaza to rubble, brought famine to parts of the territory and left dozens of hostages, living and dead, in Gaza.

The war, which began with Hamas' deadly attack on Israel on October 7, 2023, has also triggered other conflicts in the region, sparked worldwide protests and led to allegations of genocide that Israel denies.

Some 1,200 people were killed in the Hamas-led assault, and 251 were taken hostage. In Israel's ensuing offensive, more than 67,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza and nearly 170,000 wounded, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants but says around half of the deaths were women and children.

In the hours leading up to the Israeli Cabinet's vote, Israeli strikes continued. Explosions were seen on Thursday in northern Gaza, and a strike on a building in Gaza City killed at least two people and left more than 40 trapped under rubble, according to the Palestinian Civil Defense.

At least 11 dead Palestinians and another 49 who were wounded arrived at hospitals over the past 24 hours, Gaza's Health Ministry said.

An Israeli military official who spoke on the condition of anonymity in line with military guidelines said Israel was hitting targets that posed a threat to its troops as they reposition. Hamas blasted Israel over the strike, saying Netanyahu was trying to "shuffle the cards and confuse" efforts by mediators to end the war in Gaza.

A senior Hamas official and lead negotiator made a speech Thursday laying out what he says are the core elements of the ceasefire deal: Israel releasing around 2,000 Palestinian prisoners, opening the border crossing with Egypt, allowing aid to flow and withdrawing from Gaza.

Khalil al-Hayya said all women and children held in Israeli jails will also be freed. He did not offer details on the extent of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza.

Al-Hayya said the Trump administration and mediators had given assurances that the war is over, and that Hamas and other Palestinian factions will now focus on achieving self-determination and establishing a Palestinian state.

"We declare today that we have reached an agreement to end the war and the aggression against our people," Al-Hayya said in a televised speech Thursday, October 9 evening. In other developments, US officials announced that they would send about 200 troops to Israel to help support and monitor the ceasefire deal as part of a broader, international team. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not authorized for release.

In the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis, reactions to the announcement of a ceasefire were relatively muted and often colored by grief.

"I am happy and unhappy. We have lost a lot of people and lost loved ones, friends and family. We lost our homes," said Mohammad Al-Farra. "Despite our happiness, we cannot help but think of what is to come. ... The areas we are going back to, or intending to return to, are uninhabitable."

In Tel Aviv, families of the remaining hostages popped champagne and cried tears of joy after Trump announced the deal. Under the terms, Hamas intends to release all living hostages in a matter of days, while the Israeli military will begin a withdrawal from the majority of Gaza, people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of an agreement that has not been fully made public. Some 20 of the 48 hostages still in captivity are believed to be alive.

In a short video posted by US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick, Mr. Trump was seen speaking by phone to a group of elated hostage families.

"They are all coming back on Monday," said Trump, who is expected to visit the region in the coming days.

Tom Fletcher, the UN humanitarian chief, told reporters Thursday that officials have 170,000 metric tons of medicine, aid and other supplies ready for transport into Gaza when they are given a green light.

The deal, which was expected to be signed in Egypt, will include a list of prisoners to be released and maps for the first phase of an Israeli withdrawal to new positions in Gaza, according to two Egyptian officials briefed on the talks, a Hamas official and another official.

Israel will publish the list of the prisoners, and victims of their attacks will have 24 hours to lodge objections.

The withdrawal could start as soon as Thursday evening, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to be publicly named speaking about the negotiations. The hostage and prisoner releases are expected to begin Monday, the officials from Egypt and Hamas said, though the other official said they could occur as early as Sunday night.

What is behind Trump's Gaza plan?

Five border crossings would reopen, including the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, the Egyptian and Hamas officials said.

The Trump plan calls for Israel to maintain an open-ended military presence inside Gaza, along its border with Israel. An international force, comprised largely of troops from Arab and Muslim countries, would be responsible for security inside Gaza. The US would lead a massive internationally funded reconstruction effort.

The plan also envisions an eventual role for the Palestinian Authority - something Netanyahu has long opposed. But it requires the authority, which administers parts of the West Bank, to undergo a sweeping reform program that could take years.

The Trump plan is even more vague about a future Palestinian state, which Mr. Netanyahu firmly rejects.

What comes next for Netanyahu

The days ahead could be politically tricky for Mr. Netanyahu, who has been shadowed by an ongoing corruption trial as he navigated the Gaza war.

His grip on power has been largely contingent on the support of hard-line, far-right coalition partners who have urged him to continue operations against Hamas until the group is eliminated. But Mr. Trump on Thursday, October 9, suggested Mr. Netanyahu's political standing has been bolstered by the ceasefire and hostage deal. "He's much more popular today than he was five days ago," Mr. Trump said. "I can tell you right now, people shouldn't run against him. Five days ago, might not have been a bad idea."

Beyond proposed \$100,000 mandatory...

in December 2025, as per the Federal Register. Earlier reports indicated the Trump administration is also considering replacing the current H-1B lottery system with a wage-based selection process, favoring higher-paid roles to ensure that only top-tier foreign talent is prioritized.

WHY H-1B VISA IS IMPORTANT

The H-1B visa, established under the 1990 Immigration Act, allows US employers to temporarily hire highly skilled foreign workers in specialty occupations, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. It serves as a key pathway for skilled professionals-especially from India-to work and eventually seek permanent residency in the US. The annual cap is set at 65,000 visas, with an additional 20,000 reserved for individuals with a U.S. master's degree or higher. These are typically distributed through a lottery system, although certain employers such as universities and nonprofits are exempt from the cap.

According to the Pew Research Center, nearly 75 per cent of H-1B approvals in 2023 were granted to Indian nationals. Since 2012, at least 60 per cent of all approved H-1B applications have been for computer-related occupations. However, the visa is also widely used by sectors like healthcare, finance and academia.

Despite criticism of the programme, research shows that H-1B workers often earn equal or higher wages compared to their American counterparts with similar qualifications. US law mandates that employers must pay H-1B workers the higher of either the actual wage paid to comparable US workers or the prevailing wage in the occupation, in addition to paying government fees exceeding \$6,000 in many cases.



If the proposed changes go into effect, they could significantly impact thousands of Indian students and professionals seeking to work in the US.

Cuomo climbs 10% in new poll, but still...

Republican mayoral nominee Curtis Sliwa, the only other major candidate in the race, raked in 15% support in the new survey, the same figure he got in the September poll. Rich Azzopardi, Cuomo's spokesman, seized on the poll as an indication of his boss' momentum, saying it shows "this race is shifting decisively." "The path is now clear: This is a two-person race between Andrew Cuomo and Zohran Mamdani," Azzopardi said. "As voters learn more about the stakes and Cuomo's record of results - rebuilding LaGuardia, revitalizing the MTA, expanding affordable housing, and keeping New York safe - they are rallying behind proven leadership."

A spokeswoman for Mamdani, Dora Pekec, said the poll doesn't change the fact that he is "meeting voters every day in all five boroughs who are ready to turn the page on the broken politics of the past and build a city everyone can afford."

"As the billionaires continue to throw out their last-ditched efforts to prop up Andrew Cuomo, we have genuine enthusiasm and 80,000 volunteers on our side. Last time, it wasn't the billionaires who won that matchup," Pekec said, a reference to how Mamdani defeated Cuomo in June's Democratic mayoral primary by over 12%.

The detailed breakdown of the new poll features some downsides for Cuomo, including that 52% of New York City voters gave him an "unfavorable" rating, compared to 37% who viewed him as "favorable." Mamdani, by contrast, got a 43% favorable rating, compared to a 35% unfavorable listing.

The survey, which was conducted between last Friday and this past Tuesday, quizzed 1,015 likely city voters. It has a margin of error of +/- 3.9%.

Venezuela's Maria Corina Machado wins 2025 Nobel Peace Prize

The committee chose to focus on Venezuela at this time, in a year dominated by U.S. President Donald Trump's repeated public statements that he deserves the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ahead of the announcement, experts on the award had said Trump would not win it as he is dismantling the international world order the Nobel committee cherishes.

The Nobel Peace Prize, worth 11 million Swedish crowns, or about \$1.2 million, is due to be presented in Oslo on December 10, the anniversary of the death of Swedish industrialist Alfred Nobel, who founded the awards, opens new tab in his 1895 will.

Varkala: Kerala's hidden coastal gem

Tucked away along Kerala's sun-kissed southwestern coast, Varkala is the kind of place that makes you want to pause, breathe, and just take in the view. Less crowded than Kovalam or Alappuzha, Varkala offers a perfect blend of serene beaches, dramatic cliffs, spiritual charm, and vibrant local life - making it a must-visit for travelers seeking a soulful escape.

The town is most famous for its cliff-side beaches. The iconic Papanasam Beach stretches along towering cliffs that drop dramatically into the Arabian Sea. Walking along the edge, the sound of waves crashing below and the cool sea breeze create a sense of calm that instantly refreshes the mind. Sunset here is simply magical - fiery orange skies reflecting on the water, silhouetted fishing boats, and the occasional flutter of kites in the breeze.

Varkala isn't just a feast for the eyes; it has spiritual depth too. The Janardana Swami Temple, dedicated to Lord Vishnu, is over 2,000 years old and attracts devotees from all over India. Local legend says that a dip in the waters of Papanasam Beach washes away sins, making the experience both scenic and sacred. For travelers seeking wellness, Varkala has a growing number of yoga and meditation centers, offering retreats that combine natural beauty with holistic healing.

Places to Visit

Varkala Beach

Set amid a beautiful setting about 10 km away from the calm and quiet hamlet of Varkala, Varkala Beach, also known as Papanasam Beach, is a beautiful stretch of sand renowned for its solitude unlike other commercial beaches of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Also known as the Papanasam Beach meaning 'Destroyer of Sins', is unlike any other beach in the area with impeccable beauty. The water of Varkala Beach is regarded to own medicinal and curative properties. A dip in the holy water is said to cleanse the body of impurities and all sins and thus the name Papanasam Beach meaning 'Destroyer of Sins'. The beach itself is divided into two parts, the southern area of the beach lying at the end of the road leading from Janardhana Swamy Temple regarded as sacred by Hindus. However, if you are a tourist, the north part of the beach right at the bottom of the cliff is worth going renowned for its natural mineral spring.

The sublime beauty of Varkala beach is one of a kind. The backdrop of crystal blue waters against the cliffs of Kerala is a unique one since these sedimentary formation peaks are not found anywhere in the otherwise flat coastline of Kerala. These cliffs are the venue for spas, spouts, sunbathing and relaxing swims which are quite popular among visitors and if you're lucky you might also spot a few dolphins frolicking around. Sunsets at the Varkala Beach are especially pristine and call for a serene walk along the beach. Also if you are a seafood lover,



then the place is a paradise for you. The eating joints nearby offer some of the India's best moth watering and affordable food.

Edava Beach

Untouched and unspoiled by tourist activities, the Edava beaches are the virgin stretches circling a blue lagoon where sea and backwaters run parallel divided by a more-than-one km of straight road. There is also an estuary that connects the sea with the backwaters here.

Thiruvambadi Beach

Lying 1 km off Thiruvamdabi road, this black sand beach adjacent to the North cliff is an ideal picnic spot amidst lush coconut groves to relax and unwind.

Anjengo Fort

Anjengo Fort, situated 12 km off Varkala at Anjengo, is believed to have been built in 17th century. Presently the fort is protected by the National Heritage monuments.

The cemetery in the fort shelters the deceased occupants of the fort. The popular Muthalapuzhi Lake is situated very close to the Fort. Autos or cabs can be taken to reach the fort.

Sivagiri Mutt

Located at Varkala in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala is the one of the popular ashrams of Shri Narayana Guru, Sivagiri Mutt. This ashram celebrates Guru Deva Jayanti (in August) and the Guru Deva Samadhi (in September) every year.

Janardhana Swami Temple and

Varkala Beach are some nearby attractions which one should never miss during their visit to Sivagiri Mutt. Sree Narayana Guru (1855-1928), a saint, social reformer, philosopher and a leader of Ezhava community, made Varkala his headquarters. Sivagiri mutt, instituted by Sree Narayana Guru, is another major pilgrim centre here. The 'Sivagiri Pilgrimage' is usually conducted between 30th December and 1st January every year. Even decades after the Guru breathed his last breathe here in 1928; his Samadhi (resting place) continues to be thronged by thousands of pilgrims. The Sivagiri Mutt is also the headquarters of the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Sangham, a religious organization established by the Guru to propagate his concept of 'One Caste, One Religion, One God'.

Texas man arrested over fatal shooting of Indian student in US

The suspect allegedly shot Chandrashekar Pole while he was working a part-time shift at a gas station in Fort Worth

OCTOBER 7, 2025

DALLAS / HYDERABAD (TIP): A 23-year-old Texas man has been arrested over the murder of an Indian student at a Fort Worth gas station on Friday, October 3 night, leaving the local Indian-American community shocked and fearful.

The suspect allegedly shot Chandrashekar Pole, 28, while he was working a part-time shift, then fled the scene before being apprehended by officers, police said.

The suspect, identified as Richard Florez from North Richland Hills, allegedly shot Chandrashekar at a gas station on Eastchase Parkway.

After the shooting, Florez fired at another vehicle about a mile away without injuring anyone, and later crashed into a gate while attempting to enter a nearby residence on Meadowbrook Drive, police added.

Officers arrested him shortly afterwards and recovered a firearm from his vehicle.

"They also recovered a gun inside the vehicle at that scene... suspect is currently in the hospital, but he has been booked for the homicide," Officer Brad Perez, a Fort Worth Police spokesperson, was quoted as saying by NBCDFW on Monday.

The Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office confirmed Pole's



BRS MLA Harish Rao Thanneeru meets bereaved family members of Pole Chandrashekar, an Indian student from Hyderabad who was killed on Friday night in Dallas in US when unidentified assailants opened fire at him at a gas station. PTI Photo

identity and said he was pronounced dead at the scene.

Officials from Fort Worth and Tarrant County noted that a formal statement and further investigative details have been delayed due to a local government shutdown.

Authorities said the investigation is ongoing, and the motive behind the shooting has not yet been determined.

The Consulate General of India in Houston said they are in contact with Chandrashekar's family to assist in repatriating his remains.

Damodar told reporters after the incident. He was enrolled in a master's in data Analytics at the University of North Texas, Denton.

He completed the degree six months ago and was looking for a job, his brother said, adding that Chandrashekar was working part-time at the gas station to support himself.

The incident has brought attention to safety concerns for international students working part-time jobs in the US, especially in roles that may expose them to risks during late hours.

Past incidents involving Indian students in the US, including shootings and unexplained deaths, have underscored safety concerns and the complexities involved in repatriation.

In January this year, a 26-year-old student from Telangana, who was living in Connecticut in America, was allegedly shot dead by unidentified persons, while another man from Ranga Reddy district was found dead with bullet wounds in the US.

In September, a 30-year-old man from Mahabubnagar district died in California after allegedly being shot by police following a scuffle with his roommate.

Various cases have seen Indian consulates actively assisting families, often after lengthy legal and bureaucratic processes.

Perfume in car mistaken for opium; Indian man arrested in US, visa revoked, faces deportation

Ordeal has deeply impacted Kapil Raghu's mental health and shaken his wife's sense of security



Kapil Raghu and his wife, Alhley Mays, were married in April

OCTOBER 7, 2025

ARKANSAS (TIP): An Indian-origin man in Arkansas is fighting to restore his US visa after a shocking case of mistaken identity led to his arrest and possible deportation, all over a bottle of perfume.

Kapil Raghu, who was living legally in the US and married to an American citizen, was pulled over by Benton police on May 3 for a minor traffic violation while making a food delivery. During the stop, officers found a small bottle labelled "Opium" in his vehicle's center console.

Despite Raghu's insistence that the bottle was simply designer perfume, not narcotics, police assumed it was an

illegal substance and arrested him for drug possession. Bodycam footage reportedly shows officers saying, "You got a vial of opium that was in your center console."

Lab tests later confirmed that the substance in the bottle was indeed just perfume. The drug charges were dropped on May 20. However, the arrest triggered a deeper legal issue: immigration officials flagged his visa as expired-an issue Raghu says was due to his previous lawyer's failure to file paperwork on time.

Raghu spent three days in the Saline County jail before being transferred to an ICE detention facility in Louisiana, where he was held for 30 days. During that time, his visa was revoked, stripping him of his legal right to work and placing him under deportation threat.

Raghu's attorney, Mike Laux, says the situation has left his client in a vulnerable position. "Though released, Kapil now has a deportation status. He can be deported for even a minor offense, like jaywalking," Laux told The Guardian. "He's also legally barred from working, which has put immense pressure on the family."

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Indian-origin brothers jailed for serious child sex offences in UK

Vruj Patel, 26, and his brother Kishan Patel are sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court after an investigation by the Metropolitan Police

OCTOBER 7, 2025

LONDON (TIP): An Indian-origin man who had pleaded guilty to child rape offences was on Tuesday sentenced to 22 years' imprisonment at an east London court, where his brother was also sentenced to 15 months in jail for possession of indecent images of children.

Vruj Patel, 26, and his brother Kishan Patel were sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court after an investigation by the Metropolitan Police, which is appealing for other potential victims to come forward.

Detectives believe there may be other victim-survivors who were targeted by the Patels, whose offending is thought to date back to 2018.

"(Vruj) Patel is a cowardly, opportunistic offender who has preyed on vulnerable victims for his own sexual gratification," said Detective Sergeant Rob Blant, who led the Met Police's investigation.

"The threat he poses to women and children has been reflected in his sentence and his future management under the terms of the Sexual Harm Prevention Order and sex offender notification requirements for the remainder of his life," said DS Blant.



Photo for representation only -iStock

"This is a fantastic example of a thorough and detailed investigation by Met detectives working to support victims of the most serious offending and safeguard the wider public from a dangerous offender," he said.

According to the police statement, Vruj Patel had pleaded guilty to rape of a child under 13, assault of a child under 13 by penetration, and four counts of causing a child under 13 to engage in sexual activity in relation to one victim.

Additionally, he pleaded guilty to rape of a girl over 16 and sexual assault by penetration relating to a second victim.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

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History This Week OCT 10 - OCT 16

OCTOBER 10

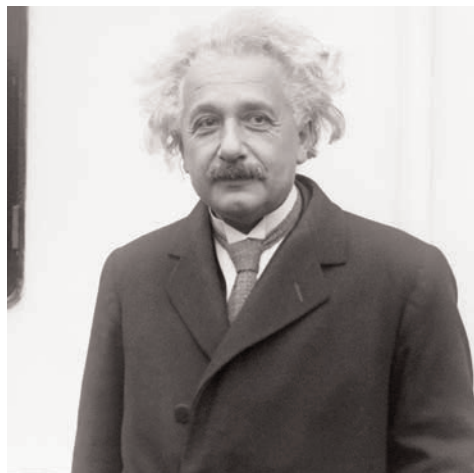
October 10, 1954 - Ho Chi Minh entered Hanoi, Vietnam, after the withdrawal of French troops, in accordance with armistice terms ending the seven-year struggle between Communist Vietnamese and the French.



October 10, 1973 - Spiro T. Agnew (1918-1996) resigned the office of Vice President of the United States amid charges of income tax evasion on illegal payments allegedly received while he was governor of Maryland and after he became Vice President. He was later given a \$10,000 fine and sentenced to serve three years probation. He was succeeded as Vice President by Gerald R. Ford, who went on to become President after the resignation of Richard M. Nixon.

Birthday - Italian opera composer Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) was born in Le Roncole, Italy. His 26 operas include; Rigoletto, Il Trovatore, La Traviata and Aida, and are among the most popular of all classical music performed today.

OCTOBER 11



October 11, 1939 - Albert Einstein warned President Franklin D. Roosevelt that his theories could lead to Nazi Germany's development of an atomic bomb. Einstein suggested the U.S. develop its own bomb. This resulted in the top secret "Manhattan Project."

October 11, 1962 - The Second Vatican Council was opened in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome by Pope John XXIII. Sessions were held in four successive autumns from 1962-65. Vatican II resulted in sweeping changes to the Catholic Church including the use of English and local native languages in the Mass instead of Latin, and openness and cooperation with other religions and denominations.

October 11, 1976 - The "Gang of Four," including the widow of Mao Zedong, was

arrested in China, charged with plotting a coup. They were subsequently tried and convicted of various crimes against the state.

Birthday - Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) was born in New York City. She was the wife of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd U.S. President. As First Lady, she led an unprecedented independent life, striving to improve the lives of people all over the world. In 1933, she became the first wife of a president to give her own news conference in the White House. She traveled extensively on her own and was affectionately called "First Lady of the world." She served as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations for many years and helped write the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

OCTOBER 12

October 12, 1960 - During a debate over colonialism in the United Nations, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev took off his shoe and pounded his desk repeatedly.



Birthday - British composer and conductor Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was born in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, England. He combined modern composition techniques with traditional English folk and Tudor music to create a uniquely British style. His major compositions include; Mass in G Minor, Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis and the opera The Pilgrim's Progress. He also composed nine symphonies, church and choral music, film and stage music and several operas.

OCTOBER 13

October 13, 1943 - Italy declared war on its former Axis partner Germany after the downfall of Mussolini and collapse of his Fascist government.

October 13, 1990 - The first Russian Orthodox service in over 70 years was held in St. Basil's Cathedral, next to the Kremlin, in Red Square, Moscow.

Birthday - Molly Pitcher (1754-1832) was born near Trenton, New Jersey (as Mary Ludwig). She was a water carrier at the Battle of Monmouth in 1778 during the American Revolution. After her husband, artilleryman John Hays, collapsed, she took his place at his cannon.

OCTOBER 14

October 14, 1912 - Former President Theodore Roosevelt was shot by a fanatic while campaigning in Milwaukee. Roosevelt was saved by his thick overcoat, a glasses case and a folded speech in his breast pocket, all of which slowed the bullet. Although wounded, he

insisted on making the speech with the bullet lodged in his chest and did not go to the hospital until the meeting ended. Roosevelt, a rugged outdoorsman, fully recovered in two weeks.

October 14, 1933 - Nazi Germany announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations and stated it would take no further part in the Geneva Disarmament Conference.



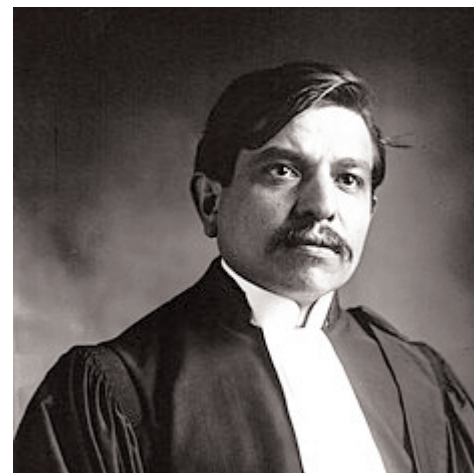
October 14, 1947 - U.S. Air Force Captain Chuck Yeager became the first man to break the sound barrier, flying in a rocket-powered research aircraft.

October 14, 1964 - Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. He donated the \$54,000 in prize money to the Civil Rights movement.

Birthday - Pennsylvania founder William Penn (1644-1718) was born in London. In 1681, he received a Royal charter with a large land grant in America from King Charles II. Penn, a Quaker, welcomed members of all religious faiths and established a democratic form of government in his province which measured over 50,000 square miles.

Birthday - Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) the 34th U.S. President was born in Denison, Texas. He served two terms as President, from January 20, 1953 to January 20, 1961. Nicknamed "Ike," he was a West Point graduate and career Army officer who became Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II. He held the rank of Five-star General of the Army.

OCTOBER 15



October 15, 1945 - Pierre Laval, the former premier of Vichy France, was executed for collaborating with Nazi Germany during World War II.

October 15, 1946 - Nazi leader Hermann Goering committed suicide by swallowing poison in his Nuremberg prison cell just hours before his scheduled hanging for war crimes.

October 15, 1964 - Soviet Russia's leader Nikita Khrushchev was deposed as First

Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, and replaced by Leonid Brezhnev.

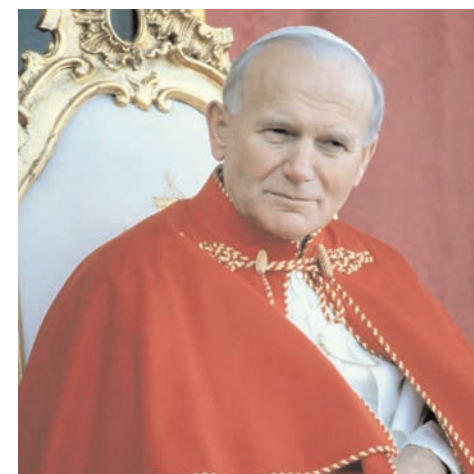
October 15, 1991 - The U.S. Senate confirmed Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court by a 52-48 vote following several days of tumultuous hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee concerning sexual harassment charges made by a former aide. Thomas became the second African American to sit on the Court, replacing retired Justice Thurgood Marshall, an African American.

Birthday - Lee Iacocca was born to Italian immigrant parents in Allentown, Pennsylvania, October 15, 1924 (as Lido Anthony Iacocca). Dubbed "America's first corporate folk hero," he was a mechanical engineer who became an automobile executive at Ford and later helped save Chrysler from bankruptcy. He also served as foundation chairman for the rehabilitation of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

OCTOBER 16

October 16, 1946 - Ten former Nazi leaders were hanged by the Allies following their conviction for war crimes at Nuremberg, Germany.

October 16, 1964 - China detonated its first nuclear bomb at the Lop Nor test site in Sinkiang.



October 16, 1978 - Cardinal Karol Wojtyla of Poland was elected Pope. He was the first non-Italian Pope chosen in 456 years and took the name John Paul II.

October 16, 1995 - The Million Man March took place in Washington, D.C., under the direction of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, who delivered the main address to the gathering of African American males.

Birthday - David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) was born in Plonsk, Poland. He was largely responsible for founding the modern state of Israel in 1948 and is revered as "Father of the Nation."

Birthday - American playwright Eugene O'Neill (1888-1953) was born in New York City. He wrote more than 35 plays and was the first American dramatist awarded a Nobel Prize for literature. He also received four Pulitzers. His dramas, which dealt realistically with psychological and social problems, included; Beyond the Horizon, The Iceman Cometh, The Emperor Jones and Long Day's Journey into Night.

Birthday - American jurist William O. Douglas (1898-1980) was born in Maine, Minnesota. He served as an associate justice on the Supreme Court for 36 years and was also a world traveler, conservationist, outdoorsman and author.

World Cup 2025: Nadine de Klerk the finisher as SA pull off thrilling win over India

10 OCT 2025

VISAKHAPATNAM (TIP): Sneha Rana, Harmanpreet Kaur and Smriti Mandhana were in a huddle near the bowling crease. It was the 43rd over of the South African innings and India were desperately searching for that one breakthrough. They had already reduced 81/5 first and 142/6 — thanks to Laura Wolvaardt's resistance of 70 runs that came from 111 balls — but Chloe Tryon and Nadine de Klerk were threatening to take the game away from India.

They had reduced the margin to 71 needed off 48, and it seemed like an even contest, especially with India playing only five bowlers. Harmanpreet had already bowled four overs herself, and now she had to ration the remaining eight.

First, it seemed like Rana would take the ball, but then Kranti Gaud was brought in. The youngster had bowled seven overs, removing both Tazmin Brits and Wolvaardt. Now, India were banking on her for another breakthrough. But that was not the case. De Klerk managed to find that one boundary as South Africa collected seven runs off the over.

This is something De Klerk had spoken about on the eve of the match. How her role would be to take the game deep rather than going hammer and tongs the moment she comes in. "It's still about finishing games off, but it might not be the same role... it's about adapting to the conditions and building a partnership with whoever's in there and try and take



games deep," she had said.

And she did just that, playing out Rana before collecting a boundary off Amanjot Kaur. She put the foot down against Rana, smashing a six and a four in the 46th over. Tryon fell for 49 from 66, but De Klerk took the chase deep. She stood in the crease and let Gaud's bouncer go. It was called wide before De Klerk sent the pacer into the stands over deep midwicket. She held her bat up for her fifty, pumped her chest and gestured to Ayabonga Khaka at the other end. A six and a four followed, India felt the pressure. Richa Ghosh called for the physio and South Africa were not

pleased. That, however, did not put any brakes on De Klerk who farmed the strike, launched Deepti behind square and over covers. Two more sixes against Amanjot and the chase was sealed. She let out a roar and punched the air in delight — an unbeaten 54-ball 84 taking South Africa home against India.

From the moment she walked in, De Klerk looked like she was on a mission. She remained calm, never felt like there were any nerves, and showcased a calculated masterclass in chasing. She built on the foundation laid by Wolvaardt and Tryon and crushed India's hopes of what seemed like an easy win. De Klerk

said, not today. Not on her watch.

Earlier, India's top-order collapsed once again. Mandhana's tentative run continued and once she fell, the others hit the self-destruct button. So much so that, Ghosh, who was kept behind Rana in the Pakistan game, had no choice but to come in to bat in the 27th over. Ghosh watchfully played out an over from Marizanne Kapp, took the attack to Tryon and Khaka, but she mixed it with caution. She added 51 runs with Amanjot in 14 overs before the latter fell, and the scoreboard read 153/7. India still had a mountain to climb, but they had a set Ghosh, who was joined by Rana in the middle. The duo accelerated, and the pressure, inevitably, got to the Proteas team.

Rana (33 off 24 balls) and Ghosh put on an 88-run stand that came in just 53 balls. By the time Rana got out, there was little time left in the game, and Ghosh had to raise the intensity level if she were to have a chance at reaching the three-figure mark. Batting on 94 off 76 balls, she needed six runs from four deliveries to reach her century and also had a chance to swell India's total. She tried to take on a hip-high full toss, but was caught in the deep. She reviewed it, but it didn't matter. Ghosh had to take a long walk back to the dressing room, falling six runs short of a sensational century. Just as she started walking, the entire stadium stood on its feet, applauding the youngster. Ghosh did her job, but in the end, it was all in vain. (TNIE)

Historic return: Indian jr shuttlers come to the fore at world stage



09 OCT 2025

CHENNAI (TIP): It was a moment that India had yearned for long. Towards the closing stages of India's match against South Korea, Unnati Hooda was edging closer and closer towards the promise land. Hooda, one of the familiar faces in the team, was doing what was needed during her women's singles tie against Kim Han Bi in the mixed team competition of the ongoing BWF World Junior Championships at the National Centre of Excellence in Guwahati.

Every point that Hooda was scoring against Kim was being cheered with palpable enthusiasm. When Hooda finally delivered the decisive blow (a half-smash from close to the net), the excitement levels rose to a crescendo. Hooda seemed

ecstatic as she turned towards her fellow teammates, who had done their bit earlier. Within seconds, her teammates thronged Hooda to celebrate the historic moment. India, in the process, had earned their first-ever medal in the history of the marquee competition. Unnati & Co, after beating South Korea 2-1 (44-45, 45-30, 45-33), marched into the semifinals of the Suhandinata Cup.

For a young bunch who have aspirations to touch the sky in the near future, it is a sizeable feat, a medal that could give them the belief ahead of bigger battles in the future.

Unlike their group stage contests, which had been a cruise, the Indian shuttlers had to dig deep into their resources to carve this win. (TNIE)

FIA candidate list indicates Mohammed Ben Sulayem could be re-elected unopposed as president

09 OCT 2025

PARIS (TIP): Mohammed Ben Sulayem is on course to be re-elected unopposed as president of motor racing's governing body the FIA, which oversees Formula 1, after a list of candidates for other posts indicated that his would-be challengers would not be able to assemble the team needed for a campaign.

FIA presidential candidates must submit a list including seven vice-presidential candidates from various regions of the world.

That must include a candidate from South America, but the only South American on a list of 29 eligible candidates on the FIA website is Fabiana Ecclestone of Brazil.

Ben Sulayem has previously posted on social media that Ecclestone, wife of former F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone, is part of his presidential list.

The rules bar the same person from being part of the team of more than one candidate and the FIA says the list of 29 eligible candidates is final.

The entry deadline for would-be FIA presidents is Oct. 24 but the lack of eligible South American officials suggests no-one other than Ben Sulayem could now form a valid list of vice-presidents.

In that case, Ben Sulayem would be



confirmed for a second four-year term in office when the FIA general assembly meets in Uzbekistan in December.

Ben Sulayem has headed the FIA since 2021 and has had high-profile disagreements with some F1 drivers over his opposition to swearing — the FIA later backed down and reduced its fines — and a large number of staff leaving the governing body.

Declared opponents to Ben Sulayem include Tim Mayer, an American ex-F1 race steward who accused Ben Sulayem of failing to deliver on promises and pushing out staff who disagreed with him.

Swiss racing driver Laura Villars and Belgian journalist Virginie Philipott have both said they were planning to run to become the FIA's first female president. (AP)



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