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# GOP senators balk at Trump's \$1.8 billion 'anti-weaponization' fund, force delay in key vote



Senate Majority Leader John Thune speaking at a press conference in Washington, D.C.

MAY 21, 2026  
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

In a striking display of defiance, GOP senators abruptly derailed plans to vote on legislation to fund Trump's immigration crackdown amid deep disagreements over security funding for a White House ballroom and a \$1.8-billion fund to pay people who claim to have been politically persecuted.

The discontent had been building for weeks. Many senators had grown frustrated over Trump's decision to endorse candidates running against longtime Republican incumbents.

Others, worried about rising costs as a result from the war in Iran, had aired concerns ahead of the midterm elections. But the breaking point came when the Justice Department, with little warning, pushed to create what it termed the "anti-weaponization fund."

Senate Majority Leader John Thune (R-S.D.) acknowledged the concerns over the fund Thursday, May 21, after a

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## Chandrayaan-3 Receives 2026 AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award



India's Ambassador to the United States, Vinay Mohan Kwatra, accepted the award on behalf of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) at the AIAA ASCEND 2026 Conference, May 21, 2026

MAY 21, 2026  
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

India's Chandrayaan-3 lunar mission has been honored with the 2026 Goddard Astronautics Award by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA), presented in Washington, D.C. on May 21, 2026, says a press note issued by the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C.

On August 23, 2023, Chandrayaan-3 made history as the first spacecraft to achieve a soft landing near the Moon's south pole - a region of immense scientific and strategic importance that had never before been explored at surface level. The mission delivered critical data to support future human missions to the Moon and confirmed the

CONTD ON PAGE 40

## BRICS Youth Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting concludes in Indore under Chairship

MAY 22, 2026  
INDORE, INDIA (TIP)

The BRICS Youth Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting concluded successfully in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, after two days of discussions, collaborative engagements, and knowledge-sharing sessions focused on strengthening entrepreneurship cooperation among BRICS nations, says ANI.

Organized by the Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, under India's BRICS Chairship 2026, the meeting was attended by Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports (virtually); Raksha Nikhil Khadse, Minister of State for Youth Affairs and Sports; Vishvas



The BRICS Youth Entrepreneurship Working Group in Indore

Kailash Sarang, Minister for Sports and Youth Welfare of Madhya Pradesh;

CONTD ON PAGE 40

## WELCOME TO NEW YORK



Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj

The Indian Panorama Extends a hearty welcome to Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj, world-renowned meditation teacher, author, and humanitarian on his visit to New York from May 23 to 25.

Maharaj Ji will hold a Satsang in Hindi (with English and Spanish translations) on Saturday, May 23 at 7.30 PM.

On Monday, May 25, at 3 PM, Maharaj Ji will deliver a Talk in English (with Spanish translation).

FOR DETAILS, PLEASE SEE THE FLIER ON PAGE 11



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# AMERICA AT 250: A Celebration of Democracy, Freedom, and Human Dignity

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



The Indian Panorama Invites You to Join a Historic Journey

There are moments in history that belong not merely to one nation, but to humanity itself. The approaching 250th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America is one such moment.

On July 4, 2026, America will commemorate two and a half centuries of a national journey that altered the course of world history. From the ringing declaration that "all men are created equal" to the continuing global struggle for liberty, justice, democratic governance, and human dignity, the American experiment has inspired generations across continents.

The celebrations planned across the United States are expected to be nothing short of the Mother of All Celebrations—a grand national reflection on freedom, democracy, resilience, innovation, and the indomitable human spirit.

At The Indian Panorama, we consider it both a privilege and a responsibility to participate meaningfully in this historic occasion.

As an Indian American publication committed to truth, dialogue, and democratic values, The Indian Panorama proudly announces a comprehensive Special Edition dedicated to the 250th Anniversary of American Independence. This will not merely be a commemorative publication. It will be an intellectual, historical, cultural, and moral journey through the making of America, its achievements, its challenges, and its continuing promise to humanity.

America's story is not the story of perfection. It is the story of aspiration. It is the story of a nation constantly striving to align itself with the ideals upon which it was founded. That struggle itself is what gives meaning to democracy.

For 250 years, America has stood as a symbol—sometimes admired, sometimes questioned, often challenged, but never ignored. Its institutions, Constitution, scientific accomplishments, economic power, military strength, cultural influence, and democratic traditions have shaped modern civilization in profound ways.

**This special edition will attempt to capture that extraordinary voyage.**

The proposed publication will include a wide range of deeply researched and thoughtfully written articles covering the many dimensions of the American experience. Among the themes to be explored are:

- The making of America—from the colonial era to independence and nation-building;
- A chronological history of America's rise as a global power;
- The growth of American democracy and the enduring strength of its Constitution;
- America's economic journey from an agrarian society to the world's largest economy;
- Scientific innovation and technological leadership—from the light bulb to artificial intelligence, and from the Wright Brothers to NASA's exploration of outer space;
- America's wars, triumphs, and moral dilemmas;
- The evolution of civil rights and the continuing struggle for equality and justice;
- America's role in shaping the modern world order;
- The story of immigration and the making of multicultural America;
- The invaluable contribution of Indian Americans in science, medicine, education, technology, business, public

service, arts, and politics;

- India-US relations and the strengthening partnership between the world's two great democracies.

This publication will also feature interviews, historical timelines, rare photographs, opinion essays, analytical articles, commemorative messages, and visual presentations designed to make the edition both intellectually enriching and aesthetically memorable.

But beyond history and politics lies something even greater: the celebration of human dignity.

**The American Declaration of Independence was not merely a political document. It was a moral statement. It declared that human beings possess inherent rights**

**and that governments derive legitimacy from the consent of the governed. Those ideas transformed the world.**

Democracy remains imperfect everywhere. Nations succeed and fail. Leaders rise and fall. Societies struggle with injustice, inequality, and division. Yet, despite all imperfections, the democratic ideal continues to offer humanity its greatest hope for peaceful



Photo: Courtesy David Trinks / Unsplash

progress and individual freedom.

That is why the celebration of America at 250 is not only America's celebration. It is a celebration of the enduring human quest for liberty, opportunity, and dignity.

The Indian American community occupies a unique place in this story. Millions of Indian Americans have built lives, careers, businesses, institutions, and families in this great nation. They have contributed richly to America while also strengthening bonds between India and the United States. This anniversary offers the diaspora an opportunity to reaffirm its gratitude, loyalty, participation, and faith in the democratic ideals that bind diverse peoples together.

We therefore warmly invite our readers, community leaders, organizations, businesses, institutions, professionals, writers, scholars, advertisers, and patrons to join hands with The Indian Panorama in making this historic special edition a memorable tribute to America and its democratic spirit.<

**WE INVITE CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FORM OF:**

- Articles and essays;
- Historical reflections;
- Messages and greetings;
- Advertisements and sponsorships;
- Photographs and archival material;
- Corporate and organizational participation.

**This is not merely an invitation to participate in a publication. It is an invitation to become part of history. Two hundred and fifty years come only once.**

Generations before us built this nation through sacrifice, courage, innovation, and faith in democratic values. Generations after us will judge how sincerely we preserved and celebrated those ideals.

**Let us therefore come together—as Americans, as Indian Americans, and above all as citizens of a shared human civilization—to celebrate freedom, democracy, and the dignity of mankind.**

The Indian Panorama proudly invites you to partner with us in this grand celebration of America at 250.

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# GOPIO-Manhattan inducts new leadership team in New York.

PROF. RAJASEKHAR VANGAPATY IS INDUCTED AS PRESIDENT



GOPIO-Manhattan Officials, Members and Supporters at the Oath Ceremony -Photo / GOPIO



Speakers at the Oath Ceremony for New Officers of GOPIO-Manhattan.

L to R: Dr. Thomas Abraham, Prakash Shah, Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty and Vichal Kumar -Photo / GOPIO

**MAY 21, 2026**  
**NEW YORK CITY (TIP)**

The Manhattan chapter of the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin, or GOPIO-Manhattan, formally inducted its newly elected leadership team during an oath-taking ceremony held May 17 at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Manhattan.

The chapter, established in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, recently conducted elections for its Executive Committee and Board of Trustees for the 2026-2027 term.

The ceremony was attended by GOPIO International leaders, members, supporters, community representatives and guests. Among those present were GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham, President Prakash Shah and General Secretary Siddharth Jain.

President-elect Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty welcomed attendees and outlined his vision for collaborative and inclusive leadership within the chapter. He then invited Abraham, who chaired the Election Committee, to speak about GOPIO's history, mission and activities supporting the Indian diaspora.

Abraham discussed the organization's work connecting Indian diaspora communities globally. Shah

later addressed the gathering and spoke about upcoming GOPIO programs, including the GOPIO convention planned in Mumbai. He then administered the oath of office to the newly elected Executive Committee, trustees and board members.

New York Democratic congressional primary candidate Vichal Kumar also addressed the gathering and congratulated the new leadership team. He emphasized the importance of civic engagement and participation in the political process.

The newly elected Executive Committee is headed by Prof. Rajasekhar Vangapaty as president. Other office-bearers include Bhavya Gupta as executive vice president, Dr. Vimal Goyle as vice president, Raj Punjabi as secretary, Braj Aggarwal as treasurer and Gagan Gujral as joint secretary.

The newly elected trustees are Shivender Sofat, Dr. Thomas Abraham, Mukund Mehta, Siddharth Jain, Anil Narang and Neha Motwani.

Appointed board members include Dr. Lisa George, Dr. Arnab Ghosh, Manoj Jareth Asig and Jasvir Ubhi.

Following the swearing-in ceremony, Vangapaty thanked the Election Committee, including Abraham,

Shivender Sofat and Mukund Mehta, for overseeing what he described as a smooth election process. He also congratulated the newly elected members and reaffirmed his commitment to serving GOPIO-Manhattan and the wider community.

Several attendees offered congratulatory remarks during the event, including GOPIO-Manhattan's first and immediate past president Shivender Sofat, who joined by telephone, GOPIO life member Mrudul Pathak and Kumar.

The speakers commended GOPIO-Manhattan's community service initiatives, cultural engagement efforts and leadership development activities.

The event concluded with refreshments and networking among attendees. Vangapaty also thanked Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Executive Director Minesh Patel and the organization's board for providing the venue for the ceremony.

GOPIO-Manhattan Membership is open to everyone. For more info or to become a member, contact Prof. Raj Vangapaty at 917-348-0759 or vangapaty@gmail.com.

(Based on a press release issued by Thomas Abraham, GOPIO Chairman)

## Renowned Sikh scholar and educator Dr. IJ Singh passes away at 89



**MAY 18, 2026**  
**NEW YORK (TIP)**

Dr. Inder Jit (I.J.) Singh, a renowned Sikh scholar and educator, passed away on May 12, 2026, in New York at the age of 89.

Born in 1937, Dr. Singh was a pivotal figure in the Sikh diaspora, known for his work in making Sikh teachings relevant to contemporary Western life. He was an Emeritus Professor of anatomical sciences at New York University and authored several influential books on Sikh identity and philosophy.

Dr. Singh was a prominent representative for the American Sikh community and notably spoke on

their behalf at the national condolence meeting following the 9/11 attacks.

Organizations like SikhNet and Sikh Research Institute have highlighted his gift for framing difficult spiritual conversations in meaningful ways.

His Antim Ardas (final prayer service) was held on May 17, 2026, at the Plainview Gurdwara in Long Island. Respected news outlets like The Tribune and various community leaders such as Tarlochan Singh have expressed their condolences, noting the great loss to the global Sikh community.

In addition to his religious scholarship, he was a respected science educator, with tributes from peers shared on platforms like Facebook emphasizing his ability to bridge science and spirituality.

## Global Indian Diaspora announces "Icons of Impact Gala & Global Launch" in New Jersey

A Landmark Celebration Honoring Visionary Leaders and Changemakers of Indian Origin Worldwide

**MAY 19, 2026**  
**NEW JERSEY (TP)**

The Global Indian Diaspora proudly announces its highly anticipated "Icons of Impact Gala & Global

Launch," set to take place on Friday, May 29, 2026, at the prestigious Ember Banquet Hall in Monmouth Junction, New Jersey. This landmark gathering will celebrate exceptional leaders of Indian origin whose contributions across business, technology, entrepreneurship, philanthropy, arts, public service, and community leadership have created meaningful impact around the world.

The event also marks the official global launch of the Global Indian Diaspora platform - a premier international network dedicated to connecting influential diaspora leaders, fostering cross-border collaboration, and empowering the next generation of innovators and changemakers. The evening will feature an elegant red-carpet reception, keynote addresses by distinguished global leaders, recognition of the prestigious "Icons of Impact" honorees, curated cultural performances, and an exclusive networking dinner bringing together visionaries from across industries and



communities.

"This gala represents more than a celebration of achievement," said a spokesperson for the organizing committee. "It is the beginning of a

powerful global movement designed to unite the Indian diaspora, inspire collaboration, and create lasting economic, cultural, and social impact worldwide."

### EVENT DETAILS

Event: Icons of Impact Gala & Global Launch  
Date: Friday, May 29, 2026

Time: 6:30 PM EDT onwards

Venue: Ember Banquet Hall

3793 US-1, Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852

Attendance is strictly by invitation and pre-registration only. The event is expected to host prominent business leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, innovators, philanthropists, policymakers, community leaders, and media representatives from across the United States and around the globe.

For media credentials, sponsorship opportunities, partnerships, or event inquiries, please Email: [Contact@glo-india.com](mailto:Contact@glo-india.com)

Website: [www.Glo-india.com](http://www.Glo-india.com)

## Kulwinder Johal and Preet Kaur Gill of Punjab origin make their mark in UK politics

MAY 18, 2026  
LONDON (TIP)

Two Sikhs of Jalandhar origin have earned a name for themselves in the political circles of the UK. Hailing from Tehang village of Phillaur, Kulwinder Singh Johal (56) has become first turbaned Sikh Mayor of Leicester, while Preet Kaur Gill (53), who hails from Jansher village of Jalandhar, has been appointed as the Junior Health Minister in the cabinet reshuffle in the Kier Starmer government.

"My parents and grandparents first settled in Talwan village of Jalandhar after coming from Pakistan during the Partition days. They later moved to Tehang village. I was only six when my family brought me to the UK. I had a good, fun life as a child here, and it was a ritual for us to go to gurdwara every Sunday," Johal said.

"I was the general secretary of Gurdwara Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji at Leicester in 2002. Queen Elizabeth had



Kulwinder Singh Johal and Preet Kaur Gill.

paid a visit there during her golden jubilee tour of the UK. The visit got good coverage," he recalled.

Johal worked in a factory in the UK for



-Instagram Photo

25 years. Alongside, he remained engaged in social work and raising a football club locally.

On being elected as the Mayor, he said,

"I am thankful to my fellow councilors for reposing faith in me and choosing me to be the First Citizen of Leicester. Also, I firmly believe that such milestones come in a person's life only when the Almighty desires so."

Johal is married to Manjit Kaur, and the two have a daughter Gursimran Kaur and son Ashveer Singh Johal.

Preet Kaur Gill started her political career as a councilor in 2012 for the Labour Party. She served as a councilor in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council.

In the 2017 general election, Gill was elected as Member of Parliament for Birmingham Edgbaston. She had then become the first British Sikh woman MP in UK history.

She got re-elected in the 2019 and 2024 general elections. On her appointment, she wrote on her social media, "Every new role comes with a lot of responsibility to deliver".

(With inputs from TNS)

## 23-yr-old elected youngest Indian-origin mayor of British town

Tushar Kumar, a former student of Political Science from King's College London, took charge as the Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood at a ceremony last week



Tushar Kumar, Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood. -Photo: X/@CllrTusharKumar

MAY 18, 2026  
LONDON (TIP)

A 23-year-old politician representing a local council in eastern England has created history by becoming the youngest Indian-origin Mayor in the United Kingdom.

Tushar Kumar, a former student of Political Science from King's College London, took charge as the Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood at a ceremony last week.

The Labour councilor joined the Elstree and Borehamwood Town Council in 2023 and previously served in the role of Deputy Mayor.

"An incredible honor to officially become the Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood last night and, at 23 years old, the youngest ever Indian-origin Mayor in the history of the United Kingdom," said Kumar, in a statement following the ceremony.

"I am truly humbled by the trust placed in me and incredibly grateful for all the support, kindness and encouragement I have received throughout this journey. Thank you to everyone who attended the Mayor Making Ceremony at Fairway Hall and to all those who have supported me over the years - from residents, community

organizations and fellow councilors to my family and friends who have always believed in me," he said.

He expressed gratitude to his predecessor, outgoing mayor Dan Ozarow, for his service and guidance during his previous tenure as Deputy Mayor and welcomed Councilor Linda Smith as his new Deputy.

"I look forward to working closely together over the coming year, serving our community. As Mayor, I want to focus on being present within the community, supporting local organizations and charities, and inspiring more young people to get involved in public service and community life. It is the privilege of a lifetime to serve the town I love," he added.

As one of the youngest councilors to be elected while still a student in London, Kumar believes that "real change starts at the community level".

"Elstree and Borehamwood Town Council gave me a platform to listen, represent and act - making a difference where it truly matters, close to home," he said.

Kumar credits the Civic Leadership Academy of King's College London for helping improve his confidence and public speaking skills. He also gained experience with the University Officers' Training Corps during his time as a student of politics at the London institution.

"My time at King's has played a significant role in shaping my values and commitment to public service and I hope my story might inspire other students to see leadership and local impact as paths worth pursuing," said Kumar.

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)

## Indian origin Aaron Rai tees off to PGA glory

Aaron is first Jat Sikh to win a major PGA championship

MAY 19, 2026  
LONDON (TIP)

After being introduced to golf "accidentally" by his mother as a child, Aaron Rai has scripted history by becoming the first Englishman in 107 years to win the PGA Championship. The 31-year-old golfer of Indian descent shot a 9-under par total of 271 (70-69-67-65). This dominant display placed him three strokes ahead of runners-up Jon Rahm and Alex Smalley.

For Aaron, who has his roots in Jalandhar, the PGA title win fetched him a \$3.68 million winner's prize from the record-breaking \$20.5 million tournament purse.

Born at Wolverhampton to Amrik Rai and Dalvir Shukla, Aaron's introduction to golf was accidental. While playing, he had once carelessly hit himself in the head with one of his brother's hockey sticks. His mother made sure that the toddler did not handle hockey sticks again and bought him a set of plastic golf clubs instead.

While the step was initial, his further interest in the sport developed through his father, who observed Aaron's sharp swing. As Aaron progressed in life, a major change was brought in by his wife-turned-caddy, Gaurika Bishnoi, a professional golfer from Haryana.

Before this grand win, Aaron had just one career win on the PGA Tour. Aaron is the first Jat Sikh to win a major PGA championship. In 2024, he had become the second Jat Sikh to win a PGA tour event after Arjun Atwal.

"Great win by him. Really hard-working and gentleman. A routine-oriented guy with good discipline. Well deserved. Proud of him," said Indian golfing great Jeev Milkha Singh. Notably, Jeev had met Aaron when the latter was still a budding golfer. "When I was on a tour in Europe. He (Aaron) had just joined as a young kid. Played a practice round together and a



Aaron Rai.

tournament also," said Jeev.

After the win, Aaron talked about his father, who bought him the first professional set at the age of seven.

"I practiced every day. When the clubs got muddy, my dad used a pin to clean every groove. Then he would put baby oil on the face to prevent rust. He bought me iron covers to protect the clubs. I learnt early to value what I had," said Aaron after winning the title.

Aaron credited Gaurika for not only helping him handle the chaos of the major championship but also helping him remain alert in the tense final stretch. The couple even discussed strategy in the car the night before the final round, a conversation Aaron admitted stayed with him throughout his march to history. And it ended up with some tears and a warm hug as the couple knew the struggle behind the historic win.

Gaurika has been one of India's top women golfers over the last 10 years. She has eight wins in India's Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour. Aaron and Gaurika got married last year. "She's been incredible. I'm not exaggerating when I say that I wouldn't be here without her... She's a professional golfer herself, so her advice and her thoughts, whether it's on technique or the way I'm holding myself, are absolutely invaluable.

Read full story at  
[www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)



# The INDIAN PANORAMA

EVER TRUTHFUL

## Announces a Historic 250-Page Special Edition

### Celebrating 250 Years of American Independence

# "THE MAKING OF AMERICA"

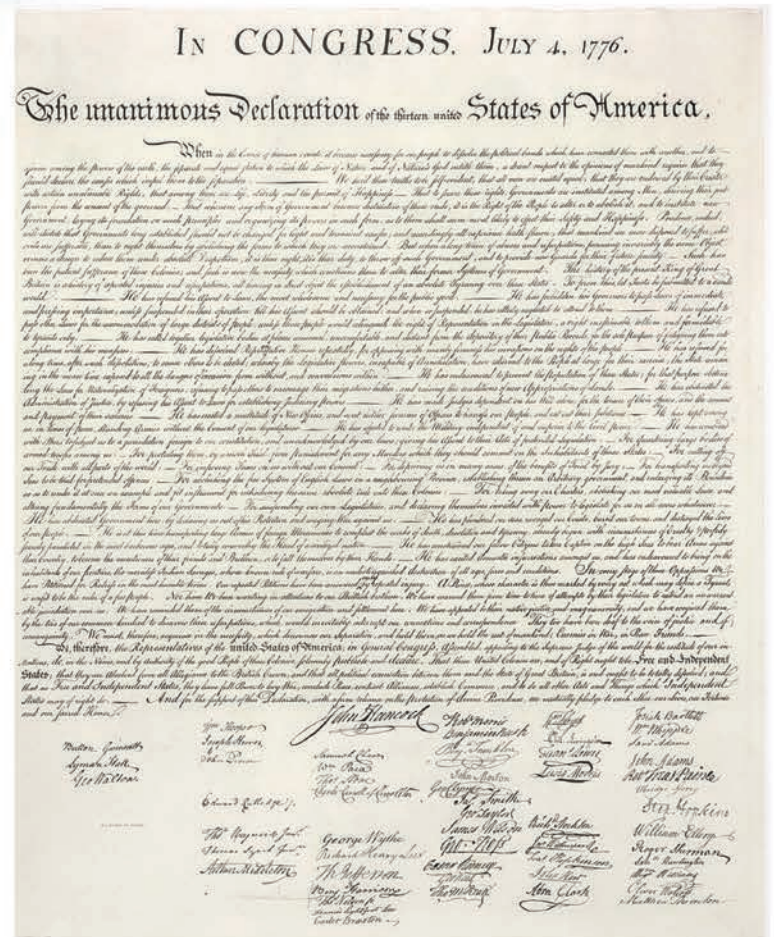
## A Grand Commemorative Publication on America's Journey: 1776-2026

The Indian Panorama proudly announces a landmark 250-page Special Commemorative Edition to celebrate the historic 250th Anniversary of the Independence of the United States in 2026.

The prestigious publication, titled "The Making of America," will present a comprehensive account of America's extraordinary journey from the pre-Independence era to the present day, highlighting its history, democracy, economy, scientific and technological achievements, military strength, cultural diversity, and global leadership.

A special section of this historic commemorative edition will be devoted to the evolving and increasingly significant relationship between India and United States—two great democracies bound together by shared democratic values, strategic cooperation, economic engagement, educational exchange, technological innovation, and deep people-to-people ties.

The section will also highlight the remarkable contribution of the Indian American community to the growth and progress of America in diverse fields including science, technology, medicine, business, academia, public service, arts, media, entrepreneurship, and philanthropy. It will celebrate the role played by Indian Americans in strengthening the bonds of friendship and understanding between the two nations and in enriching the multicultural fabric of American society.



#### THE MEGA EDITION WILL FEATURE:

- Scholarly articles and historical analyses
- Editorial comments and readers' reflections
- Messages from world leaders, organizations, and eminent personalities
- A special section on India-US relations and the contribution of Indian Americans to America
- Rare photographs, timelines, and archival material
- Greetings and advertisements from businesses, institutions, and community organizations

THIS COMMEMORATIVE EDITION WILL SERVE AS A COLLECTOR'S VOLUME AND A LASTING TRIBUTE TO THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY, DEMOCRACY, DIVERSITY, AND OPPORTUNITY THAT AMERICA REPRESENTS.

THE INDIAN PANORAMA WARMLY INVITES SCHOLARS, WRITERS, ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, COMMUNITY LEADERS, READERS, AND WELL-WISHERS TO PARTNER WITH US IN THIS GRAND CELEBRATION THROUGH ARTICLES, GREETINGS, SPONSORSHIPS, AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

THIS IS TRULY A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME PART OF A HISTORIC PUBLICATION COMMEMORATING AMERICA'S REMARKABLE 250-YEAR JOURNEY.

For Participation, Greetings, Messages, Articles & Advertisements:

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## 73 Nursing Graduates Honored at Middlesex College Pinning Ceremony



The largest nursing class in seven years celebrates their achievement before starting their professional careers. Photo/ Middlesex College

### MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ (TIP)

Lauded for their perseverance and resilience, 73 Middlesex College nursing students received their program pins May 18 at a heartfelt and emotional pinning ceremony on campus. This year's class is the largest nursing cohort since 2019.

"Nursing is hard, because you care for people who are at their most vulnerable," said Middlesex College Nursing Program Director Kara Kaldawi. "You have to be compassionate. You have to be an advocate for them and their families. Nurses are part of a global community, and each one of our patients has a story including us. We should encourage those stories to be

told."

Graduates Mary Kazior of Metuchen and Richa Sharma of Carteret addressed the crowd and shared some of their own personal stories about the rigorous training and the pride they possessed for what they had achieved.

"Nursing school has a way of stripping you down," said Kazior. "It takes the version of you that walked in-the version that is hopeful and eager, and maybe a little naïve-and it tests every part of that person. Nursing will bring you a range of emotions, from the highest highs watching someone heal to the depth of grief in losing a patient...then, it will ask you to do it all again."

"Wherever we go from here, may we lead with compassion, act with integrity, and continue to bring light into the moments that need it most," said Sharma. "This is not the end of our journey. It's only the beginning."

Nursing Program Coordinator Elizabeth DeCarlo gave special recognition to graduate Khadiga Elfaki who won the Daisy Award, a national honor that celebrates a nursing student who demonstrates commitment to caring, compassion, and creates a connection that makes a difference in the healthcare experience.

At the end of the ceremony, four additional students received individual honors for their performance:

National League for Nursing Membership - Richa Sharma

Dr. Surender Grover Award - Juan Motta

Dr. Lund/Breslow Award - Alda Cuka

Dr. H. Shangold Award - Janice Cruz

Learn more about the Middlesex College Nursing Program here:

<https://middlesexcollege.edu/academics/health-professions/nursing/>

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#### Panelists



Yakub Mathew  
Banker, Author



Lama Aria Drolma  
Buddhist Nun



Nayan Kisnadwala  
Finance, Temple Trustee



Sharon Epstein  
Yoga Teacher



Parveen Chopra  
Moderator

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# Vichal Kumar: Son of Immigrants, Public Defender, and Civil Rights Attorney Running to Become NY's First South Asian Member of Congress

Vichal Kumar, a longtime civil rights attorney and public defender, is one of four candidates on the ballot in the June 23 Democratic primary for New York's 7th Congressional District. The district covers Bushwick, Williamsburg, Greenpoint, Ridgewood, Long Island City, Astoria, Sunnyside, Maspeth, Woodhaven, Clinton Hill, Downtown Brooklyn, and East New York, including significant South Asian communities across Brooklyn and Queens. If elected, Kumar would be the first South Asian member of Congress from New York. He sat down with us to talk about his story and what he believes is at stake for the South Asian community in this race.

## Q: CAN YOU TELL US WHERE YOU COME FROM?

A: My parents came to this country as working-class immigrants from India. We bought a convenience store when I was a kid. They worked twelve hours a day, seven days a week, for decades. I stocked shelves, made sandwiches, and ran the register. That store was our family's life.

## Q: HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO BECOME AN ATTORNEY?

A: My parents overcame immense obstacles while running our store, and yet they never ceased to look out for their neighbors. The experience taught me that we as individuals have a responsibility to care for one another. I realized at a young age that I wanted to become a lawyer and help those who could not defend themselves. I went to Hofstra Law at night while working during the day. While my classmates went to big law firms, I decided to go to The Bronx Defenders. I have been a public defender ever since.

For more than twenty years, I have helped families: tenants, immigrants, and workers across New York City. I built the Civil Defense Practice at Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, and as Managing Director at Partners for Justice, I scaled that

holistic-defense model nationally, including in states such as Texas and Missouri.

I also have had the privilege of serving as the past President of the South Asian Bar Association of North America and the South Asian Bar Association of New York.

## Q: YOU MENTIONED YOU HAVE A PLAN TO HELP SMALL BUSINESSES, AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR THE SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITY IN QUEENS. WHAT IS IT?

A: My parents' store would not survive in today's New York. Corporate conglomerates have captured the supply chain. Apps take a third of every order. Commercial rent is unbearable.

There are almost 185,000 small businesses across the five boroughs, and nearly half are immigrant-owned, generating \$250 billion a year in economic impact. Yet small businesses are facing major challenges.

I am running on a small business plan built around three things: starting, surviving, and passing the business on.

? On starting businesses: I support no-interest federal startup loans for first-generation entrepreneurs and immigrant communities, banking reform that recognizes ITINs so immigrant founders can actually get a loan, and federal childcare investment so working parents can run a business.

? On surviving: We need to block the proposed \$29 billion Sysco-Restaurant Depot merger, which would crush 725,000 small foodservice businesses across 35 states, cap what delivery apps can take from each order, and tie federal small business funding to anti-displacement protections because 77 percent of immigrant small business owners in this city are rent-burdened.

? On passing it on: Extend Section 1042 of the tax code so every retiring small business owner can sell to their workers, and provide federal retirement security for the self-employed, and Medicare buy-in for older owners.

Rep. Nydia Velázquez helped build the federal small business agenda in this district. I am running to deepen and continue that work.

## Q: THE IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT LANDSCAPE HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY. WHERE DO YOU STAND?

A: My position on ICE is clear: dismantle it. Not reform it. Not retrain it. Dismantle it. The agency has been operating outside the rule of law and separating families for years. I will also push to end the federal 287(g) program nationwide. When local police become ICE, immigrant families stop calling 911 and reporting crimes. Every community becomes less safe, and every immigrant small business loses customers, employees, and revenue.

Immigration policy is not only about enforcement. South Asians have helped build American science, medicine, technology, small business, and so many facets of our culture. What is happening at the federal level now puts that story at risk. The current administration's push to cap H-1B visas, the family-based visa backlogs that have separated families for decades, and the green card backlogs

that punish South Asians because of outdated per-country caps are hurting families and innovation in our country. I will fight for comprehensive immigration reform that stops unjustly penalizing South Asians and creates a real pathway to citizenship.

## Q: HEALTHCARE IS A MAJOR CONCERN FOR FIRST-GENERATION SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS AND SENIORS. WHAT IS YOUR POSITION?

A: I grew up in a household without health insurance. Every time someone got sick, we asked ourselves: "are we sick enough to go to the doctor?" No family in the richest country in the world should be asking that question. I support Medicare for All. In the meantime, I will fight to expand ACA subsidies, eliminate pre-existing condition exclusions, cap prescription drug costs, and create a public option that small business owners and the self-employed can buy into.

## Q: WHY ARE YOU RUNNING FOR CONGRESS NOW?

A: I am running for Congress because of the values my parents instilled in me: hard work, service to others, and looking out for your community. These are the values our country needs right now.

Our community in New York has built businesses, raised families, and contributed to this country without seeing itself and its needs reflected in Washington. I want to change that.



Vichal Kumar requests South Asian voters, in particular, to "show up."

## Q: WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE TO SOUTH ASIAN VOTERS IN NY-7 AS THE JUNE 23 PRIMARY APPROACHES?

A: Show up. The Democratic primary is the election that matters in this district, and South Asian voters have the numbers to be decisive in a four-way race. If you have never voted in a primary before, this is the one. Learn more at [kumar4ny.com](http://kumar4ny.com).

(Editorial Board, The Indian Panorama)

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# This immigration policy is a winner. It just needs a champion.

BY ALEXANDER  
KUSTOV



Even the most anti-immigration voter will back a program that's clearly beneficial to the country

In 1992, Congress passed the Soviet Scientists Immigration Act, which gave hundreds of weapons scientists and engineers a new pathway to permanent U.S. residency and kept them from selling their expertise to Iran or North Korea. Despite the name, nobody

**CONSIDER THE FIELD OF AI. ABOUT 70 PERCENT OF THE TOP AI RESEARCHERS WORKING IN THE U.S. WERE BORN OR EDUCATED ABROAD, AS WERE ROUGHLY TWO-THIRDS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS IN AI-RELATED FIELDS. THE AMERICAN ADVANTAGE IN AI IS, TO A REMARKABLE DEGREE, AN IMMIGRATION ADVANTAGE. THESE ARE NOT WORKERS WHO ARE DISPLACING AMERICANS. THEY ARE THE RESEARCHERS EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD IS ACTIVELY BIDDING FOR.**

are displacing Americans. They are the researchers every country in the world is actively bidding for.

But that advantage is under pressure. In September, the Trump administration imposed a \$100,000 fee per new H-1B visa petition aimed at deterring firms that the administration argued were using the specialty occupation visa to undercut American workers. Then in March, the Labor Department proposed overhauling the prevailing-wage system in a way that would push required salaries for H-1B and green card workers sharply upward, on similar grounds. Right now, every H-1B hire must be paid a "prevailing wage" meant to match what comparable Americans earn, but the current formula is crude enough that large IT staffing firms routinely game it by paying foreign workers less.

So both these rules have a defensible rationale. But they would also price out the research institutions and early-stage companies that produce the most top talent, because the biggest wage hikes fall on entry-level positions, where research labs and start-ups do most of their hiring.

That's the opposite of what's needed.

Voters will reward the politician or party that advances a well-designed plan to invite in the world's best talent, whether in AI or other promising high-tech fields. Two concrete moves can put that idea to work. And they don't even require action by Congress.

First, expand and encourage greater use of the O-1A extraordinary-ability visa. Unlike the H-1B, this established program for top individuals in fields including the sciences has no numerical cap and no lottery. Far more STEM PhDs and postdocs already in the U.S. would qualify than currently apply, but university hiring offices and corporate HR default to the H-1B lottery out of habit. This visa exists; many more companies and immigrants should use it.

Second, fix how the government sets wages for foreign workers. The Labor Department's March proposal includes an option that would require employers to pay foreign workers what an American with the same job and experience earns, which would close that gap without crushing the research pipeline. That option needs to be the one the agency picks, and the public comment window closes May 26. After that, the choice gets harder to reverse.

In a 2019 Rose Garden speech, President Donald Trump lamented that U.S. rules were pushing the world's top talent elsewhere. "We discriminate against genius. We discriminate against brilliance," he said.

That diagnosis remains correct. The programs are there. All that's missing is a politician to promote them.

(Alexander Kustov is an associate professor of global affairs at the University of Notre Dame and the author of "In Our Interest: How Democracies Can Make Immigration Popular" and the "Popular by Design" newsletter)

(Original Source: The Washington Post)



Scientific progress in the United States is inextricably linked to the lives and stories of immigrants.  
Left to right: Marianne Bronner, Elham Azizi, Guosong Hong, and Maayan Levy -Photos: Courtesy of Vilcek Foundation

thought of it as immigration legislation, and the bill cleared both chambers easily.

It may seem surprising given America's toxic immigration politics, but the door those scientists came through still exists. And the party that throws it open once again will own the single most popular pro-growth policy in the United States.

The numbers are irrefutable: Roughly 80 percent of American voters support high-skilled immigration. Even more than 70 percent of Trump voters back it. By comparison, expanding nuclear power sits at 59 percent. Building smaller homes closer together polls at just 50 percent. Deregulation has never crossed majority support in 25 years of Gallup tracking.

Nonetheless, the center-left has conceded this ground. Democrats have broadly retreated since President Joe Biden's late-term turn toward immigration enforcement. Abundance writers such as Ezra Klein and Derek Thompson sidestep touting immigration as a growth lever. Even Matt Yglesias, who made an ambitious pro-immigration case in "One Billion Americans," has grown cautious.

The center-right has the same problem, except in reverse. The center of gravity in the party has moved far rightward on the issue since 14 Senate Republicans backed a compromise containing a path

**SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS IN THE UNITED STATES IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO THE LIVES AND STORIES OF IMMIGRANTS. THEIR EFFORTS HAVE IMPROVED LIVES WORLDWIDE AND ESTABLISHED THIS COUNTRY AS A BEACON OF SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY. IMMIGRANTS REPRESENT 28% OF THE AMERICAN RECIPIENTS OF NOBEL PRIZES AWARDED IN PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY, AND MEDICINE BETWEEN 1901 AND 2024.**

to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants in 2013. Republicans who privately know the country needs foreign scientists avoid saying so for fear of being outflanked on their right.

Vice President JD Vance illustrated the point when he recently described the U.S. space program as built by "American citizens," rejecting any need to "import a foreign class of servants and professors." That erases not just Wernher von Braun, who led the Saturn V program, but the entire Operation Paperclip cohort of more than 1,600 German scientists the U.S. recruited after World War II.

While Washington argues over which immigrants belong, the cost is already showing in the data. CNN has tallied at least 85 top U.S. researchers, including more than a dozen artificial intelligence specialists, who have joined Chinese institutions since early 2024. A March 2025 Nature poll found that three-quarters of U.S.-based scientists are considering leaving. Britain, Singapore, Australia and Canada are actively recruiting them. The U.S. is the only

major AI power moving in the other direction.

Both sides have misread the politics in the same way. Immigration in the abstract is toxic, because voters see illegal crossings and visa abuse by people willing to break the rules. But the resulting backlash does not extend to welcoming top talent via specific, well-designed, legal programs.

Even the most anti-immigration voters will support increased entries when the policies are straightforwardly beneficial to the country. I call this demonstrably beneficial immigration, and it is less about rhetoric than design: Programs with visible benefits whose beneficiaries have a stake in defending them and whose opposition is thin can succeed.

Consider the field of AI. About 70 percent of the top AI researchers working in the U.S. were born or educated abroad, as were roughly two-thirds of graduate students in AI-related fields. The American advantage in AI is, to a remarkable degree, an immigration advantage. These are not workers who

# A 2026 World Cup that doesn't rip off fans? Some cities are showing that it's possible.

BY  
LEANDER  
SCHAERLAECKENS



Philadelphia, Kansas City and Atlanta are among the hosts showing that price-gouging at this summer's tournament is, ultimately, a choice



Lincoln Financial Field (dubbed Philadelphia Stadium for the tournament, as per Fifa's sponsor rules).

Philadelphia has spotted an opportunity. A chance to burnish a budding reputation as one of the East Coast's most pleasant and interesting big cities - in the view of this columnist, at least - and one of its most affordable, too.

The ample offering of public transportation to the six 2026 World Cup matches slated for Lincoln Financial Field (dubbed Philadelphia Stadium for the tournament, as per Fifa's sponsor rules) will set fans back a mere \$2.90. Tickets to see those matches are somehow getting cheaper on the secondary market - down about 16% from last month. Hotels are still reasonably priced. And fan fests will remain free for every day of the tournament. There will be no getting charged three times as much for shade, either, as you will in Los Angeles.

"We've been working on this for a significant amount of time," Meg Kane, host city executive for Philadelphia's local organizing committee told the Philadelphia Inquirer. "We have always really put the fan experience at the center of what we wanted to build the Fifa World Cup in Philadelphia around."

So much of the narrative about this summer's World Cup has centered on high prices - either due to Fifa's pursuit of maximum revenue - which it says will be ploughed back into the sport's grassroots - or local authorities' quest to recoup the significant costs, or some combination of the two. But Philadelphia is one of several of the 11

World Cup host cities in the United States to have found some breathing room within this oppressive climate. Here and there, along the margins, a few brave parts of a few brave cities have carved out a little daylight, a spot for them to put fans first.

With match tickets priced similarly to a car, which even chief World Cup cheerleader Donald Trump said he would balk at, and the rocketing rates for hotel rooms - which are coming right back down in the absence of robust demand - the latest assault on the wallet was transportation.

Canada fans cheer as the team arrives on the field to warm up ahead of Group F World Cup soccer action against Belgium at Ahmad bin Ali Stadium in Al Rayyan, Qatar, on Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2022. (Nathan Denette/The Canadian Press via AP)

Train tickets from New York City to MetLife Stadium in New Jersey's Meadowlands on NJ Transit were priced at \$150, up from their usual \$13, although that subsequently fell to \$105 and then to \$98 as sponsors were found. From Boston, train tickets to Gillette Stadium in Foxboro cost \$80. Bus services aren't much cheaper, and in some cases they are more expensive.

But after a fan fest in Liberty State Park in New Jersey was canceled on account of its cost to taxpayers - the same reasoning for those eye-watering train tickets, seeing as how Fifa won't share in any of the cost of getting fans to its games - New York City's mayor,

Zohran Mamdani, and New York Governor Kathy Hochul announced five free fan fests across all the city's boroughs.

## OTHER CITIES HAVE GONE FURTHER.

Rather than go along with Fifa's pricey in-stadium concession rates, Arthur Blank - the owner of the Atlanta Falcons, Atlanta United FC, and, crucially, the Mercedes-Benz Stadium they share - made his own rules. Hotdogs will be \$2, as they always are at a stadium where cheap concessions are part of its selling point.

Blank wants to showcase Southern hospitality. "Fans give us their energy, their time, their passion, their resources, their families, whatever it may be," he told WSB-TV. "And we need to honor that in the truest sense of the word, whatever we can."

In Kansas City, a sprawling metropolis chronically underserved by public transit, an extensive system of cheap bus service is on its way for World Cup ticket-holders. Return rides to its stadium will cost a mere \$15, whereas shuttle buses from the airport to downtown Kansas City will be free. A network of regional buses connecting the fan fest to a dozen hubs across the wider area will be \$5 a day or \$50 for the entire tournament. And, oh yeah, the fan fest will remain free.

On the one hand, these cities are showing that even at this World Cup, behaving reasonably and fairly and in the interest of the fans is still possible.

On the other, they do so by sacrificing the opportunity to generate revenue that may otherwise have been invested in a World Cup legacy project. There are really no perfect options. They either extract some small benefit from being a host city, to make the entire endeavor fiscally worthwhile, and get clobbered with bad PR. Or they don't and are left with nothing but an impression that looks positive by comparison.

Places such as Philadelphia are opting for the latter.

"Being a host city for the World Cup is very different than being a host city for any other major event," Kane told the Inquirer. "And people recognize that it changes the profile of the city of Philadelphia."

Host cities have struggled to sell sponsorship to cover their costs, but Philadelphia instead sold its business community on simply making donations, figuring, presumably, that the good press would benefit the whole town. Public funds were also tapped.

Taken together, something of a blueprint emerges for ways to defray the cost of attending the World Cup a little, and for its hosts to leave fans with something other than the sense that they've been shaken down for every last dollar.

It can be done. Leaving money on the table is a choice you can actually make.

(Leander Schaerlaeckens is the author of *The Long Game: U.S. Men's Soccer and Its Savage, Four-Decade Journey to the Top, or Thereabouts*, which is out now. He teaches at Marist University.) (Source: The Guardian)

# Why the Bengal formula may not work in Punjab

Punjab's real concerns are jobs, drugs and growth, not imported narratives of communal division

BY NIRMAL SANDHU



"BJP leaders ask Punjabis for an AAP-type chance to govern. The BJP has been part of Punjab's inglorious political history. Its leaders had tasted power along with the Akalis. The rise of gangsters and drug peddlers happened on their watch. Seldom did they raise their voice against the political patronage of these elements. They were happy participants in misgovernance, enjoying the fruits of power. The issues of drugs and corruption that vocal BJP leaders raise today did not matter then."

After the controversial West Bengal win, the BJP crowd gathered at the party office in Chandigarh on May 5 for celebrations. The slogan raised on this occasion, and which also echoed in Delhi BJP circles was: "Bengal ki jeet hamari hai, ab Punjab ki baari hai." The loud drumbeat of jubilation was justifiable since the BJP had grabbed quite a historic mandate, even if tainted.

Now that emotions have cooled, it is the right time for wise heads in the party to have a rational assessment of the ugly politics played in West Bengal. Do they seriously believe that the party can manufacture a similar situation of hatred and violence in Punjab and Punjabis will let them do it?

Do they really intend to turn Punjab into a pre- and post-poll Bengal? Do Punjab leaders in the BJP intend to stoop to conquer? Fortunately, they don't have Suwendu Adhikari-type shady credentials. Seeking power is a legitimate aspiration. Should it be achieved through whatever it takes? Being border states, both require deft handling. Any misplaced spark can turn into a conflagration.

West Bengal and Punjab both have much in common. Bengalis and Punjabis were on the forefront of the freedom struggle, displaying uncommon courage and making supreme sacrifices. Both paid a heavy price during the Partition. Surmounting tremendous odds, they rebuilt their lives and thrived. They are also unafraid of making political experiments.

After what happened in Bihar and West Bengal, the start of the SIR exercise has stoked anxieties in Punjab. An all-party meeting called by the Chief Electoral Officer raised issues such as duplicate votes and voter deletions. Political opponents of the BJP are keeping a hawk's eye on any possible attempts at rigging and replication of the Bengal model.



If the BJP wants to spread its footprints in Punjab, there are issues it can take up on priority.

-Tribune File photo

BJP leaders ask Punjabis for an AAP-type chance to govern. The BJP has been part of Punjab's inglorious political history. Its leaders had tasted power along with the Akalis. The rise of gangsters and drug peddlers happened on their watch. Seldom did they raise their voice against the political patronage of these elements.

other cities is a Herculean task. Even during the best of times, in alliance with the ruling Akali Dal, a towering BJP leader like Arun Jaitley could not win the Amritsar Lok Sabha seat. Its subsequent Sikh faces fielded in Amritsar, like Hardeep Puri and Taranjit Singh Sandhu, too tasted defeat.

Now the party hopes for a landslide

responsible for its desperate attempts to disturb the peace in the border state. This is a serious charge. Either they should substantiate the allegation by making evidence, if any, public or withdraw it. They cannot be allowed to get away after hurling wild allegations.

Mischief-makers frequently try to arouse Sikh sentiments by resorting to acts of sacrilege.

The strong anti-beadbi law is meant to stop such incidents. However, the Sukhbir Badal-run SGPC and top priests first welcomed it, and on second thoughts, started opposing it. The government should realize that more than the law, it is the low conviction rate that requires its attention.

Sikhs and Hindus are unlikely to fall easy prey to designs aimed at religious divisions. If the BJP really wants to spread its footprints in Punjab, there are issues it can take up on priority.

Punjab's growth rate has been stagnant and may decline after the recent oil price hike. The Centre can offer a package or tax holiday for industry. Secondly, it can give a boost to the economy by opening up the Attari-Wagah border for trade and tourism.

Thirdly, the Centre has to stop attempts to snatch the control of BBMB and Panjab University from Punjab, replace Punjabi with Hindi and ensure Punjab's fair share in the river waters. Finally, it can weaponize the Sikh grievance by giving farmers their due and releasing detainees who have completed their jail terms.

The import of select turbaned leaders alone will not help the BJP. It needs to win over the mindset of the rural masses.

(Nirmal Sandhu is a senior journalist)  
(Source : Tribune, India)

## THE IMPORT OF SELECT TURBANED LEADERS ALONE WILL NOT HELP THE BJP. IT NEEDS TO WIN OVER THE MINDSET OF THE RURAL MASSES.

They were happy participants in misgovernance, enjoying the fruits of power. The issues of drugs and corruption that vocal BJP leaders raise today did not matter then.

The present lot of political imports from the Congress and AAP hardly inspires confidence. They have no agenda other than gaining power, that too through the muscular politics of their bosses in Delhi. The strong leadership they present as the panacea for Punjab's ills has not been able to control drugs from crossing the international borders or trafficking within the BJP-ruled states. Gujarat has earned nationwide notoriety with massive quantities of drug seizures.

At the Chandigarh jamboree, Punjab BJP president Sunil Jakhar argued that if the BJP could grow from three seats to a two-thirds majority in a TMC bastion, then it was much easier to script a similar success story in Punjab. Currently, the BJP has two Assembly seats and its pockets of influence are confined to the Pathankot and Hoshiarpur areas. Punjab is not a fertile land for defectors, hate-peddlers and the communal-minded.

Extending the Hindutva following to

win in 2027 without Akali Dal support. History tells us that only the ideology believers vote for the BJP. On governance, the party's score is dismal.

One of the known BJP election-winning underhand strategies is to create a sense of fear and insecurity and create problems for an Opposition-ruled state by doing whatever is required. There are two narratives about the series of harmless bomb explosions in the state in the recent past. Only the one at a rail track claimed a life.

One narrative attributes these to the ISI agents. It is amusing that the once powerful intelligence agency of the neighboring country that had once played a dreadful role in terrorist violence in Punjab cannot ensure a proper blast now.

The one outside the BSF headquarters in Jalandhar and another near an Army cantonment, it seems, were not intended to cause damage or any loss of life but just to spread fear. Far from getting scared, villagers in my part of Amritsar joke about such friendly blasts.

The second narrative advocated by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and AAP leader Sanjay Singh holds the BJP



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# Trump to deploy 5,000 troops to Poland post Karol Nawrocki's election as President

MAY 22, 2026  
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

US President Donald Trump on Thursday (local time) said that the United States will be sending an additional 5,000 troops to Poland.

Trump expressed his satisfaction at the election of the now President of Poland, Karol Nawrocki.

"Based on the successful Election of the now President of Poland, Karol Nawrocki, who I was proud to Endorse, and our relationship with him, I am pleased to announce that the United States will be sending an additional 5,000 Troops to Poland. Thank you for your attention to this matter! President DONALD J. TRUMP," he said in a post on Truth Social.

A Polish official and a NATO representative told Politico that they were flabbergasted by the decision as the US did not discuss this ere making the announcement.

Poland's military was alerted that the Pentagon had decided to cancel a 4,000-troop deployment to the country last week -- blindsiding the country and stunning US defense officials.

The Pentagon on Tuesday (local time) announced a reduction in the number of Brigade Combat Teams



Photo for representation only

(BCTs) stationed in Europe, lowering the total from four to three and effectively returning US troop levels on the continent to their 2021 posture.

In a post on X, Assistant to the Secretary of War for Public Affairs and Chief Pentagon Spokesman Sean

Parnell released a statement which said, the move followed "a comprehensive, multilayered process focused on US force posture in Europe."

## STATEMENT:

The Department of War has reduced the total number of Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) assigned to Europe from four to three. This returns us to the levels of BCTs in Europe in 2021. This decision was the result of a comprehensive, multilayered process focused on U.S....

- Sean Parnell (@SeanParnellASW) May 19, 2026

"The Department of War has reduced the total number of Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) assigned to Europe from four to three. This returns us to the levels of BCTs in Europe in 2021," the official statement said.

The statement added that the decision has resulted in "a temporary delay of the deployment of US forces to Poland," while emphasizing that Poland remains "a model US ally."

According to Fox News, the affected formation is the 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, which had been scheduled for a routine nine-month NATO rotational deployment to Poland and other eastern flank positions. (Source: ANI)

# AIA's The Great Indian Food & Shopping Fest & Mango Festival Draws Thousands



Sri Jayaram Komati is felicitated on his appointment as the Andhra Pradesh Government's Special Representative for North America.

MAY 14, 2026  
SAN RAMON, CA (TIP)

Association of Indo Americans (AIA) successfully hosted the highly anticipated AIA's The Great Indian Food & Shopping Fest (AIA TGIFS Fest) & Mango Festival on Saturday, May 9, 2026, at Bishop Ranch in San Ramon, bringing together more than 15,000+ floating attendees from across the Bay Area for a vibrant celebration of



Officials and organizers

culture, cuisine, entertainment, shopping, and community.

The festival transformed the venue into a lively multicultural marketplace filled with energy, flavors, music, and family-friendly experiences throughout the afternoon and evening. Attendees described the event as a colorful carnival-like celebration packed with excitement, community spirit, and unforgettable experiences.

Sanjiv Gupta CPA was the Grand sponsor, Platinum Sponsor Realtor Lavanya Duvvi, Travel partner Travelopod, Powered by realtor Nagaraj Anniah. Other sponsors include Sierra Pacific PW, Insta Service, Azad Financials, Vachi Silks, Apex, Kavya foods, My Pursu, Realtor Shikha Kapoor, Deeksha Boutiq, Bhanu Mangoes & AnuGraha Farms.

One of the biggest highlights of this year's event was the popular \*Mango Festival\*, where attendees enjoyed a wide variety of seasonal mango-inspired desserts, beverages, sweets, and specialty creations celebrating the beloved fruit during peak mango season. Long lines and enthusiastic crowds reflected the excitement surrounding the unique mango-themed offerings.

On this special occasion, AIA also felicitated Sri.



Mothers' Show

Jayaram Komati on his appointment as the Andhra Pradesh Government's Special Representative for North America. Speaking at the event, Sri. Jayaram Komati stated that he was honored and humbled by the appointment and reaffirmed his commitment to working for the betterment of communities while helping build stronger relationships between the United States, Andhra Pradesh, and India.

Several distinguished public officials and community leaders attended the festival and shared their greetings and support from the stage, including:

- \* Nahas Ali (Consul, Consulate General of India, San Francisco)
- \* Elisa Marquez (Supervisor, Alameda County)
- \* Ursula Jones Dickson (District Attorney, Alameda County)
- \* Marisol Rubio (Vice Mayor, City of San Ramon)
- \* Sridhar Verose (Councilmember, City of San Ramon)
- \* Melissa Hernandez (BART Board of Directors)
- \* Evan Branning (Councilmember, City of Livermore)
- \* Ben Barrientos (Councilmember, City of Livermore)

"It was inspiring to see thousands of families, community members, and leaders come together to celebrate culture, diversity, and unity," said representatives from Association of Indo Americans. "The overwhelming support from attendees, sponsors, vendors, performers, and volunteers helped make this year's festival one of the most successful and memorable celebrations to date."

The festival featured more than 100 vendors representing Indian and global cuisine, clothing, jewelry, financial \$, fashion, handicrafts, art, home décor, artisan products, and local small businesses. The event provided a strong platform for entrepreneurs and community businesses to connect with thousands of visitors while showcasing the diversity and richness of multicultural commerce in the Bay Area.

Read full story at [www.theindianpanorama.news](http://www.theindianpanorama.news)



Boys dance



Girls dance



Women dance

# Ambassador of India Reinforces Expanding India-Moldova Partnership During Official Visit to Chisinau



Ambassador held discussions with Mr. Oleg Bivol, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy of Moldova



Ambassador held discussions with ANRE Moldova on cooperation in renewable energy



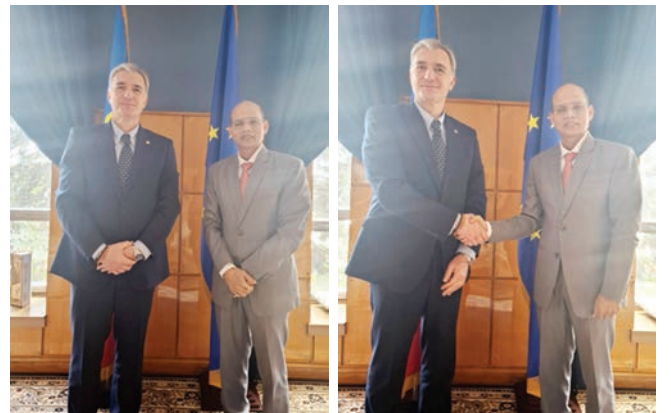
**MAY 10, 2026  
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

Ambassador of India to Romania and concurrently accredited to the Republic of Moldova, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, concluded a substantive official visit to Chisinau from 8-9 May 2026. During the visit, he held high-level engagements with Moldovan government officials, international financial institutions, regulatory authorities, municipal leadership, and the Indian student community. The visit reflected the growing dynamism of India-Moldova relations and reaffirmed the commitment of both countries to deepen cooperation in energy, infrastructure, investment, digitalization, labor mobility, capacity building, and people-to-people exchanges.

Political and institutional consultations underscored the importance both countries attach to sustained diplomatic engagement and enhanced bilateral coordination. During discussions with Mr. Sergiu Mihov, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Moldova, both sides reviewed the evolving trajectory of bilateral relations and explored cooperation in energy, infrastructure, agriculture, and economic development. Discussions also covered the proposed bilateral consultations, participation of Indian companies in



Ambassador held discussions with Mr. Ion Ceban, Mayor of Chisinau



Ambassador held discussions with H.E. Mr. Eugeniu Osmochescu, DPM and Minister of Economy of Moldova

Moldova's development initiatives, including the forthcoming EU-Moldova Investment Conference, and progress relating to the proposed Social Security Agreement.

Energy cooperation emerged as a major pillar of the visit, reflecting growing convergence in sustainable development and green transition priorities. During meetings with Mr. Vitalie Mita, State Secretary, Ministry of Energy, and officials of the National Agency for Energy Regulation, discussions focused on

Business Meet.

Labor mobility, skills development, and social protection cooperation also featured prominently during the visit. In discussions with Ms. Felicia Bechtold, State Secretary, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, both sides reviewed progress relating to the proposed Social Security Agreement and Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement between India and Moldova. Discussions further covered structured labor mobility frameworks, skills development cooperation, and participation of Moldovan officials in ITEC training programs, reflecting the shared commitment towards institutional capacity building and mutually beneficial workforce partnerships.

At the municipal level, the Ambassador held substantive discussions with Mr. Ion Ceban, Mayor of Chisinau, on strengthening municipal cooperation, smart city initiatives, cultural engagement, and people-to-people exchanges. The Mayor expressed support for organizing India's Independence Day celebrations in Chisinau in August 2026 and welcomed greater promotion of Indian culture and traditions across Moldova. The discussions reflected the growing warmth, goodwill, and cultural affinity between the peoples of India and the Republic of Moldova.

The visit concluded on a vibrant note with the organization of the cultural event "Disha 2026," bringing together Indian students pursuing higher education across Moldova. The event showcased India's rich cultural heritage through classical and contemporary artistic performances while strengthening cultural diplomacy and community engagement. Graced by Ambassador Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra and Mr. Ion Ceban, Mayor of Chisinau, the programme highlighted the growing educational and cultural linkages between India and Moldova and reinforced enduring people-to-people ties between the two countries.

The visit reinforces the steady advancement and growing maturity of the India-Moldova partnership and reflected the shared resolve of both countries to further expand bilateral cooperation, deepen economic engagement, and promote sustainable, forward-looking, and mutually beneficial collaboration across priority sectors.



Ambassador met with Ms. Felicia Bechtoldt, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection



Ambassador held discussions with Mr. Vitalie Mița, State Secretary, Ministry of Energy of Moldova



Ambassador met with Mr. Sergiu Mihov, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Moldova

renewable energy cooperation, including wind energy projects, battery storage solutions, and opportunities for Indian companies in Moldova's evolving energy sector. The Moldovan side appreciated the contribution of Indian companies, particularly KEC International, towards infrastructure development in Moldova.

Economic cooperation, investment facilitation, and industrial engagement formed another significant dimension of the visit. During meetings with Mr. Eugeniu Osmochescu, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Development and Digitalization, Mr. Oleg Bivol, Secretary of State, and Mr. Ulrich Schmitt of the International Finance Corporation, discussions highlighted opportunities for enhanced Indian economic engagement in Moldova. Both sides explored cooperation in renewable energy, infrastructure, railways, logistics, agriculture, and digital transformation, while emphasizing investor-friendly frameworks and the proposed India-Moldova

(Based on a press release issued by the embassy of India in Bucharest)

# Embassy of India, Bucharest Hosts "Circular Economy & Waste Management Forum"



Special remarks by Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania



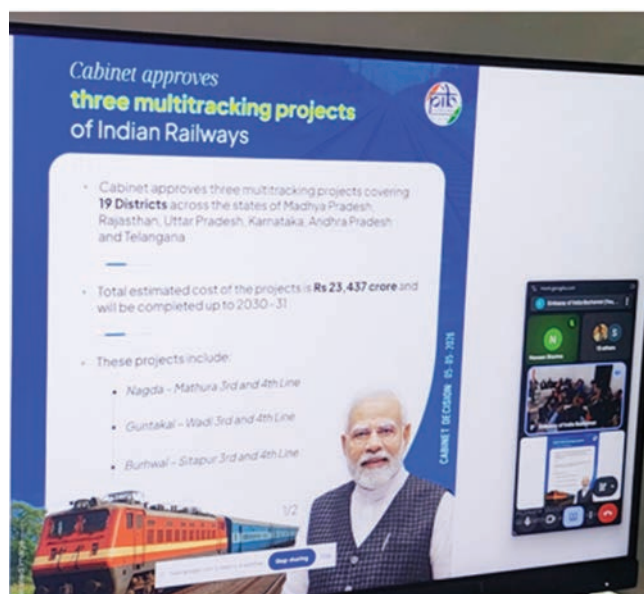
A panel discussion featuring distinguished experts provided in-depth insights of the energy sector

**MAY 10, 2026  
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

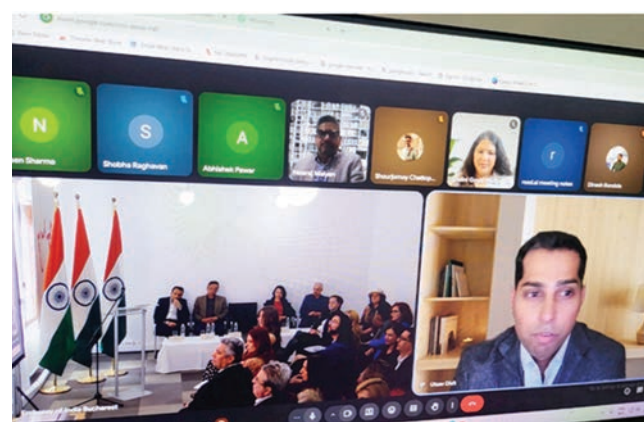
Embassy in collaboration with Ubuntu World, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Green Pack, Romania successfully organized the "Circular Economy & Waste Management Forum" in hybrid format on 7 May 2026 at the Embassy premises in Bucharest. The Forum brought together senior government officials, industry leaders, sustainability experts, financial institutions, and businesses from India and Romania to discuss opportunities for bilateral cooperation in circular economy, waste management, recycling, sustainability, and green innovation.

The event commenced with opening remarks by Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, who emphasized the importance of strengthening India-Romania cooperation in sustainable development, environmental protection, and green technologies. Highlighting sustainability as a key driver of future economic growth, the Ambassador noted the vast potential for collaboration between Indian and Romanian companies in circular economy practices, recycling technologies, waste management, and sustainable industrial solutions. He also underlined India's strong commitment to climate action and resource efficiency through initiatives promoting renewable energy, waste management, and green innovation. Referring to Romania's strategic position within the European Union, the Ambassador highlighted its potential role as an important bridge connecting Indian businesses with European markets and sustainability frameworks.

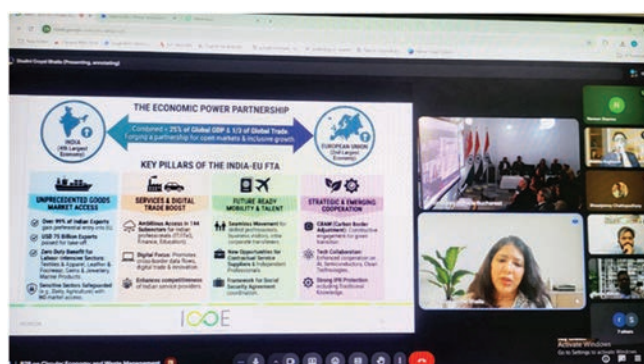
Ms. Ana Maria Paraschiv, CEO of Ubuntu World, welcomed the participants and stressed the importance of collaborative international platforms for addressing environmental challenges and promoting sustainable business models. Mr. Utsav Dixit, Chair of the CII-IPP Advisory Committee (2026-27) and Chief Sustainability and Growth Officer of ALPLA India Private Limited,



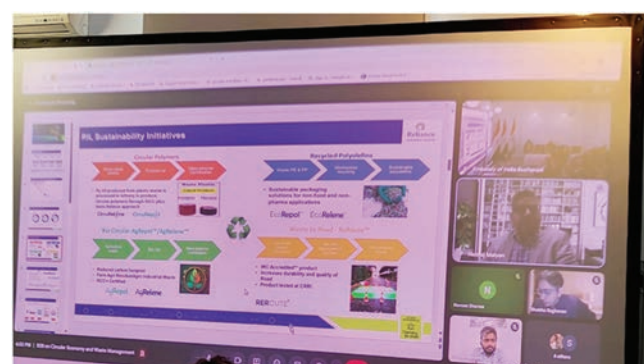
The Ambassador also briefed on Cabinet decisions and recent policy initiatives undertaken by the Government of India



Mr. Utsav Dixit from CII shared perspectives on industry-led sustainability initiatives



Ms. Shalini Goyal Bhalla from the Circular Economy Coalition / NITI Aayog focused on India's policy framework in circular economy and resource efficiency



Indian companies joined virtually and gave presentation on investment opportunities, and business collaboration in the field of sustainability and waste management.

joined virtually and shared perspectives on industry-led sustainability initiatives and the growing importance of circular economy practices for future economic resilience.

The keynote session featured Ms. Mihaela Fr?sineanu, State Counsellor at the Prime Minister's Office of Romania, who highlighted Romania's commitment to sustainability and the importance of international cooperation in achieving environmental goals. A special online intervention by Ms. Shalini Goyal Bhalla from the Circular Economy Coalition / NITI Aayog focused on India's policy framework and emerging opportunities in circular economy and resource efficiency.

The expert panel discussion on "Waste Management and Circular Economy: Romania as a Bridge between the EU and India" was moderated by Mr. Mircea Ilie of Viitor Plus. The panel explored strategic, economic, and business dimensions of India-Romania cooperation in the sustainability sector. Mr. Radu Magdin, CEO of Smartlink Communications, discussed Romania's geopolitical and economic role as a gateway connecting India with European markets. Mr. Alex Laibar, Executive Director of the Circular Economy Coalition (CERC), highlighted evolving trends and policy priorities in circular economy implementation across Europe. Mr. Rituraj Somani, CEO of Green Pack, shared industry experiences and market insights in sustainable packaging and recycling solutions. Ms. Corina Vulpe?, Director at Exim Banca Româneasc?, elaborated on financial instruments, state guarantees, and export support mechanisms available for green business initiatives.

The Forum also featured dedicated B2B and matchmaking sessions involving representatives from leading Indian companies and organizations, including Reliance Industries, Recykal, Ganesh Ecosphere Ltd., Saahas Zero Waste Pvt Ltd, and UNIPHOS International Limited. These interactions enabled participants to explore partnerships, technology exchange, investment opportunities, and business collaboration in the field of sustainability and waste management.

Embassy reaffirmed its commitment to promoting India-Romania cooperation in emerging sectors such as sustainability, green technologies, and circular economy, in line with global efforts towards environmentally responsible and sustainable development.

(Based on a press release issued by the Embassy of India in Bucharest)

## Embassy Hosts India-Romania Hybrid B2B Event on Textile and Apparel Cooperation



The event commenced with special remarks by Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania

**MAY 18, 2026**  
**BUCHAREST (TIP)**

Embassy of India successfully organized an India-Romania Hybrid Business-to-Business (B2B) Meeting on Textile and Apparel Cooperation on 15 May 2026 bringing together Indian and Romanian stakeholders to explore opportunities for enhanced collaboration in the textile and apparel sectors.

The event witnessed participation from Indian and Romanian companies, industry representatives, and business stakeholders, reflecting the growing economic engagement between India and Romania. Several Indian companies joined the discussions virtually through Google Meet, enabling wider participation and interaction.

The programme commenced with special remarks by H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, who underscored the growing importance of India-Romania economic relations and the vast untapped potential for cooperation in the textile and apparel sector. He highlighted India's emergence as a global leader in textiles, supported by a robust manufacturing ecosystem, skilled workforce, innovation, sustainability initiatives, and strong export capabilities. The Ambassador emphasized that enhanced engagement between Indian and Romanian businesses could create mutually beneficial opportunities through trade, investment, technology exchange, and supply chain partnerships. Referring to India's focus on 'Make in India' and the promotion of



Mr. Manpreet Singh, Chairman, ICIB, highlighted the immense potential for expanding India-Romania business collaboration



Romanian companies actively participated and explored opportunities with Indian firms

sustainable and high-quality textile production, he encouraged Romanian companies to explore partnerships with Indian manufacturers and participate actively in India's expanding textile ecosystem. He also noted that such business interactions serve as an important platform for strengthening bilateral economic ties and fostering long-term commercial cooperation between the two countries.

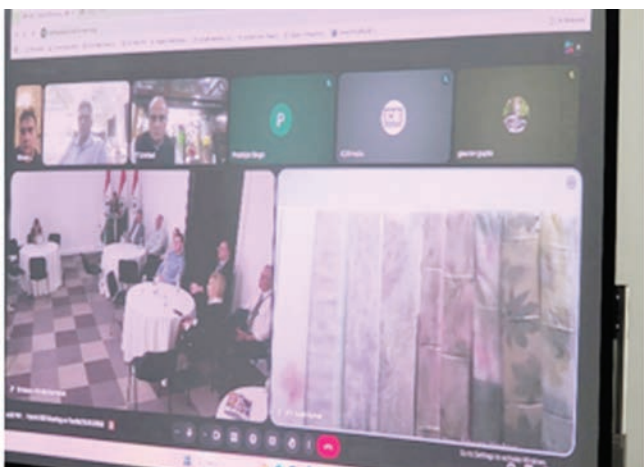
The session also featured opening remarks by Mr. Manpreet Singh, Chairman, ICIB, who highlighted the immense potential for expanding India-Romania business collaboration. Participants were further briefed on Bharat Tex 2026, India's flagship global textile event scheduled for July 2026, by the Embassy.

Representatives of Indian textile companies delivered presentations showcasing their expertise, manufacturing capabilities, and export potential. Participating companies included Crazy Mod, BBK Textiles Mills, Trisa Exports, N.V. Woollen Mills, and T.T. Company, among others.

The programme also included introductions of Romanian companies, followed by an interactive Question & Answer session between Indian and Romanian businesses. Discussions focused on identifying opportunities for trade, sourcing, investment, and long-term partnerships in the textile and apparel sectors.

The event reaffirmed the Embassy of India's commitment to fostering stronger economic and commercial ties between India and Romania by facilitating dialogue between businesses and promoting mutually beneficial cooperation across key industries.

(Based on a press release issued by the Embassy of India in Bucharest)



Indian companies joined virtually and showcased their products and expertise



# History This Week MAY 22-28

**MAY 22**



May 22, 1972 - President Richard Nixon became the first American president to visit Moscow. Four days later, Nixon and Soviet Russia's leader Leonid Brezhnev signed a pact pledging to freeze nuclear arsenals at current levels.

May 22, 1947 - Congress approved the Truman Doctrine, assuring U.S. support for Greece and Turkey to prevent the spread of Communism.

Birthdays - German composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883) was born in Leipzig, Germany. He made revolutionary changes in the structure of opera and is best known for *The Ring of the Nibelung*, a series of operas based on old German myths which include: *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walkure*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*.

Birthdays - Sherlock Holmes creator Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) was born at Edinburgh, Scotland. He was also deeply interested in and lectured on spiritualism.

Birthdays - Laurence Olivier (1907-1989) was born in Dorking, England. Considered one of the most influential actors of the 20th Century, he was honored with nine Academy Award nominations, three Oscars, five Emmy awards, and a host of other awards. His repertoire included most of the major Shakespearean roles, and films such as *The Entertainer*, *Rebecca*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Boys from Brazil*, *Marathon Man* and *Wuthering Heights*. He was knighted in 1947 and made a peer of the throne in 1970.

**MAY 23**

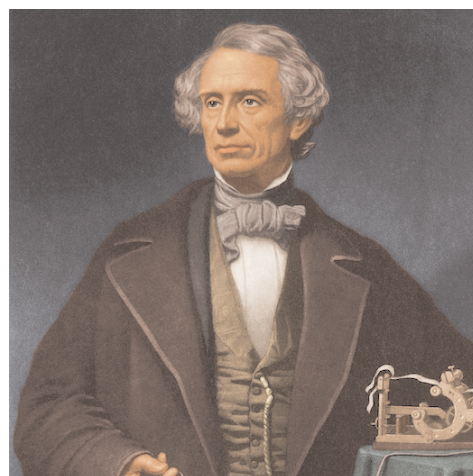


Birthdays - Journalist Margaret Fuller (1810-1850) was born in Cambridgeport, Massachusetts. She became the first American woman to serve as a foreign correspondent, reporting for the *New York Tribune*. Her book *Women in the Nineteenth Century*, published in 1845, is considered the first feminist statement by an American writer, and brought her

international acclaim. Sailing from Italy to the U.S. in 1850, she died, along with her husband and infant son, in a shipwreck off Fire Island, New York.

Birthdays - The first American female attorney Arabella Mansfield (1846-1911) was born near Burlington, Iowa (as Belle Aurelia Babb). She was certified in 1869 as an attorney and admitted to the Iowa bar, but never practiced law. Instead she chose a career as a college educator and administrator. She was also instrumental in the founding of the Iowa Suffrage Society in 1870.

**MAY 24**



May 24, 1844 - Telegraph inventor Samuel Morse sent the first official telegraph message, "What hath God wrought?" from the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., to Baltimore.

May 24, 1881 - A boating disaster occurred in Canada when Victoria, a small, double-decked stern-wheeler carrying over 600 passengers on the Thames River keeled over then sank, killing 182 persons.

**MAY 25**

May 25, 1787 - The Constitutional Convention began in Philadelphia with delegates from seven states forming a quorum.



May 25, 1994 - After 20 years in exile, Russian author Alexander Solzhenitsyn returned to his homeland. He had been expelled from Soviet Russia in 1974 after his three-volume work exposing the Soviet prison camp system, *The Gulag Archipelago*, was published in the West.

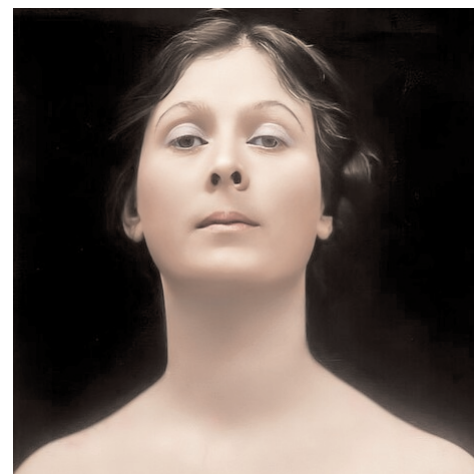
May 25, 2020 - George Floyd, an African American man, died during an arrest by Minneapolis police officers, including Derek Chauvin, who knelt on his neck for over nine minutes, despite Floyd's repeated pleas that he could not breathe. The fatal encounter was captured on a bystander's video and led to widespread protests against racial injustice and

police brutality.

Birthdays - American author and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. His works include: *Nature* (1836), *Essays*, *First Series* (1841), *Essays*, *Second Series* (1844), *Poems* (1847, 1865), *Representative Men* (1850), *English Traits* (1856), *The Conduct of Life* (1860), and *Society and Solitude* (1870).

**MAY 26**

May 26, 1940 - The Dunkirk evacuation began in order to save the British Expeditionary Force trapped by advancing German armies on the northern coast of France. Boats and vessels of all shapes and sizes ferried 200,000 British and 140,000 French and Belgian soldiers across the English Channel by June 2nd.



Birthdays - Interpretive dancer Isadora Duncan (1878-1927) was born in San Francisco. She revolutionized the entire concept of dance by developing a free-form style and rebelled against tradition, performing barefoot in a loose fitting tunic. She experienced worldwide acclaim as well as personal tragedy. Her two children drowned, her marriage failed, and she met a bizarre death in 1927 when a scarf she was wearing caught in the wheel of the open car in which she was riding, strangling her.

Birthdays - Actor, singer Al Jolson (1886-1950) was born in St. Petersburg, Russia (as Asa Yoelson). One of the premier American vaudeville entertainers of his day, he appeared in the first motion picture with full sound, *The Jazz Singer*, in 1927.

**MAY 27**

May 27, 1937 - In San Francisco, 200,000 people celebrated the grand opening of the Golden Gate Bridge by strolling across it.



Birthdays - Legendary Wild West figure Wild Bill Hickok (1837-1876) was born in Troy Grove, Illinois. He was a frontiersman, lawman, legendary

marksman, army scout and gambler. On August 2, 1876, he was shot dead during a poker game by a drunk in the Number Ten saloon in Deadwood, in the Dakota Territory. In his hand he held a pair of eights and a pair of aces which became known as the 'dead man's hand.'



Birthdays - American politician Hubert H. Humphrey (1911-1978) was born in Wallace, South Dakota. Humphrey was a mainstay of liberal Democratic politics, championed civil rights, and was considered by political friends and foes alike to be a truly decent man. He served as vice president under Lyndon Johnson. In 1968, Humphrey was the Democratic candidate for president, but lost to Republican Richard Nixon in a very close race.

**MAY 28**

May 28, 1961 - Amnesty International was founded by London lawyer Peter Berenson. He read about the arrest of a group of students in Portugal then launched a one-year campaign to free them called *Appeal for Amnesty*. Today Amnesty International has over a million members in 150 countries working to free prisoners of conscience, stop torture and the death penalty, and guarantee human rights for women.

Birthdays - William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806) was born at Hayes, Kent, England. Following in his father's footsteps, he became British prime minister at age 24 and served from 1783 to 1801 and again from 1804 to 1806. Pitt was influenced by Adam Smith's economic theories and reduced Britain's large national debt brought on by the American Revolution.



Birthdays - All-around athlete Jim Thorpe (1888-1953) was born near Prague, Oklahoma. He won the pentathlon and decathlon events at the 1912 Olympic Games and also played professional baseball and football.

# NIA details Pakistan role in Pahalgam attack

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Pahalgam terror attack on April 22 last year was planned by The Resistance Front (TRF)/Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Sajid Saifullah Jatt, aka Langda, who shared the co-ordinates of the Baisaran meadow with the attackers; one of the terrorists involved was also part of a terror strike on the Srinagar-Leh highway in October 2024; and the three terrorists involved sat outside the meadow and had lunch before launching their attack, and indulged in celebratory firing after it.

These details are part of the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) charge sheet, which also offers proof of Pakistan's involvement in the attack that killed 25 tourists and one pony operator by tracing IP addresses of social media accounts and purchase details of the two phones retrieved from the attackers. The charge sheet, filed on December 15 last year, but details of which have just emerged, also gives a blow-by-blow account of the run-up to the attack. HT has reviewed a copy of the charge sheet.

The agency has named seven accused: Sajid Jatt, based in Pakistan's Kasur; the three attackers — Faisal Jatt alias Suleman, Habeeb Tahir alias Jibril Bhai and Hamza Afghani (all three were killed in a gunfight with security forces on July 28, 2025); locals Bashir Ahmad Jothatd and Parvaiz Ahmad; and LeT/TRF in the charge sheet. They have been charged with murder and waging war against India, and relevant sections of the Arms Act and Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA).

According to the charge sheet, Faisal Jatt, believed to be at large in Pakistan, shared the co-ordinates of the meadow with the three attackers on April 15.

According to the charge sheet, data retrieved from two phones recovered from the terrorists revealed "chats with Sajid Jatt giving directions to them ... and screen shots of the Alpine Quest app showing co-ordinates of locations near Baisaran Park". Both phones, NIA said, based on data from the Indian arm of the phone manufacturer Xiaomi, were sold in Pakistan.

On April 21, the three arrived outside the dhok (hut) of Parvaiz Ahmad, roughly a kilometre from the meadow. Ahmad was arrested on June 22 last year along with Jothatd, a pony operator and his maternal uncle. It was Jothatd who first encountered the trio at around 4pm on



## Pulwama attack mastermind, Hamza Burhan, killed by unknown men in POK

**U**nknown men at work again in Pakistan? One of the masterminds of the 2019 Pulwama attack, which left over 40 CRPF personnel dead, was killed by unknown gunmen in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK). A resident of Pulwama, Hamza Burhan, known as 'Doctor', was designated as a terrorist by the Union Home Ministry in 2022. Burhan, whose original name is Arjumand Gulzar Dar, sustained multiple bullet injuries after he was attacked in Muzaffarabad by unidentified assailants. For those who have watched Dhurandhar, the moment feels eerily familiar. In fact, in the past couple of years, several designated terrorists have been eliminated in Pakistan and POK. Born in Kharbatpora in the Ratnipora area of Pulwama, Burhan left for Pakistan in 2017 under the pretext of pursuing higher studies. However, he joined the banned terror outfit Al-Badr and soon rose to the rank of commander in the outfit.

April 21. They demanded a safe place and food in the name of Allah, according to the charge sheet. He recognised them for what they were, and let them into the hut. Ahmad, his wife Tahira, and their infant child were present. The three asked that their weapons be hidden, and asked for food; while eating, they grilled the uncle and nephew about the upcoming Amarnath Yatra, camps of security forces nearby, and their movements. According to the charge sheet, they also spoke to Jatt. The terrorists sheltered in the hut for around five hours, and left at around 10pm, after getting Tahira to make them some rotis, and taking some spices, two checked

blankets, tarpaulin and a cooking pot. Before leaving, they gave Ahmad ₹3,000.

Jothatd and Ahmad saw the terrorists the next morning (April 22), the charge sheet added, when they reached Baisaran Park for work. The three were sitting outside the fence, but the uncle and nephew did not think to warn security forces, tourists, or even their fellow pony operators. Before entering the park, the terrorists sat under a tree and ate lunch, the NIA charge sheet said. After some time, they took out blankets from their bags and draped them over themselves. Two of the three terrorists then moved towards the point from where a rivulet entered Baisaran Park and sat there to observe the activities inside, the charge sheet added.

Then they launched their attack at 2.23pm.

Faisal Jatt carried the M4 carbine was wearing a GoPro camera around his head; two of them, Tahir and Afghani (AK-47s), moved straight towards the main entry gate of the park along the toilets, while Faisal Jatt moved towards the end of the zipline. According to the charge sheet, the three "systematically verified the religious identity of the victims before killing them".

"Victims who could not recite the kalma or who disclosed that they were not Muslims were shot at point-blank range in an execution-style manner. Throughout this sequence, the assailants told the victims 'Modi ko bolo (Tell Modi)', making it clear that the attack was intended to send a message to the elected Government of India, thereby evidencing the ideological intent behind the act," it added.

According to the charge sheet, co-ordinated attacks from the zipline in the south and from the main gate/dhabas axis in the north created "an enclosed kill zone in the central meadow", the motive being to maximise civilian casualties. The three didn't spare anyone.

NIA writes that during their getaway, the terrorists encountered three civilians hiding behind trees outside the fence and shot them at close range. They also indulged in "celebratory" firing on their way out, the agency said.

The NIA has cited the testimony of a protected witness (identity is kept secret in such cases) to say that this witness had, on April 21, seen Jothatd signalling three individuals near Ahmad's dhok and later going inside. *Source: HT*

# Will be taken to Tihar Jail the moment I land in Delhi: Cockroach Janata Party founder Abhijeet Dipke after X account is blocked

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The founder of the viral satirical outfit Cockroach Janata Party has claimed that he fears arrest upon returning to India after the group's X account was withheld in the country amid its meteoric rise on social media. Abhijeet is currently based in Boston, US.

Speaking in an interview to The Red Mike, Abhijeet Dipke said he believes he could be detained immediately upon landing in Delhi.

"I feel that as soon as I land at Delhi airport, a convoy of Delhi Police will take me to Tihar Jail," Dipke said.

The remarks come days after the parody political outfit exploded online, amassing nearly 19.1 million followers on Instagram in just five days, overtaking the Instagram following of the Bharatiya Janata Party, which currently has around 8.7 million followers on the platform.

## From satire to viral political phenomenon

What began as a parody page following a remark by Chief Justice Surya Kant has rapidly evolved into a full-



fledged online political movement drawing support from opposition leaders, influencers, comedians and celebrities. The CJP has received endorsements and social media backing from leaders, including Mahua Moitra, Kirti Azad and Akhilesh Yadav, among others.

Explaining the sentiment behind the outfit's popularity, Dipke said, "Finally, we have come to know

of our identity in this country that we are seen like cockroaches."

However, he downplayed the significance of surpassing the BJP's follower count.

"I am not happy that we have more followers. What will happen with it? The issues remain the same," he said.

Earlier, the X account of the Cockroach Janata Party was withheld in India. Sharing a screenshot of the notice displayed on the platform, Dipke wrote: "As expected Cockroach Janta Party's account has been withheld in India."

Dipke, 30, is currently in the United States after recently completing a Public Relations programme at Boston University. Before moving abroad, he worked in political communication, digital messaging and online campaign strategy. He completed his undergraduate studies in journalism in Pune.

The sudden rise of the satirical outfit has triggered intense debate online, with supporters describing it as a reflection of public frustration and critics dismissing it as social media theatrics.

## Bhojshala temple dispute reaches SC as Muslim side challenges High Court order

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The decades-old dispute over the Bhojshala-Kamal Maula Mosque complex in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar has now reached the Supreme Court, with the Muslim side challenging a recent High Court verdict that recognised the site as a temple dedicated to Goddess Vagdevi Saraswati and barred Friday namaz at the premises.

The petition has been filed by Qazi Moinuddin, the mosque's caretaker and one of the intervenors in the case, against the May 15 judgment delivered by the Indore bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court.

The Intazamiya Committee Kamal Maula Masjid and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board were also among the parties contesting the matter before the High Court.

In its landmark ruling, the High Court held that the religious character of the disputed complex was that of Bhojshala, a temple associated with Goddess Saraswati and linked to Parmar ruler Raja Bhoj, who is credited with turning Dhar into a centre of Sanskrit learning.

A division bench of Justice Vijay Kumar Shukla and Justice Alok Awasthi observed that historical records, archaeological material and literary evidence supported the Hindu claim over the site. The High Court said the available materials established the existence of a temple dedicated to Goddess Vagdevi Saraswati at Dhar and noted continuity of Hindu worship at the site over time.

The High Court also quashed the Archaeological Survey of India's 2003 arrangement that allowed Hindus to perform puja on Tuesdays and Muslims to offer namaz on Fridays at the protected monument. With the order being struck down, the weekly Friday prayers by the Muslim community at the complex stand discontinued.

"The historical literature of the place establishes it as a centre of Sanskrit learning associated with Raja Bhoj. It indicates the existence of a temple dedicated to Goddess Vagdevi Saraswati at Dhar. Therefore, the religious character of the area is held to be Bhojshala with temple of Goddess Vagdevi Saraswati," the court said in its ruling.

At the same time, the High Court suggested that the Madhya Pradesh government could consider allotting suitable land within Dhar district for the construction of a mosque if an application was made by the Muslim side.

# Pathankot man arrested for sending live feed of armed forces' movement to Pakistan-based handlers

MAY 22, 2026

**CHANDIGARH (TIP):** A resident of Punjab's Pathankot was arrested on charges of spying for Pakistan-based handlers, police said on Thursday, May 21.

Preliminary investigation revealed that Baljit Singh, a resident of Chakk Dhariwal village, had installed a CCTV camera at a shop located near a bridge on the National Highway-44 to allegedly keep an eye on the movement of the army and paramilitary forces, police said, adding that he was transmitting the live feed to Pakistan-based handlers.

During questioning, the accused confessed that he had installed an internet-based CCTV camera at a shop on the NH-44 Pathankot-Jammu Highway in January.

He was also getting directions from an unidentified person in Dubai. He was given Rs 40,000, police claimed.

Police recovered the CCTV camera from his possession, they said.

Last month, police had busted two ISI-backed espionage modules using high-tech, China-made solar-powered CCTV cameras to transmit live feeds of sensitive military locations to Pakistan-based handlers.

Police said preliminary investigations revealed that the camera was installed in January this year to monitor the movement of security forces.

During questioning, Baljit allegedly confessed that he had been acting under instructions received through an unknown individual based in Dubai. In return, he was reportedly paid Rs 40,000 for the operation.

Officials recovered the CCTV camera and related equipment from his possession.

Investigators suspect the live surveillance feed was being used to track sensitive troop and convoy movement along the crucial



highway corridor connecting Punjab with Jammu & Kashmir.

### Link to earlier ISI spy modules

The arrest comes barely weeks after Punjab Police claimed to have busted two Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence-backed espionage modules that allegedly used China-made solar-powered CCTV cameras to transmit real-time visuals of military installations and movement to handlers across the border.

Security agencies have increased surveillance across border districts amid concerns over the use of commercially available internet-enabled devices for espionage activities.

## FBI shuts down India-based fraud call centre which defrauded elderly Americans

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) has shut down an India-based call centre operation, which defrauded several elderly American of millions of dollars under what is known as "tech support scam".

In a post on X, the FBI's Boston unit said the call centre was shut after "years-long investigation that led to the conviction of five telemarketing fraudsters". "The FBI has shut down a call centre operation in India that defrauded hundreds of elderly victims here in the US and abroad out of millions of dollars through tech support scams, and two senior executives who operated a business that enabled it, have just admitted to turning a blind eye to this widespread fraud," the post said further.

"This comes after the FBI, Boston, investigation that has resulted in the arrests and convictions of a former employee of their call routing company, and five India-based telemarketing fraudsters," it added.

According to the US Attorney's Office, former CEO Adam Young, 42, of Miami



(Florida) and former CSO Harrison Gevirtz, 33, of Las Vegas (Nevada), have admitted to operating a business that provided telecommunications-related services, including "telephone numbers, call routing services, call tracking, and call forwarding services, to customers they knew were engaged in tech-support fraud schemes".

They will be sentenced on June 16, the FBI said. Young and Gevirtz pleaded guilty after an investigation launched in 2020 led to the conviction of five India-based telemarketing fraudsters and a former employee of their call routing company. They were identified as Sahil Narang, Chirag Sachdeva, Abrar Anjum and Manish Kumar. The Indian nationals were convicted on charges related to the

fraud scheme that targeted and defrauded Americans, many of them elderly or otherwise vulnerable, the statement said.

The investigation also contributed to the conviction of another individual, Jagmeet Singh Virk, in the US District Court for the Northern District of California. The investigation further revealed that call centres based in India utilised Young and Gevirtz's business to route their "tech fraud" scheme calls and, in some instances, advised those fraudsters on methods intended to reduce complaints and prevent account terminations.

Sources said the case was investigated by the FBI on its own and no intervention was sought from Indian probe agencies.

Young and Gevirtz admitted to operating a business that provided telecommunications-related services, including telephone numbers, call routing services, call tracking and call forwarding services, to customers they knew were engaged in tech-support fraud schemes. Young and Gevirtz each pleaded guilty to misprision of a felony, in violation of federal law.



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**HEALTH IS WEALTH**

# India in history this Week

## MAY 22 TO MAY 28

### 22 MAY



1772 Raja Rammohun Roy, one of the socio-religious reformers, was born on this day in 1772. He started the Brahma Samaj movement and raised his voice against evils like child marriage and sati system.

1987 The heartbre- aking Hashimpura massacre took place on this day in 1987, in which 19 jawans of Uttar Pradesh were tried for murder.

1963 India's first glider Rohini took off.

1984 Bachendri Pal became the first Indian woman to conquer Everest, the world's highest peak.

1988 India successfully tested the indigenously developed intercontinental ballistic missile Agni.

1936 Foundation stone of India's first stadium Brabourne Stadium in Bombay

1949 West Germany formally came into existence after adopting the constitution.

2010 Air India Express Boeing 737 crashed while landing in Mangalore. In which 158 people died.

### 23 MAY



1919 Birthday of Maharani Gayatri Devi, Rajmata of Jaipur royal family.

1967 The country had taken a step forward in the field of education. Under which the South Gujarat University was established on this day.

1995 The TADA rule was abolished. Along with this, a proposal was made in the Lok Sabha to implement the Anti-Terrorism Activities Act.

2008 India successfully test-fired the surface-to-surface missile Prithvi-2.

2014 The Supreme Court did not consider it a crime for women and men to live together without marrying.

2016 The Indian Space Research Institute (ISRO) launched the space shuttle RLV-TD made entirely in India from Sriharikota Space Center in Andhra Pradesh in 2016.

### 24 MAY



1896 Kartar Singh Sarabha, who gave his life for the country, was born.

1954 Bachendri Pal's birthday is the first Indian woman to climb Mount Everest

2000 Famous lyricist and poet of Hindi films Majrooh Sultanpuri died.

1959 Empire Day was renamed Commonwealth Day.

1956 On the occasion of the 2500th birthday of Gautam Buddha, a huge program was organized.

1993 India and Uzbekistan had made five treaties.

2000 The Supreme Court denied the proposal for an out-of-court hearing.

### 25 MAY



2005 Actor and successful leader Sunil Dutt said goodbye to the world on this day.

1611 The Mughal ruler Jahangir married Mehrunnisa, known in history as Nur Jahan.



2010 59-year-old Indian-born Kamala Prasad Bisesar was elected the first female Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, defeating outgoing Prime Minister Patrick Manning.

### 26 MAY

1739 Afghanistan was once a part of India, but the Mughal Emperor Mohammad Shah signed an agreement with Nadir Shah of Iran which separated it

from the Indian Empire.

1957 Janta Insurance Policy started in Bombay (now Mumbai).

1999 ISRO successfully orbited three satellites from India, Germany and South Korea.



1999 Sourav Ganguly and Rahul Dravid set a world record of 318 runs in a one-day international cricket match against Sri Lanka.

2014 Narendra Modi was sworn in as the 15th Prime Minister of India.

### 27 MAY

1964 India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, passed away. He was 74 years old. Nehru died of a heart attack. His death marked a significant event in Indian history.

1962 Ravi Shastri, the most prolific all-rounder of the Indian cricket team, was born on this day.

2008 The central government has withdrawn the ban imposed on cement exports.

2016 Hungapan Dada, a brave soldier of the Indian Army, died. He was posthumously awarded the 'Ashoka Chakra'.

2010 India successfully test-fired the Dhanush and Prithvi 2 missile equipped with nuclear technology at Balasora district in Chandipur, Odisha. Prithvi 2 missile is an earth-to-earth ballistic missile with a range of 350 km. While Dhanush is the naval version of the Prithvi missile.

### 28 MAY



1883 Birth of Hindutva leader and poet Vinayak Damodar Savarkar.

1923 The birth of Nandamuri Tarak Rama Rao, one of the most popular names in South India. After achieving immense success in films, NTR took a political stance and held the post of Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh three times.

1970 The All India Trade Union Congress was formally partitioned.

1989 Marthakavali David became the first woman Christian priest of India and second in the world.

1996 Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee resigned.

# THEATRE WORLD AWARDS 2026 HONOREES TO BE CELEBRATED

BY MABEL PAIS

The historic 80th Annual Theatre World Awards honorees were announced by the Board of Directors on May 7, 2026. The Ceremony will be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2026 at 2 p.m. at The Longacre Theatre (220 West 48th Street), home of "Two Strangers" ("Carry a Cake Across New York").

The Ceremony hosted annually by well-known theater journalist, Peter Filichia, the 80th Annual Theatre World Awards Ceremony will be produced by Theatre World Awards, Inc. Board of Directors/Dale Badway with Executive Producer Karen Johnston.

"For 80 years, the Theatre World Awards celebrated new beginnings. We have been honoring Outstanding Broadway and Off-Broadway debuts since 1945. Each one represents a new, fresh spark of hope, passion, excitement and hopefully a path to infinite joy. Encouraging Promising Personalities for 80 years, "Who could ask for anything more?!" said Dale Badway, Theatre World Awards, President.

## 80TH ANNIVERSARY STATUE

In celebration of the landmark 80th Annual Theatre World Awards, a 'new' retro Theatre World Award Statue will make its Broadway debut at this year's Theatre World Awards ceremony honoring Outstanding Debut Performances in a Broadway or Off-Broadway Production. The statue is two-sided: one side depicting comedy, the other tragedy.

## 2026 THEATRE WORLD AWARD HONOREES

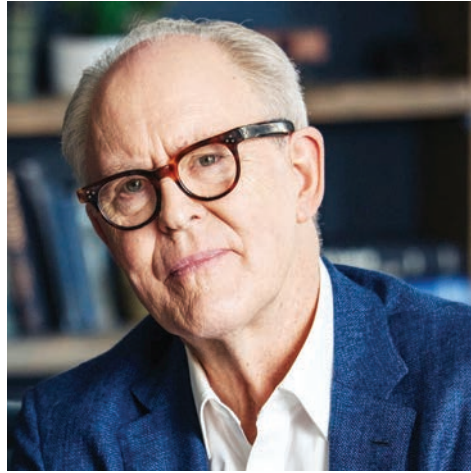
### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

The winner of the 13th Annual John Willis Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Theatre is John Lithgow, named by the Theatre World Awards Board of Directors.

John Lithgow has long been regarded as one of America's most distinguished performers. He has made an indelible impression on audiences with his work in film, television and the theater, receiving two Tonys, six Emmys, two Golden Globes, four SAG Awards and two Oscar nominations.

Lithgow has appeared in a long list of critically acclaimed films, as far back as "The World According to Garp" and as recent as "Conclave." He most recently starred in "The Rule of Jenny Pen" with Geoffrey Rush, and in the title role of JIMPA with Olivia Colman, which debuted at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival. Lithgow has starred in the hit TV shows "3rd Rock from the Sun," "Dexter," "The Crown," and the recent "The Old Man" on FX.

On stage, he has appeared on Broadway twenty-five times, including award-winning appearances in "The Changing Room," "M. Butterfly," "Requiem for a Heavyweight," and the musicals "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels" and "The Sweet Smell of Success." Upcoming, Lithgow will be seen as 'Dumbledore' in the "Harry Potter" series for HBO. In November, Lithgow



John Lithgow.

Credit: Jessica Howes

concluded a sold-out run of *Giant* at London's Royal Court Theatre, where he starred as Roald Dahl. The production then transferred to the Harold Pinter Theatre on the West End for a limited run in Spring 2025.

Lithgow won an Olivier Award for Best Actor for his performance, with "Giant" also earning the award for Best New Play. "Giant" opened on Broadway in March this year, and was just nominated for a Tony Award, as was John for his performance.

For children, Lithgow has written several best-selling children's picture books for Simon & Schuster. His recordings for kids have landed him four Grammy nominations, and he has appeared with a dozen major American orchestras in children's concerts that feature many of his own songs. He wrote the narration for the New York City Ballet's "Carnival of the Animals" in 2003 and danced the role of The Elephant. In 2011, a warm reception greeted Lithgow's memoir "Drama: An Actor's Education," published by Harper Collins. Since 2019, he has written and illustrated the "Dumpty Trilogy," three books of political satire from Chronicle Prism which achieved the remarkable feat of landing Lithgow on the New York Times non-fiction bestseller list for three consecutive years.

Mr. Lithgow recently completed his term as co-chair of the Commission on the Arts of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, producing authoritative reports on America's creative workforce and arts in education. The Commission's deliberations also spawned *Art Happens Here*, a PBS documentary which highlights the importance of all the arts in the lives of young people.

The John Willis Award is given for lifetime achievement in the theatre to honor the man who created and maintained the Theatre World tradition for 66 years, encouraging new talent in an often-challenging business. The John Willis Award is presented annually by the Theatre World Awards, Inc. Board of Directors to an individual whose lifetime achievements and personal generosity to the Theatre Community merit special recognition and acknowledgement.

**17th Annual Dorothy Loudon Award For Excellence in The Theater**  
Rachael Stirling, "Giant"



New 80th Anniversary Statue, Comedy Face.



New 80th Anniversary Statue, Tragedy Face.

Credit : <https://theatreworldawards.org>

The **Dorothy Loudon Award for Excellence in the Theater** honors an Outstanding Performance in a Broadway or Off-Broadway production. Dorothy Loudon, who had the unique talent of being able to make audiences laugh and cry, made her Broadway debut in "Nowhere to Go But Up" for which she received a Theatre World Award for her performance. She received a Tony® Award for her incomparable performance as 'Miss Hannigan' in "Annie" and went on to triumphous originating roles in "Noises Off," "West Side Waltz," and Michael Bennett's "Ballroom."

The Dorothy Loudon Award for Excellence in the Theater is chosen by the Trustees of The Dorothy Loudon Foundation, Lionel Lerner, Executive Director, together with recommendations from the Theatre World Awards Committee.

**For Outstanding Broadway or Off-Broadway Debut Performance** during the 2025-2026 theatrical season

**Ben Ahlers**, "Death of a Salesman"

**LJ Benet**, "The Lost Boys"

**Madeline Brewer**, "Becky Shaw"

**Adrien Brody**, "The Fear of 13"

**Ayo Edebiri**, "Proof"

**Alden Ehrenreich**, "Becky Shaw"

**Luke Evans**, "The Rocky Horror Show"

**Will Harrison**, "Punch"

**River Lipe-Smith**, "Caroline"

**Leslie Manville**, "Oedipus"

**Robert "Silk" Mason**, "Cats: The Jellie Ball"

**Sam Tutty**, "Two Strangers" (Carry a Cake Across New York)

The Theatre World Award honorees are chosen by the Theatre World Awards Committee which is comprised of Linda Armstrong (Amsterdam News), David Cote (The Observer), Joe Dziemianowicz (New York Daily News, Emeritus), Peter Filichia (The Newark Star-Ledger, Emeritus), David Finkle (New York Stage Review), Elysa Gardner (USA Today, Emeritus), Cary Wong (Freelance), and

Frank Scheck (The Hollywood Reporter).

The Theatre World Awards, Inc. Board of Directors is headed by Dale Badway (President) with Tom Lynch (Vice-President), Michael Kostel (Vice-President), Stephen Wilde (Secretary), Rozanne Scarpelli (Treasurer), James Sheridan, Karen Johnston, Jeffrey Grove and Arthur Makar.

First presented in 1945, the prestigious Theatre World Awards, founded by John Willis, the Editor-in-Chief of both Theatre World and its companion volume, Screen World, are the oldest awards given for Outstanding Broadway and Off-Broadway Debut Performances. The Theatre World Awards are presented annually at the end of the theatre season to six actors and six actresses for their significant, reviewable, debut performances in a Broadway or Off-Broadway production.

The ceremony is a private, invitation-only event followed by a party to celebrate the new honorees and welcome them to the Theatre World "family."

In what has become a highly entertaining and often touching tradition, 12 previous winners serve as the presenters, and often relive moments from past ceremonies and share wonderful stories rarely heard at other theatrical awards. Many people feel that this is the most fun and enjoyable awards show of the Broadway season!

For Past winners and more information, visit <https://theatreworldawards.org>.

## THEATRE WORLD AWARDS

To access the Theatre World Awards fan page on Facebook, visit @ [www.facebook.com/TheatreWorldAwards/](https://www.facebook.com/TheatreWorldAwards/) and follow on X (formerly, Twitter) @TWAwards

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

# WHARTON PERFORMING ARTS SCHOOL PIANO STUDENTS EARN TOP HONORS AT INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

BY MABEL PAIS

Among them  
**ATHENA CHAKRABORTTY and KEARA HETTIARACHCHI - GOLD AWARD**

**TRISHA SANT - SILVER AWARD**  
The Wharton Performing Arts School's (https://whartonarts.org/programs/performing-arts-school) six piano students, at the 2026 Golden Key Music Festival, have earned top honors. The Golden Key Music Festival is an international competition that provides young musicians the opportunity to perform on some of the world's most prestigious stages. All six students study under faculty member Margarita Sturman.

#### AWARD RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:

- Athena Chakrabortty of Summit and Keara Hettiarachchi of Chatham — Gold Award  
Invited to perform at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall
- Trisha Sant of Skillman and Yuting An of New Providence — Silver Award  
Invited to perform at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall
- Trisha was also selected for an additional performance opportunity in Vienna, Austria
- Emily Bu of Berkeley Heights and Evangeline Tang of New Providence — Super Bronze Award



Top, Left to Right: Keara Hettiarachchi, Evangeline Tang, Athena Chakrabortty  
Bottom, Left to Right: Emily Bu, Trisha Sant, Yuting An -Credit: whartonarts.org

Invited to perform at Lincoln Center These invitations represent a significant milestone for the Wharton Performing Arts School students, offering the opportunity to perform on internationally recognized stages as part of the festival winners' concerts.

"This level of achievement reflects not only our students' dedication and artistry, but also the strength of early music education and mentorship," said PAS Director Debra Joyal. "It's incredibly

rewarding to see their hard work lead to opportunities on such renowned stages."

PAS faculty member Margarita Sturman said, "Each of these students has put in consistent, focused work over time. It's been a joy to guide their development and see it culminate in these performance opportunities."

The students are currently preparing for their upcoming performances, continuing their studies and rehearsals in New Jersey while looking ahead to

their appearances in New York City and abroad. For more information about the Wharton Performing Arts School, visit WhartonArts.org.

#### WHARTON ARTS

Wharton Arts' mission is to offer accessible, high quality performing arts education that sparks personal growth and builds inclusive communities.

Wharton Arts' vision is for a transformative performing arts education in an inclusive community to be accessible for everyone.

From Pathways classes for young children to Lifelong Learning programs for adults, the Wharton Performing Arts School has a robust musical theater and drama program and offers both private and group classes for instruments and voice for all ages and all abilities. With the belief in the positive and unifying influence of music and that performing arts education should be accessible to all people regardless of their ability to pay, Wharton Arts offers need-based scholarships.

Wharton Arts is located in Berkeley Heights, New Providence, and Paterson, NJ and reaches students from 12 counties. All of Wharton Arts' extraordinary teaching artists, faculty members, and conductors hold degrees in their teaching specialty and have been vetted and trained to enable our students to achieve their personal best.

## MPAC OFFERS COMMUNITY FREE SUMMER CONCERTS

BY MABEL PAIS

MPAC's (Morristown Performing Arts Center) Arts in the Community free summer concerts are scheduled.

Six free concerts will take place between June and August. The lineup includes the return of three of our most popular events – Bollywood Dance Party, Country Line Dancing and Salsa at Sunset, as well as singer-songwriters, and more.

Events will be held at Vail Mansion Plaza, adjacent to MPAC, and at Pioneer Plaza (see individual listing for location).

All events start at 6 pm.

The rain site is St. Peter's Church Parish Hall for events scheduled at Vail; inside Headquarters Plaza for events scheduled at Pioneer.

#### MPAC MUSIC STUDENT OF THE MONTH RECITAL

Tuesday, June 2

Location: Vail Mansion Plaza

Morris County middle and high school musicians honored as MPAC Music Students of the Month throughout the past season showcase their talents in this year-end recital.

#### BOLLYWOOD DANCE PARTY WITH DJ ARJUN

Tuesday, June 16

Location: Pioneer Plaza

DJ Arjun returns to spin Bollywood and Top 40 dance music mix and get everyone moving! B2Z Dance School returns to bring the rhythm of Bollywood moves and Mehndikalogie will provide intricate designs of henna art.

#### SALSA AT SUNSET

Featuring Bri'La Flor Dance Studio  
Tuesday, July 14



Bollywood Dance Party with DJ Arjun. -Credit: mayoarts.org

Location: Pioneer Plaza

MPAC's annual salsa night spices up the town with a night of Latin rhythms, great dancing and much more. Instructors will be on hand to help you learn all of the steps!

#### COUNTRY LINE DANCING WITH PAUL STODDARD

Tuesday, July 28

Location: Pioneer Plaza

Back by popular demand! It's a honky-tonk evening of country line dancing with DJ and dance instructor Paul Stoddard, who will have you swinging to the sounds of classic and contemporary country music, whether you're an experienced line dancer or novice!

#### JOSHUA VAN NESS & GARRETT LASH

Tuesday, August 4

Location: Vail Mansion Plaza

Singer songwriter Joshua Van Ness is both the working man's musician and a true indie spirit whose music echoes the classics from decades ago merged with today's sounds. Featuring Morristown Onstage performer Garret Lash.

WILMA

Tuesday, August 18

Location: Vail Mansion Plaza

A fun, female-fronted band showcasing delightful harmonies and unique instrumentation, Wilma interprets songs across many genres including modern pop, classic rock, folk, indie gems, and quirky deep cuts.

In addition, MPAC plans to show two free movies on Tuesday, August 11, with a morning show for families and an evening show for adults. Movies will be announced at a later date.

#### MAYO PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (MPAC)

MPAC presents a wide range of programs that entertain, enrich, and educate the diverse population of the region and enhance the economic vitality of Northern New Jersey. Mayo Performing Arts Center was named 2016 Outstanding Historic Theatre by the League of Historic American Theatres, and is ranked in the top 50 mid-sized performing arts centers by Pollstar Magazine.

#### MAYO PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

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

# LEGENDARY COMPOSER'S STAR WARS BROUGHT TO LIFE IN FILM CONCERT BY NJ SYMPHONY

BY MABEL PAIS

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

The New Jersey Symphony will present "Star Wars: The Last Jedi" in Concert brought to life by legendary composer John Williams' GRAMMY®-nominated score performed live to the film. The concert will be led by conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos May 29-31, 2026 at theater locations in New Jersey (see below).

Since the release of the first "Star Wars" movie almost 50 years ago, the "Star Wars" saga has had a seismic impact on both cinema and culture, inspiring audiences around the world with its mythic storytelling, captivating characters, groundbreaking special effects and iconic musical scores composed by Williams.

The Academy Award®-nominated film and its RIAA® gold-certified soundtrack feature twenty cues composed by the legendary Oscar® and GRAMMY®-winning Williams and is performed to thrilling effect in a live concert experience.

The Resistance is in desperate need of help as its freedom fighters are relentlessly pursued by the First Order. Hoping to be trained in the ways of the Force, Rey travels to a remote planet to recruit the legendary Luke Skywalker to the Resistance. Meanwhile, the First Order seeks to destroy the remnants of the Resistance and rule the galaxy unopposed. In Lucas film's "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," the Skywalker saga continues as the heroes of "The Force Awakens" join the galactic legends in an epic adventure that unlocks new mysteries of the Force and shocking revelations of the past.

## PROGRAM

**Star Wars: The Last Jedi in Concert**  
**New Jersey Symphony at the Movies**  
**Constantine Kitsopoulos** conductor

**Red Bank** - Friday, May 29, 7:30 pm, Count Basie Center for the Arts

**Newark** - Saturday, May 30, 7:30 pm, New Jersey Performing Arts Center

**New Brunswick** - Sunday, May 31, 2 pm, State Theatre New Jersey

Event page -

<https://njsymphony.org/events/detail/star-wars-the-last-jedi-in-concert-2026>

## INSTRUMENT DISCOVERY ZONE

Saturday, May 30, at 6:30 pm at NJPAC in Newark

New Jersey Symphony musicians will showcase an Instrument Discovery Zone in NJPAC's lobby for patrons to explore making music with various instruments. Patrons are invited to come try out an instrument before the performance!

## TICKETS

For tickets and more information on the film concert, visit [njsymphony.org](https://njsymphony.org).

## CONSTANTINE KITSOPOULOS

Constantine Kitsopoulos has established himself as a dynamic conductor known for his ability to work in many different genres and settings. He is equally at home with opera, symphonic repertoire, film with live orchestra, music theatre, and composition. His work has taken him worldwide, where he has conducted the major orchestras of North America, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, and the Tokyo Philharmonic.

The 2025-26 season will bring Maestro Kitsopoulos back for return engagements with the New York Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, and New Jersey Symphony, among others. In the past two seasons, Maestro Kitsopoulos conducted return engagements with the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, and the Pacific, New Jersey, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Santa Barbara, and San Francisco symphonies. Highlights of previous seasons include



Scene from Star Wars: The Last Jedi.

Credit : njsymphony.org



Scene from Star Wars: The Last Jedi.

Credit : njsymphony.org

return engagements with the Dallas Symphony, Phoenix Symphony, Houston Symphony, and Vancouver Symphony. Kitsopoulos also conducted Stephen Sondheim's Sweeney Todd, and Leonard Bernstein's Mass and "Candide" at Indiana University Opera Theatre.

In addition to Maestro Kitsopoulos' engagements as guest conductor, he was Music Director of the Festival of the Arts Boca from 2010-23 and General Director of Chatham Opera between 2005-15. He was Assistant Chorus Master at New York City Opera from 1984-89.

Maestro Kitsopoulos' has developed semi-staged productions of Mozart's "The Magic Flute," for which he has written a new translation, "Don Giovanni," and "La bohème." He has conducted IU Opera Theatre's productions of "Mass," "Falstaff," "Die Fledermaus," "A View from the Bridge," "H.M.S. Pinafore," "The Most Happy Fella," "South Pacific," "Oklahoma," "The Music Man," and "The Last Savage."

Learn more at <https://maestrokit.com>

## DISNEY CONCERTS

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



## 'Imaginary similarities': Pritam reacts to Cocktail 2 'Mashooqa' plagiarism allegations

Ahead of its release, Shahid Kapoor, Kriti Sanon, and Rashmika Mandanna's upcoming film *Cocktail 2* has been creating a lot of buzz. The makers recently released their latest song "Mashooqa", however, it went viral for all the wrong reasons. Netizens alleged that the tune of the song was copied from a 1993 Italian track "Se So Arrubate A Nonna." Some people even took a dig at music composer Pritam and brought back older allegations of plagiarism. Pritam addressed these allegations on social media and expressed his displeasure over them.

Taking to his Instagram handle, he wrote on his Story, "Every single one of my song releases comes with a set of self-appointed music detectives, who have created a new genre called 'imaginary similarities'. Same people, same 'inspired by' thesis.. Boss, at this point, you are my unpaid PR team..I just want to say guys, NOT NICE. (sic)"

*Cocktail 2*'s song "Mashooqa" has been composed by Pritam, with Amitabh Bhattacharya's lyrics. It has been voiced by Raghav Chaitanya and Mahmood Ruua Kayy, with the Italian bits written and performed by Mahmood. The track's video shows Kriti and Shahid's characters travelling to different places together and falling in love with each other.

The controversy started when a user on Reddit recently shared videos from the song with the original 1993 track, pointing out the similarities between the tunes. Soon after, many social media users started claiming that the music was almost identical. "It's still a dull song even after Pritam copied it," a person wrote. Another commented, "Bollywood copying again?" A third comment read, "It sounds the same."

However, several fans took a stand to defend Pritam, highlighting that the song may have been inspired from the OG Italian track. "This is called sampling, not stealing/copying. It's when you take the main beat of a song and layer other instruments over it with changed lyrics. It's a very popular concept in the music industry. Pitbull, Taylor Swift, Kanye and many more artists also sample songs," a Reddit user elaborated.

The original song "Se So Arrubate A Nonna" is a Neapolitan track by Italian duo Bibi and Coco. It was released in 1993 as one of the songs of their album *Le Origini Vol. 2*. The title actually means "The Kidnapped Grandma" in the Neapolitan dialect.

# SRK's King faces AI leak crisis as makers tighten security

The makers of Shah Rukh Khan's *King* have tightened security on the film's current Mumbai schedule after an Artificial Intelligence-generated fan edit, created using leaked visuals, paparazzi clips and stills, went viral online. The video surfaced days after footage from the film's climax shoot was leaked on the internet.

The 15-minute fan-made video claimed to offer viewers a "mini version" of director Siddharth Anand's film before its release. According to insiders, both fans and the production team quickly mass-reported the footage, following which it was removed from several platforms.

A source close to the production told *Mid-Day* that the team had already been dealing with leaks from the film. "The team was already upset after stills from the climax leaked. Before that, sequences from the Cape Town schedule went viral where Deepika and SRK shot a song. The line production team was extremely careful but when someone like SRK shoots in public, it's impossible to trace the source of the leak. But the AI edit crossed a line because it attempted to recreate the narrative of the film," the report quoted the source as saying.

The report further mentioned that the concern was not limited to footage being circulated online, but also to the way the AI-generated video tried to stitch together available material into what it presented as a version of the film's story.

The insider added that security has now been significantly tightened



around the current schedule near Ghodbunder Road, on the outskirts of Mumbai. The report mentioned that the location poses its own challenges because it is a busy public area.

"This set in Mumbai is a busy area, so removing phone access won't help much. But movement in the action portions and crucial scenes has become extremely restricted," it said.

*King* is now nearing completion, though nearly two months of shooting is still pending. The source told the *Daily* that the project is in its final phase, with patchwork, action inserts and another schedule still to be shot, while visual effects work continues alongside

production.

"King is in its final leg. A lot of patchwork, action inserts, and another schedule remains to be done, with VFX work going on simultaneously. The film is looking to wrap by July-end," the source revealed.

Siddharth Anand has also urged people not to share leaked material from the film's set. "Please do not post or circulate any leaked multimedia from the sets of *King*. The team is working around the clock to ensure the best cinematic experience for everyone. Let us wait for the surprise on the big screen," he said in a social media post.

Source: *India Today*

## Rakul Preet Singh says 'one-time cheating' can be forgiven: 'Life is too long'



After Jacky Bhagnani jokingly described his marriage with wife Rakul Preet Singh as a "situationship" — prompting Rakul to make him hold his ears in a playful clarification video — the actress has now opened up about cheating and forgiveness in relationships. Interestingly, while Rakul said "one-time cheating" can sometimes be forgiven, she also stressed that cheating is "definitely not okay."

Speaking to *Mashable India* during promotions for *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do*, the cast discussed whether cheating can ever be acceptable in a relationship. Rakul was quick to respond with a firm: "No!"

Joining the conversation, Sara Ali Khan added: "I mean the least you can do is say sorry, but it is definitely not okay." Rakul agreed, saying: "Yeah, don't do!" Ayushmann Khurrana, however, offered a more nuanced perspective. "Marriage has its own rules. At the same time, if sorry has been said genuinely, then why not?" he said.

A visibly shocked Rakul reacted: "Cheating kar ke?" Defending his point, Ayushmann added: "People make mistakes. It may be genuine." Rakul then clarified: "It also depends on what is the extent... What is the extent? If cheating is a habit..."

Before she could complete her thought, Sara interrupted and asked: "One-time cheating is okay?" Rakul immediately clarified: "I am not okay." Both Rakul and Ayushmann then said together: "It is not okay! We are clarifying that." Ayushmann further added: "Primarily it is not okay."



## Amy Schumer opens up about 'botched' colonoscopy

Amy Schumer was living her best single life when a medical mishap threw a wrench in.

Months after her breakup with husband Chris Fischer in December last year, the "Trainwreck" star admits she is feeling less like herself due to a "botched colonoscopy".

The procedure did not go quite as planned, leaving the notoriously candid comedian dealing with some unexpected physical downtime.

"I feel happier than I've ever been before," Amy said during the podcast "Not Skinny But Not Fat", to which host Amanda Hirsch hinted at her recent weight loss and asked, "Does it have to do with being really hot?"

And Amy appreciated the compliment, she said, "I actually had kind of a botched colonoscopy, so I'm not feeling very sexual."

Amy, who shares 7-year-old son Gene with Chris, did not divulge additional details of the procedure. "See, that's another thing you're not going to have to worry about for 15 years," she joked.

Never been one to sugarcoat things, Amy has always kept it completely real whether it is her career or relationships.

## Kendall Jenner 'really likes' Jacob Elordi: 'They're figuring things out naturally'

Things are just starting to heat up between Kendall Jenner and Jacob Elordi. Days after the model, 30, and Oscar-nominated actor, 28, were spotted spending time in public together, a source tells PEOPLE exclusively that the pair are in the process of figuring out their relationship — but they still have strong feelings for one another.

"They're not trying to turn this into some big public thing," the source explains. "They enjoy spending time together in more private settings."

"They want to keep things low-key while they're figuring things out naturally," continues the insider. "Kendall really likes him though."

A source previously told PEOPLE in late April that Jenner and Elordi have "been hanging out and getting to know each other the last couple months."

The speculation about their relationship comes amid fans closely tracking their movements and connections after reports of them being together at the first weekend of Coachella. Months before, they were seen deep in conversation at the Vanity Fair Oscar Party.

Neither has publicly commented on the relationship speculation, but they were spotted enjoying a tropical getaway at Nourish Hanalei on the island of Kaua'i, Hawaii.

Photos posted by DeuxMoi showed the Euphoria star at a farm, and another photo of Jenner walking on the property. Fans who saw the two in Hawaii told DeuxMoi that the rumored couple was "so cute together."

During their trip, Jenner and Elordi were seen staying at a resort and going for coffee and shopping at a wine shop, according to DeuxMoi.



Soon after, the couple was spotted out in Los Angeles on a double date with Kendall's sister, Kylie Jenner, and Kylie's boyfriend, Timothée Chalamet. In more photos shared by DeuxMoi, the group covered their faces from paparazzi, but Elordi and Kendall were in the front seat of a car leaving a party, and Kylie, 28, and Timothée, 30, were in the back.

"They have a lot of fun together," a source told PEOPLE of the two couples, who have "similar personalities and lifestyles," so they "all really get along."

Oscar nominees Chalamet and Elordi "already know each other and were friendly before Kendall and Jacob were getting close," the previous source said. "They spent a lot of time around each other during the award season and naturally run in similar circles."

Kylie has been dating Chalamet since 2023 and often joins her boyfriend at awards shows, so she had also spent time with Elordi "and really likes him," the insider added. "She's excited Kendall is spending time with him."

## Selena Gomez to star in The Brutalist director's X-rated film



Actor-singer Selena Gomez is reportedly set to star in director Brady Corbet's next X-rated film, adding another major project to her slate after Emilia Perez (2024). The untitled feature will also star Oscar-winning Cate Blanchett and Oscar-nominated Michael Fassbender. Blanchett said that she was "about to work with Corbet on a film" at the ongoing 79th Cannes Film Festival during a masterclass.

However, Gomez has not confirmed her participation in the project.

According to Variety, Blanchett and Gomez will join Fassbender in Corbet's next film. Gomez's name had also surfaced in a report by The InSneider a few weeks earlier. Only limited details about the project are out so far, but Corbet has previously described it as an X-rated film, which drew attention to the project.

Corbet had earlier said that he wanted to make an "X-rated movie set in the 1970s". In an interview with The Hollywood Reporter, he said the "genre-defying film would take place from the 19th century to now", although it would be more focused on the 1970s. The film remains under wraps, but these details have given a clearer sense of its scale and setting.

The film will be shot using rare eight-perf 65mm cameras. It is also expected to run longer than The Brutalist, Corbet's earlier film, which had a running time of three and a half hours. The screenplay for the new project is 200 pages long. By comparison, the script for The Brutalist ran to 165 pages. Andrew Morrison is producing the drama.

Corbet comes into the project after the success of The Brutalist. The film received 10 nominations at the 97th Academy Awards in 2025. It went on to win three Oscars: Best Cinematography, Best Original Score and Best Actor for Adrien Brody. That awards run has put added focus on what the director chooses to make next.

Gomez is set to begin filming the sixth season of the Hulu series Only Murders in the Building, which will move to London. Steve Martin and Martin Short co-star in the Emmy-nominated comedy.

Blanchett, meanwhile, will appear in the live-action remake of How to Train Your Dragon 2, reprising her voice role as Valka Haddock in the 2027 film. She is also attached to Alpha Gang and Sweetsick.

Fassbender, who recently starred with Blanchett in Black Bag, is premiering Hope at Cannes. He is also part of the action comedy Kung Fury 2.

# Memorial Day 2026: America's solemn tribute to sacrifice, service and remembrance

**Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday of May, honoring the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. This year, the Memorial Day falls on May 25**

Every year on the last Monday of May, the United States observes one of its most solemn and emotionally significant national observances - Memorial Day. In 2026, Memorial Day falls on May 25, a day dedicated to honoring the American military personnel who lost their lives while serving the nation.

Unlike many public holidays marked purely by celebration, Memorial Day carries a deeper emotional purpose. It is a day of remembrance, reflection, patriotism, and gratitude. Across the United States, Americans gather at cemeteries, war memorials, churches, and town squares to honor soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in wars fought across generations.

Though often associated today with parades, family gatherings, and the beginning of summer, Memorial Day remains rooted in mourning and national memory. It is a reminder that the freedoms enjoyed by citizens have often come at a profound human cost.

## The Origins of Memorial Day

The roots of Memorial Day stretch back to the aftermath of the American Civil War, one of the deadliest conflicts in United States history. Fought between 1861 and 1865, the war claimed the lives of more than 600,000 soldiers and left countless families grieving across the divided nation.

In the years immediately following the war, communities began organizing local tributes to fallen soldiers. Families, women's groups, churches, and veterans' organizations decorated graves with flowers and flags while holding prayer services in memory of the dead. This practice gave rise to the original name of the observance - "Decoration Day."

Several towns in the United States claim to be the birthplace of Memorial



Day. Communities in states such as Mississippi, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and South Carolina held early remembrance ceremonies for fallen soldiers after the Civil War. One historically significant event took place in Charleston in 1865, where formerly enslaved African Americans organized a tribute for Union soldiers buried in a mass grave.

The observance gained national recognition in 1868 when General John A. Logan, leader of the Grand Army of the Republic - a Union veterans' organization - proclaimed May 30 as a nationwide day to decorate soldiers' graves with flowers.

The first large official observance took place at Arlington National Cemetery, where both Union and Confederate soldiers were honored. Over time, the tradition expanded beyond Civil War casualties to commemorate all American military personnel who died in service.

In 1971, Memorial Day officially became a federal holiday observed on the last Monday of May under the Uniform Monday Holiday Act.

The Difference Between Memorial Day and Veterans Day

Memorial Day is often confused with Veterans Day, but the two observances have distinct meanings.

Memorial Day honors military

personnel who died while serving the country. Veterans Day, observed in November, honors all individuals who served in the armed forces, whether living or deceased.

While Veterans Day celebrates military service broadly, Memorial Day focuses specifically on sacrifice and remembrance.

## The Significance of Memorial Day

At its heart, Memorial Day is about honoring sacrifice. The holiday serves as a national expression of gratitude toward soldiers who lost their lives defending the United States during wars and military operations around the



From Page 26

world.

The observance carries emotional significance for military families, especially Gold Star families - relatives of service members who died in military service. For them, Memorial Day is deeply personal. It is a day filled with memories, grief, pride, and remembrance.

The holiday also symbolizes:

- National unity
- Patriotism
- Courage
- Service
- Civic responsibility
- Respect for military sacrifice

Historians note that Memorial Day helps preserve collective national memory by reminding citizens of the human consequences of war. It encourages younger generations to understand the sacrifices behind the freedoms and democratic institutions they inherit.

Wars Remembered on Memorial Day

Memorial Day honors American military personnel who died in conflicts including:

- The Civil War
- World War I
- World War II
- The Korean War
- The Vietnam War
- The Gulf War
- The Iraq War
- The Afghanistan War

From the beaches of Normandy to the jungles of Vietnam and the mountains of Afghanistan, Memorial Day commemorates generations of service members who never returned home.

### Traditions and Observances

Across the United States, Memorial Day is marked through solemn ceremonies and patriotic traditions.

### Visiting Cemeteries and Memorials

Families visit military cemeteries and memorial sites to place flowers, wreaths, and flags on graves. Thousands of volunteers participate in decorating cemeteries with American flags.

One of the most moving sights occurs at Arlington National Cemetery, where rows of white gravestones are adorned with flags ahead of Memorial Day weekend.

### National Moment of Remembrance

In 2000, Congress established the National Moment of Remembrance. Americans are encouraged to pause at 3 p.m. local time for one minute of silence to honor fallen soldiers.

This collective pause symbolizes national gratitude and remembrance.

### Lowering the Flag

The American flag is flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon on Memorial Day as a sign of mourning. At noon, it is raised to full staff to symbolize the resolve of the living to continue the nation's ideals.

### Memorial Day Parades

Cities and towns across America organize patriotic parades featuring:

- Military bands
- Veterans



- Marching groups
- Scouts
- Patriotic floats
- Honor guards

Some of the largest Memorial Day parades take place in cities such as:

- Washington
- New York City
- Chicago

### Religious and Community Services

Churches and civic organizations hold memorial prayers, concerts, and candlelight ceremonies dedicated to fallen soldiers.

Patriotic hymns and military salutes form an important part of these observances.

### Memorial Day Events in 2026

Memorial Day 2026 is expected to feature large-scale events and commemorations across the United States.

### National Memorial Day Parade

Held annually in Washington, D.C., the National Memorial Day Parade honors American veterans and fallen soldiers through marching bands, military units, historical reenactments, and patriotic performances.

### Rolling to Remember

The motorcycle demonstration known as "Rolling to Remember," previously called Rolling Thunder, brings thousands of riders to Washington, D.C., to honor prisoners of war and missing service members.

Concerts and Patriotic Performances

The annual "National Memorial Day Concert," traditionally held near the U.S. Capitol, features musical performances, tributes, and stories of military sacrifice.

Community Gatherings

Local communities organize:

- Memorial runs
- Charity events
- Veterans' fundraisers
- Candlelight vigils
- Educational programs
- Military museum exhibitions

### Arlington National Cemetery: The Heart of Remembrance

One of the most iconic Memorial Day ceremonies occurs at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

Located near Washington, D.C., Arlington serves as the final resting place for more than 400,000 military veterans and service members.

The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier remains one of the most powerful symbols of Memorial Day. Guarded continuously by elite soldiers, the tomb honors unidentified American soldiers who died in war.

Each Memorial Day, senior government leaders participate in wreath-laying ceremonies at the site.

Memorial Day and American Culture  
Over the decades, Memorial Day has evolved into both a solemn observance and a major cultural occasion.

For many Americans, the holiday marks:

- The unofficial start of summer
- Family reunions
- Outdoor gatherings
- Sporting events
- Barbecues and travel

However, historians and veterans' organizations continually stress the importance of remembering the true meaning behind the holiday.

Many schools and institutions use Memorial Day as an opportunity to educate young people about military history and civic values.

The Symbolism of the American Flag  
The American flag plays a central role during Memorial Day ceremonies.

Placed beside graves and displayed

during parades, the flag represents:

- " Sacrifice
- " Freedom
- " National identity
- " Unity
- " Remembrance

The sight of thousands of small flags fluttering across military cemeteries remains one of the most emotional visual symbols associated with the holiday.

Memorial Day in Modern Times

In recent years, technology and social media have changed the way Americans observe Memorial Day. Families now share stories, photographs, and tributes online, helping preserve the memories of fallen loved ones for future generations.

Virtual memorials, digital archives, and oral history projects have also expanded awareness of military sacrifice.

At the same time, debates occasionally emerge about balancing the holiday's solemn purpose with commercial activities associated with the long weekend. Veterans' groups frequently remind the public that Memorial Day is fundamentally a day of remembrance rather than celebration alone.

A Day of Reflection and Gratitude

As Memorial Day 2026 approaches, millions of Americans will once again gather to honor the fallen. Whether through silence at a graveside, participation in a parade, or the careful placement of a single flower upon a headstone, the holiday continues to unite the nation in remembrance.

Memorial Day is ultimately more than a historical observance. It is a national act of gratitude toward those who sacrificed their futures so others could live in freedom. Through ceremonies, traditions, and personal memories, America continues to preserve the legacy of courage carried by generations of soldiers who gave their lives in service to the nation.

## Iran's Supreme Leader rejects Trump demand to transfer enriched uranium: Report

MAY 22, 2026

**TEHRAN (TIP):** Iran's Supreme Leader has issued a directive that the country's near-weapons-grade uranium should not be sent abroad, two senior Iranian sources said, hardening Tehran's stance on one of the main US demands at peace talks.

Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei's order could further frustrate US President Donald Trump and complicate talks on ending the US-Israeli war on Iran.

Israeli officials have told Reuters that Trump has assured Israel that Iran's stockpile of highly enriched uranium, needed to make an atomic weapon, will be sent out of Iran and that any peace deal must include a clause on this.

Israel, the United States and other Western states have long accused Iran of seeking nuclear weapons, including pointing to its move to enrich uranium to 60 per cent, far higher than needed for civilian uses and closer to the 90 per cent needed for a weapon. Iran denies seeking nuclear weapons.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said he will not consider the war over until enriched uranium is removed from Iran, Tehran ends its support for proxy militias, and its ballistic missile capabilities are eliminated.

"The Supreme Leader's directive, and the consensus within the establishment, is that the stockpile of enriched uranium should not leave the country," said one of the two Iranian sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

Iran's top officials, the sources said, believe that sending the material abroad would leave the country more vulnerable to future attacks by the United States and Israel. Khamenei has the last say on the most important state matters.

The White House and Iran's foreign ministry did not respond to requests for comment.

A shaky ceasefire is in place in the war that began with US-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28, after which Iran fired at Gulf states hosting US military bases and fighting broke out between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon.

But there has been no big breakthrough in peace efforts, with a US blockade of Iranian ports and Tehran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz, a vital global oil supply route, complicating negotiations mediated by Pakistan.

The two senior Iranian sources said there was deep suspicion in Iran that the pause in hostilities was a tactical deception by Washington to create a sense of security before it renews airstrikes.

# Tense Trump-Netanyahu call over Iran leaves Israeli PM's 'hair on fire'

MAY 22, 2026

**JERUSALEM (TIP):** As uncertainty grows over whether the US and Israel will pursue war or diplomacy with Iran, a tense and lengthy phone call between US President Donald Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu became so difficult that the Israeli Prime Minister's "hair was on fire after the call," American news website Axios reported, citing sources.

During the call, US President Donald Trump told Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that mediators were working on a "letter of intent" to be signed by Washington and Tehran to formally end the war and begin a 30-day negotiation period covering Iran's nuclear programme and the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, according to a US source.

However, Axios, citing sources, reported sharp disagreements between Trump and Netanyahu over the path ahead, with one source saying, "Bibi's hair was on fire after the call." The source also said Israel's ambassador to Washington had told US lawmakers that Netanyahu was concerned by the conversation.

According to Axios, Netanyahu had also been highly worried during earlier stages of the negotiations, even though previous efforts did not produce a deal.



"Bibi is always concerned," one source told Axios.

On the other hand, Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson said talks could succeed only if the US ended its "piracy" against Iranian ships and agreed to release frozen funds, and if Israel ended its war in Lebanon. Trump said the war could resume "very quickly" if "we don't get the right answer", but added that he was prepared to give diplomacy a few more days. "If I can save people from getting killed by waiting a couple of days, I think it is a great thing to do," he said.

The call between Trump and Netanyahu centred on a revised peace memo drafted by Qatar and Pakistan, with input from Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Egypt, to bridge gaps between Washington and Tehran. The effort comes as Trump has alternated between

threatening a massive strike on Iran and insisting that an agreement can still be reached.

The sources said Netanyahu remains highly sceptical about the negotiations and wants the war to resume in order to further damage Iran's military capabilities and weaken the regime by destroying critical infrastructure. Trump, however, has continued to say that a deal remains possible, while making clear that fighting could restart if talks do not succeed.

Speaking at the Coast Guard Academy on Wednesday, Trump said, "The only question is do we go and finish it up or are they gonna be signing a document. Let's see what happens." Later the same day, he said the US and Iran were "right on the borderline" between reaching a deal and resuming the war. Trump also said Netanyahu "will do whatever I want him to do" on Iran, while adding that they had a good relationship. The two leaders have had temporary disagreements over Iran before, but have stayed closely coordinated throughout the war.

Iran has confirmed that it is reviewing an updated proposal, though Axios, citing sources, reported that there has so far been no sign of flexibility from Tehran. Pakistan, Qatar and the other mediators have spent the past several days refining the proposal.

## How China built world's largest Chongqing rail station in 38 months with robot army

MAY 22, 2026

**Beijing (TIP):** While visiting China as part of US President Donald Trump's high-profile billionaire entourage last week, Elon Musk took to X to repost a video of the construction journey of the Chongqing East Railway Station, which is the world's largest.

While Musk didn't write anything in the post, it remains a subject of curiosity about why he made the post. That's because he has previously expressed scepticism about public transport. Curiosity aside, the real story of Chongqing East Railway Station is more interesting. The story of how it was constructed in 38 months using an army of robots.

The Chongqing East Railway Station is a gigantic multi-modal transit complex. It is the world's largest railway station by floor area, which was opened to the public in May 2025.

Located deep inland in Southwestern China, Chongqing, where the station is located, is the country's largest city by both population and administrative area. A major economic powerhouse today, Chongqing was dramatically transformed starting in the 1960s under Mao Zedong's Third Front Campaign. It was a massive effort that redirected huge national resources to rapidly industrialise China's historically neglected interior regions. As a result, industries spread westwards from the Pacific coast to the east.

Today, Chongqing, and its new station, stand as a striking display of China's formidable engineering prowess, and its massive economic heft. It's the same Chinese city where one would see metro trains passing through apartment blocks.



While many countries struggle for decades to deliver large-scale projects, China built this colossal 1.22-million-square-meter station in just 38 months. Here's how the station was built by an army of robots.

Before diving into the station itself, it is essential to first understand the city behind it. Chongqing is one of China's most important and dynamic megacities.

Like many other Chinese urban centres like Shanghai and Beijing, Chongqing is an ancient city dating back nearly 3,000 years. During World War II, it served as the capital of the Chinese Nationalist (KMT) Government after the fall of the erstwhile capital, Nanking, to Japanese forces in 1937.

## Russia test fires ballistic, hypersonic missiles during nuclear drills with Belarus

MAY 22, 2026

**MOSCOW (TIP):** Russia and Belarus carried out large-scale joint nuclear drills on Thursday, May 21, across land, sea and air, in a major show of military strength amid growing tensions with the West and continued fighting in Ukraine. The exercises involved nuclear-capable missiles, submarines, warships and strategic bombers.

The three-day drills began on Tuesday and marked one of the largest joint nuclear exercises conducted by Russia and Belarus since the start of the Ukraine war. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko jointly observed the final stage of the drills.

Convoys carrying intercontinental ballistic missiles moved through forest roads, nuclear-powered submarines sailed from Arctic and Pacific bases, and military aircraft were deployed as part of the operation. Russia's Defence Ministry said the drills involved 64,000 troops, more than 200 missile launchers, over 140 aircraft, 73 warships and 13 submarines. Eight of those submarines were armed with nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The Kremlin said the exercises were focused on the "preparation and use of nuclear forces under the threat of aggression".

The drills come at a time when Russia is facing Ukrainian drone attacks, including strikes near Moscow earlier this week that killed three people and damaged industrial facilities and residential areas. The attacks have made it harder for the Kremlin to present the Ukraine war as a distant conflict that does not affect ordinary Russian citizens.

During the drills, Putin stressed the importance of Russia's nuclear arsenal and said Moscow would continue strengthening its nuclear forces together with Belarus.

"Given the growing tensions in the world and the emergence of new threats and risks, our nuclear triad must continue to serve as a reliable guarantor of the sovereignty of the Union State of Russia and Belarus," Putin said.

He added that the nuclear forces would continue "ensuring the fulfillment of the tasks of strategic deterrence and maintaining nuclear parity and the global balance of power."



# French court finds Air France, Airbus guilty of manslaughter over 2009 plane crash

MAY 22, 2026

**PARIS (TIP):** A Paris appeals court on Thursday, May 22, found Airbus and Air France guilty of corporate manslaughter over the 2009 Rio-Paris plane crash that killed 228 passengers and crew in France's worst air disaster.

The verdict is the latest milestone in a legal marathon involving two of France's most emblematic companies and relatives of the mainly French, Brazilian and German victims.

Relatives of some of the 228 passengers and crew who died when the Airbus A330 vanished in darkness during an Atlantic storm gathered to hear the verdict after their 17-year legal battle to pinpoint blame for France's worst air disaster.

The court ordered the companies to pay the maximum fine for corporate manslaughter, Euro 225,000 (\$261,720) each, following the request of prosecutors during the eight-week trial.

In 2023, a lower court had cleared the two companies, both of which have repeatedly denied the charges.

The maximum fines, amounting to just a few minutes of either company's revenue, have been widely dismissed as a token penalty. But family groups have said a conviction would represent a recognition of their plight.

French lawyers have predicted further appeals to the country's highest court, potentially dragging the process out for years more and prolonging the ordeal for relatives.

Flight AF447 vanished from radar screens on June 1, 2009, with people from 33 nationalities on board. The black boxes were recovered two years later after a deep-sea search.

In 2012, BEA crash investigators found the plane's crew had



The court ordered the companies to pay the maximum fine for corporate manslaughter, €225,000 (\$261,720) each. (Photo: Reuters)

pushed their jet into a stall, chopping lift from under the wings, after mishandling a problem to do with iced-up sensors.

Prosecutors, however, focused their attention on alleged failures inside both the planemaker and airline. Those included poor training and failing to follow up on earlier incidents. To prove manslaughter, prosecutors needed not only to establish that the companies were guilty of negligence but pull the threads together to demonstrate how this caused the crash. Under the French system, last year's appeal proceedings involved a completely new trial with evidence reviewed from scratch. Any further appeals following Thursday's verdict will shift the focus from the AF447 cockpit to intricacies of law.

Source: Reuters

## UK eases Russian oil sanctions as Hormuz crisis

MAY 22, 2026

**LONDON (TIP):** The United Kingdom spent two years telling the world it had the toughest sanctions against Russia. Then, recently, it published a licence allowing Russian oil, refined in India and Turkey, to flow back into British markets. No press conference. No announcement. Just a document slipped onto a government website. The Trade Minister later told Parliament the government had "handled it clumsily." That is a careful phrase for what was, by any honest reading, a significant reversal.

The trigger was the effective closure of the Strait of Hormuz following the outbreak of the US Iran war. More than half of Europe's jet fuel moved through that waterway. When it shut, prices moved at a speed few governments anticipated. In late February, jet fuel traded at 831 dollars per tonne in Europe. By early April, it touched 1,838 dollars. Airlines cancelled flights. Fuel budgets collapsed. The UK then issued what it called a phase in of its planned ban on Russian crude refined in third countries. Critics called it a waiver. Ukraine's sanctions commissioner said he understood the rationale but disagreed with the result. His concern was direct:



temporary exemptions still generate revenue for Russia's war machine.

The UK was not alone. The United States extended a similar arrangement for Russian oil cargoes at sea. The European Union criticised that decision at a meeting of G7 finance ministers whilst its own member states were quietly seeking ways to maintain their Russian energy supplies.

That is where Hungary and Slovakia sit in this story. Neither country ever fully left the Russian oil orbit. Both rely on the Druzhba pipeline, which carries Russian crude into Central European refineries built specifically for Russian grade crude. Switching to alternatives requires years of infrastructure change. Hungary's Viktor Orban had blocked a 90 billion euro EU loan to Ukraine until the

Druzhba pipeline was restored after a drone strike damaged a section running through Ukrainian territory. Slovakia backed the veto.

Orban lost Hungary's April election. The pipeline restarted almost immediately afterwards. The EU loan was approved the same morning. One election shifted the entire balance, which tells you a great deal about how fragile the political architecture around sanctions had become.

The reason pipeline oil has always been treated differently from seaborne Russian crude comes down to geography. The EU banned seaborne shipments, which accounted for between 70 and 85 per cent of Russian oil reaching Europe by tanker. That did real damage to Russian revenues. But landlocked refineries in Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic had no immediate alternatives. Shutting them off overnight meant refinery closures and domestic energy crises that no government in Brussels was prepared to own politically.

The result is a sanctions structure with a gap that was never fully closed, and which has now been widened by a global energy shock that Russia played no part in creating.

## Crackdown in Southeast Asia pushes scam networks to Sri Lanka

MAY 22, 2026

**COLOMBO (TIP):** A surge in arrests of suspected foreign scammers in Sri Lanka has authorities concerned that the island is fast becoming a hub for online crime, following sweeping crackdowns in hotspots Cambodia and Myanmar.

Officials say some scam networks forced out of countries in Southeast Asia have simply shifted to new bases, increasingly moving operations to Sri Lanka — an attractive destination due to a relaxed visa regime and reliable, high-speed internet.

Since the start of the year, police have arrested more than 1,000 foreign nationals, mainly from China, Vietnam and India, for alleged involvement in cybercrime, Sri Lankan police spokesman Fredrick Wootler said, a jump from 430 for the entirety of 2024 and even fewer last year.

Last month, Sri Lankan customs officials intercepted nine Chinese nationals attempting to smuggle used mobile phones and laptops in the hundreds, raising suspicions that they were for use in large-scale fraud operations.

Fraud compounds where scammers lure internet users into fake romantic relationships, cryptocurrency investments and betting platforms have flourished across Southeast Asia.

Initially largely targeting Chinese speakers, the criminal groups behind the compounds have expanded operations into multiple languages.

Those conducting the scams are sometimes willing con artists, and other times trafficked foreign nationals forced to work.

Officials say the networks operating in Sri Lanka target victims across Asia, including in India, Vietnam and the Philippines, but there are growing concerns Sri Lankans could be next.

Authorities are also investigating whether foreign syndicates were involved in a recent cyberattack on the Sri Lankan treasury that resulted in around \$2.5 million in losses.

China, which has stepped up cooperation with regional governments in recent years to crack down on scam networks, has acknowledged the geographical shift.

The Chinese Embassy in Colombo said illicit activity in Sri Lanka had risen following enforcement actions in Cambodia and Myanmar as well as the United Arab Emirates.

"The Chinese government attaches great importance to this trend," the embassy said in a statement, pledging closer cooperation with Sri Lankan law enforcement agencies.

The networks displaced from Myanmar and Cambodia, where authorities have stepped up raids and deportations, exploit the island's 30-day tourist visas for nationals of more than 40 countries, including India and China, while others can easily apply for permits online.

# Pakistan commits to fiscal targets as IMF reviews reforms, budget

MAY 21, 2026

**ISLAMABAD (TIP):** The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has concluded its latest round of discussions with Pakistan, focusing on the country's economic outlook, upcoming budget plans and the implementation of reforms linked to its ongoing IMF-supported financial programmes.

In a statement released on Wednesday, the IMF said Pakistani authorities had committed to achieving a primary budget surplus target of 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in the 2027 fiscal year as part of efforts to stabilise the economy and maintain fiscal discipline.

The IMF delegation, led by adviser Iva Petrova, visited Islamabad from May 13 to May 20 for detailed consultations with Pakistani officials. The discussions covered recent economic developments, reform progress and the possible impact of growing instability in the Middle East on Pakistan's economy.

The latest talks come shortly after the IMF approved around \$1.32 billion in additional funding for Pakistan earlier this month under the country's broader \$7 billion financial assistance programme.

According to the IMF, Pakistan's central bank reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining a tight monetary policy stance to control inflation and stabilise economic expectations. The fund noted that authorities would continue closely monitoring the possible spillover effects of rising global energy prices, particularly amid tensions in the Middle East that have

## Pakistan defense minister regrets interference in Afghanistan

Although tensions between the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and Pakistan have eased in recent weeks, discussions and disputes over relations between the two countries continue.

As part of these discussions, Pakistan's defense minister, in recent remarks, expressed regret over Islamabad's interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs over many years and said that Pakistan had become a proxy and conduit in the wars of major powers.

He stressed coexistence between the two countries and said conflicts could be resolved through understanding and dialogue.

Khawaja Asif, Pakistan's defense

minister, said: "In my view, our investment was a mistake. We should not have interfered in Afghanistan's internal affairs because it was not related to us. We became a proxy or conduit in the wars of major powers, and we paid the price for it."

Meanwhile, the acting ambassador of the Islamic Emirate in Qatar, during a meeting with the United Kingdom's special envoy for Afghanistan, discussed improving relations between Kabul and Islamabad.

Richard Lindsay described the meeting as valuable and added that he had a useful discussion with Suhail Shaheen regarding the importance of strengthening Afghanistan-Pakistan relations.



increased volatility in oil markets.

Pakistan has been battling persistent inflation, external financing pressures and weakening foreign exchange reserves in recent years, making IMF support crucial for economic stability and investor confidence. The fund also indicated that discussions on Pakistan's fiscal year 2027

budget would continue in the coming days as authorities work to finalise revenue and spending targets.

The IMF added that its next mission to Pakistan, which will include consultations and reviews under various arrangements, is expected to take place in the second half of 2026.

## Will deliver on Teesta, Padma: Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman

MAY 22, 2026

**DHAKA (TIP):** Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has said his government will deliver on both Teesta and Padma River water plans. While the Teesta Water Agreement between India and Bangladesh has been held up since 2011, the Ganga Water Agreement -- signed in 1996 for 30 years -- is up for renewal this year.

"In Rajshahi, we will build the Padma Barrage on the Padma River... because across the border, they (India) are extracting water in various ways by constructing barrages and dams," Tarique Rahman said at an event in Dhaka.

The water that reaches Bangladesh is significantly reduced during the dry season. The water flow in the river has decreased, causing numerous problems, and the surrounding areas are gradually drying up, he added.

"You must have noticed - in our childhood, one couldn't see the other side of the Padma River. Even now, you can't



see across, but back then it was because of the vast water body, whereas now it is empty, there is no water," he said.

India and Bangladesh are in the middle of negotiations over the renewal of the treaty that has been in operation for the last 30 years. Bangladesh is expected to negotiate harder for more water.

Currently water from the Ganga is diverted into the Bhagirathi (Hooghly) river that serves the critical purpose of maintaining the Haldia Port and feeding the entire Greater Kolkata region.

Rahman listed the reasons for the construction of the Padma Barrage.

"We want to build this barrage so that during both the monsoon and dry seasons people of our country can have access to water. Another dangerous issue is that due to the Farakka Dam, since the volume of river water is low, seawater is gradually intruding into the southern region. Due to its high salinity, the Sundarbans and surrounding areas are facing severe crises. Various plants are dying, and different wildlife species are becoming extinct," Rahman said.

"If we want to counteract that pressure, we must construct this barrage and retain water within it. We can store the excess water that flows in during the monsoon so we can utilize it for the welfare of our people... this is not the only issue; there is another problem regarding our Teesta," Rahman added.

The Teesta Agreement between India and Bangladesh has also been held up for decades despite the efforts of former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

# Sikh History This Week

## MAY 22 TO MAY 28

### 22nd May



1710 Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadur) killed Wajir Khan in Chapud-Chidhi and destroyed Sirhind. Then he established his capital at Mukhlas. Until 1720 everything was conducted from this capital.

1960 Punjabi Suba Convention was held at Amritsar. It was attended by Dr. Kitchlew, K.G. Jodh, Zaheer Qurashi and leaders of Socialist and Swatantra Parties.

### 23rd May

1606 Jahangir received false reports on Guru Arjan's blessing Khusrau.



1848 Maharani Jind Kaur exiled and sent to Banaras prison.



1914 Guru Nanak Jahaz (Koma gata Maru) reached Vancouver port, Canada. However, it was forced to return to India. KOMA GATA MARU: Punjabis traveling to foreign land in search of better jobs were being discriminated against at the beginning of 20th century. The Canadian government had issued prohibition against their entry and the British ships had refused to

accept any Punjabi travelers. The Canadian law stated, for the purpose of preventing immigration from India and other countries, that only those passengers could land in Canada who travelled on a through ticket without any break in journey from their land of birth. However, no company provided such a service between the Indian and Canadian ports. As a result, many Punjabis were stranded for months in Hong Kong, unable to get tickets for their final destination, Canada.

### 24th May



1606 Guru Arjan Dev reached Lahore for martyrdom in protection of the Dharam. For 6 days he suffered immense tortures. At the time of martyrdom, Sai Mia Meer and a priest from Puratgal, Saint Jaerom Jaevier witnessed the martyrdom.

1710 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur enters Sirhind city.

1960 Master Tara Singh and hundreds of Sikhs arrested.

### 25th May



1606 GUR GADHI, Patshahi Sixth, Guru Har Gobind Ji. Patshahi sixth, Guru Har Gobind Sahib Ji, ascended to Guruship of GurSikhism. Just after the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev, Baba Budha anointed Hargobind as the sixth Guru of the Sikhs. Guru Arjan had sent to Hargobind, five paisas and a coconut through a messenger. Baba Budha put those in front of Hargobind and applied a 'tilak' (saffron mark) on his forehead, bowed to him and declared him to be the next Guru of the Sikhs. The Guru then asked baba Budha to adorn him with a sword. Baba Budha who had not handled a sword before, tied it on the wrong side of the Guru. On realising his mistake he wanted to move it to the right side, but the Guru said not to remove that sword, but instead to put another one on the right side, which Baba Budha did. Thus the Guru wore two swords simultaneously. He declared that one sword represented 'Piri' (spirituality) or Bhakti) while the other

represented 'Miri' (Temporality or Shakti). He told his followers that in the Guru's house spiritual and temporal powers would be combined. He declared that his rosary would be the sword-belt and he would wear the emblem of royalty on his turban. Further he instructed the Sikhs to keep a sword and a horse and always recite the name of God from their lips.

1675 Kashmiri Panditsi, led by Kirpa Ram, arrive in Anandpur Sahib to ask Guru Tegh Bahadur for help in preserving Hindu dharam.

### 26th May



1886 Maharaja Dalip Singh reentered Sikh faith. He received Khande Di Pahul (Amrit) on May 26, 1886 at Aden. Earlier, on March 8, 1853, Maharaja Dalip Singh was formally admitted into the Christian Church with water brought from Ganges nearby at his own private dwelling house. The service was conducted by the Rev. M.W. Jay, with Dr. John S. Login, Mrs. Login, Colonel Alexander and Mr. Guise signing the Baptism register as witnesses.

1960 Morcha initiated for seeking Punjabi Subha.

1984 The last meeting was held between Akalis and Indira Gandhi. The last meeting was held between Akalis and Indira Gandhi regime. Several such meetings preceded this meeting. However, by now it became abundantly clear that this was in fact a drama. The government had planned an attack on Darbar Sahib for several months. Russian KGB and even British Intelligence was guiding the invasion of Darbar Sahib.

1988 The President of India issued an ordinance banning the Sikh fundamentals of Miri-Piri (Cohesive oneness of Religion and Politics). An integral part of the Sikh religion Miri-Piri is the most fundamental to Sikh religion. This ordinance (which later became law) meant that the Sikhs shall have to adopt only that part of their religion which the Hindu majority will allow. This was the final blow to the Sikh nation which made the professing of their religion under the subjugation of the Hindu regime.

1996 Atal Bihari Vajpayee, in his capacity as Prime Minister of India, visited Sri Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar and apologized to the Sikhs for the following two abominations committed by the Government of India.

### 27th May

1710 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur announces the establishment of Sikh rule in a heavy Diwan organized in Sirhind city.

1921 The Governor of Punjab arrested Sardul Singh Caveesher for spearheading the non-cooperation resolution at SGPC meeting of May 11, 1921. This meeting was really a confrontation that once again demonstrated the majority of the radicals in the SGPC.

### 28th May

1922 A meeting is called at Kaulgarh by Karam Singh Gargaj group to reform the Jholichuks.

# Losing hair too fast? Know the reasons, prevention tips

**H**air loss has become a growing concern among people of all ages. While losing some hair daily is normal, excessive shedding, thinning, or bald patches may indicate underlying health or lifestyle problems. Stress, pollution, unhealthy diets, hormonal changes, and excessive use of styling products are among the major reasons behind increasing hair fall cases today.

Experts say understanding the cause of hair loss is important for proper prevention and treatment. Though genetics play a major role in many cases, healthy habits and timely care can help reduce damage and improve hair health.

## Common Causes of Hair Loss

One of the most common causes is hereditary hair loss, which affects both men and women as they age. Hormonal changes due to pregnancy, menopause, thyroid disorders, or conditions like PCOS can also trigger hair fall.

Stress is another major factor. Physical illness, emotional anxiety, lack of sleep, and hectic lifestyles may disturb the natural hair growth cycle and lead to increased shedding.

Poor nutrition also weakens hair roots. Deficiency of iron, protein, vitamin D, zinc, and biotin can result in brittle hair and thinning. Excessive use of hair dyes, heat styling tools, chemical treatments, and tight hairstyles may further damage hair.

Certain medical conditions, scalp infections, and medications can also contribute to hair loss.

## Ways to Prevent Hair Loss

Maintaining a balanced diet is essential for healthy hair growth. Protein-rich foods, leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds, eggs, fruits, and plenty of water help nourish hair follicles from within.

Managing stress through yoga, meditation, exercise, and proper sleep can also improve overall hair health. Experts recommend avoiding harsh shampoos, excessive heat styling, and frequent chemical treatments.

Regular scalp massage with natural oils such as coconut or almond oil may improve blood circulation and strengthen roots. Gentle hair care practices and maintaining scalp hygiene are equally important.

## When to Seek Medical Help

If hair loss becomes severe or sudden, consulting a



doctor or dermatologist is advisable. Persistent hair fall may indicate nutritional deficiencies, hormonal imbalance, or other health conditions that require treatment.

Modern treatments, including medications like Minoxidil, PRP therapy, and hair transplantation, may help in some cases under medical supervision.

## Healthy Lifestyle, Healthy Hair

Experts believe healthy hair is often a reflection of overall well-being. A nutritious diet, stress management, proper sleep, and gentle hair care can go a long way in preventing excessive hair fall. While some hair loss may be natural with age, adopting healthy habits early can help maintain stronger and healthier hair over time.

## FOOD CORNER

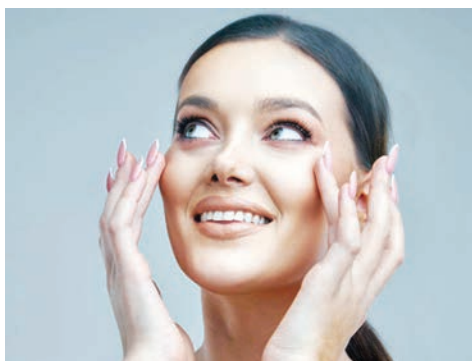
### Nawabi Pulao

#### Ingredients

1/2 kg chicken  
1/4 kg mutton  
1/2 kg rice  
1 cup curd, well beaten  
1 cup milk  
3 onions  
2 eggs  
1/2 cup green peas, shelled  
1 pod arlic  
1 big piece of ginger  
1 tsp rose water  
Ghee or oil for frying  
Salt to taste

#### Method

- Clean and wash rice and soak it in water for 15 minutes.
- Cook the rice till half done. Keep aside.
- Clean and cut the mutton into cubes. Joint the chicken. Boil the eggs and keep aside.
- Slice the onions. Grind ginger and garlic to a paste.
- Heat ghee in a frying pan, add onions, ginger-garlic paste and fry well.
- Add the jointed chicken and fry. Add 3 cups of water and salt to taste and cook on slow fire till the meat is tender and only 1/3 of the gravy is left.
- Add some more ghee and the well beaten curd. Cook on a slow fire until the curd gets absorbed.
- Add 1 tsp of rose water after the meat has cooled.
- Take a heavy bottomed pan and arrange alternate layers of rice and cooked meat taking care that the first and last layers are that of rice.
- Place in an oven and cook for about 15-20 minutes on low heat.
- Garnish with fried onions, quartered boiled eggs and boiled green peas.



**S**ave your skin from dryness and dehydration. Increase water intake and exfoliate the dead skin cells to achieve smooth skin, says an expert.

An expert has shared a few tips to get spotless skin:

- Hydrate: Hydrating yourself is absolutely essential to keep your skin healthy. A lot of water content from the body is lost while you sweat

## Hydrate, exfoliate, moisturize to avoid dry skin

during summer season. Therefore, it is essential to increase water intake by a couple of glasses every day.

- Avoid caffeinated drinks and keep away from aerated drinks too as they further dehydrate the skin. Instead, opt for freshly squeezed lime juice or go for coconut water and other fresh juices.
- Exfoliate: Exfoliation helps in the removal of dead skin cells and in achieving smooth skin. You can do it yourself at home with the right mix.
- Oatmeal, honey, lemon, curd, cucumber are some of the ingredients that can work wonders on your skin. In summer season, exfoliate at least thrice a week to remove dead skin and improve blood

circulation.

- Moisturize: It is necessary to moisturise your skin before you step out in the searing sun. This will keep your skin hydrated and prevent it from becoming dry and scaly.
- Apply a light and non-greasy moisturiser after you step out from a shower and before applying sunscreen. Follow this procedure in the night.
- Balanced diet: It is not just water that helps you to stay hydrated; indulging in fresh fruits, leafy vegetables and salads help as well. Eat the right food to nourish your skin and stay fit during summer. Avoid boiling or steaming vegetables for too long, as this will reduce their water content.

Junk food, beverages, non-vegetarian and spicy preparations are a strict no-no as well during summer.

- Milk products work wonders on your skin. If you have dry and itchy skin, try applying milk. Take a piece of cloth, soak it in milk and apply it on your skin. Leave it on for five to eight minutes and wash with lukewarm water. Apply it on alternate days and see how your skin begins to glow in a matter of weeks.
- Olive oil helps condition your skin since it has many properties that can leave your skin smooth. Take some olive oil and apply it on your skin half an hour before you take shower. Take a hot water bath, and moisturise your skin using a cream.

# Thyroid disorders: Types, symptoms and causes

The thyroid gland may be small in size, but it plays a vital role in maintaining the body's overall health. Located in the front of the neck, the butterfly-shaped gland produces hormones that regulate metabolism, energy levels, heart rate, digestion, and body temperature. When the thyroid fails to function properly, it can affect several organs and lead to a wide range of health problems.

Health experts say thyroid disorders are becoming increasingly common, especially among women. Since symptoms often develop slowly and may resemble stress or fatigue, many people remain unaware of the condition until it begins affecting daily life.

## Types of Thyroid Disorders

One of the most common thyroid conditions is hypothyroidism, which occurs when the thyroid gland does not produce enough hormones. People with hypothyroidism may experience fatigue, weight gain, dry skin, hair loss, constipation, depression, and sensitivity to cold. The condition is often linked to autoimmune diseases such as Hashimoto's thyroiditis.

Another major thyroid disorder is hyperthyroidism, in which the gland becomes overactive and produces excessive hormones. Symptoms may include rapid heartbeat, sudden weight loss, anxiety, sweating, tremors, irritability, and difficulty sleeping. Graves' disease is considered one of the leading causes of hyperthyroidism.

Some people may also develop goitre, which refers to swelling or enlargement of the thyroid gland. Thyroid nodules, or lumps within the gland, are another common condition. Though most nodules are harmless, some may require medical examination to rule out cancer.

Thyroid cancer is less common but can occur when abnormal cells develop in the thyroid gland. Early diagnosis usually improves treatment outcomes significantly.

## Risk Factors Linked to Thyroid Disease

Several factors may increase the risk of thyroid disorders. Women are more likely to develop thyroid problems than men, particularly during pregnancy, after childbirth, or during menopause. Family history of thyroid disease can also increase susceptibility.

Autoimmune disorders such as diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, and lupus are associated with a higher risk of thyroid dysfunction. Iodine imbalance, whether too little or too much, may affect hormone production as well.

Stress, unhealthy eating habits, smoking, lack of sleep, and sedentary lifestyles can also contribute to hormonal imbalance and thyroid-related issues. In some cases, radiation exposure around the neck area may increase the risk of thyroid disease.

## Symptoms That Should Not Be Ignored

Since thyroid hormones influence multiple body functions, symptoms can vary from person to person. Common warning signs include persistent tiredness, unexplained weight changes, hair thinning, mood swings, irregular menstrual cycles, dry skin, muscle weakness, swelling in the neck, and changes in heart rate.

Experts advise that symptoms lasting for long periods should not be ignored, as untreated thyroid disorders may affect heart health, fertility, mental well-being, and metabolism.

## Diagnosis and Treatment

Doctors usually diagnose thyroid disorders through



blood tests that measure hormone levels. Imaging scans or biopsies may sometimes be recommended for thyroid nodules or swelling.

Treatment depends on the type of disorder. Hypothyroidism is commonly managed with hormone replacement medicines such as Levothyroxine, while hyperthyroidism may require medication, radioactive iodine therapy, or surgery in severe cases.

Maintaining a healthy diet, managing stress, exercising regularly, and undergoing timely health check-ups may help support thyroid health and prevent complications.

## Importance of Early Awareness

Thyroid disorders often remain unnoticed in the early stages, but timely diagnosis and proper treatment can help people lead healthy and active lives. Health experts stress that awareness about symptoms and risk factors is essential, as early medical attention can prevent long-term health complications associated with thyroid imbalance.

## Lifestyle Tips for Better Thyroid Health

- Eat a balanced diet rich in iodine, iron, selenium, and protein.
- Exercise regularly to maintain weight and metabolism.
- Manage stress through yoga, meditation, or relaxation techniques.
- Get enough sleep to support hormonal balance.
- Avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption.
- Take prescribed medicines such as Levothyroxine regularly and go for routine check-ups.
- Experts say healthy habits and timely treatment can help manage thyroid disorders effectively.

## Why filtered RO water may become dangerous before you drink it

Most people believe that once water passes through an RO purifier, it becomes completely safe to drink. But a new study by researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology Madras suggests that the real danger may begin after the water is filtered.

The study found that many households may unknowingly contaminate purified water because of poor storage and handling practices, allowing harmful bacteria such as *Escherichia coli* infection to grow in drinking water.

Researchers tested filtered drinking water samples from hundreds of homes in Chennai where RO purifiers were already installed.

According to the findings, 81 out of 262 filtered water samples contained *E. coli* bacteria, a microbe usually linked to contamination from human or animal waste.

*E. coli* can cause diarrhoea, stomach cramps, vomiting, fever, and in severe cases, kidney-related complications.

The researchers said the RO machines themselves were generally functioning properly. The contamination was happening later, mainly because of unhygienic storage methods inside homes.

The study found several common household habits that may re-contaminate purified water storing water in unclean steel or plastic containers, keeping containers uncovered, repeatedly refilling the same vessel without proper washing, and washing storage containers with tap water before adding RO water.

Experts warned that even a small amount of contamination in a storage vessel can allow bacteria to multiply in otherwise purified water.

Researchers also noted that taps, sinks and poorly maintained purifier systems themselves may become breeding grounds for bacteria over time.

The findings are important because RO purifiers are now widely used across Indian households, especially in cities where people are worried about polluted water.

Many families assume filtered water is automatically safe, but researchers say hygiene after filtration is equally important.

The study also observed that households with higher awareness and education levels had lower bacterial contamination in stored drinking water.

Researchers believe this may be because these families paid more attention to cleaning water containers, servicing RO systems, and proper storage habits. Researchers stressed that RO systems still improve water quality significantly by reducing hardness, turbidity and dissolved impurities. The problem is not the purifier itself, but how water is handled afterwards.

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# From Omni world model to Gemini 3.5 and smart audio glasses, biggest announcements from Google IO 2026

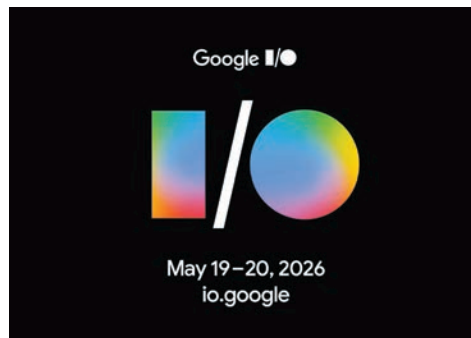
At its annual Google I/O 2026 developer conference, Google made one thing very clear — the company wants AI to become the centre of almost everything people use online. From Search and YouTube to Gmail, Docs and even smart glasses, Google spent most of its keynote showing how artificial intelligence is slowly turning into a personal assistant that can search, create, plan, edit and even complete tasks on behalf of users.

The company opened the event by highlighting the growing popularity of its AI products. Google says more than 900 million people now use its Gemini assistant, while users have generated over 50 billion images using Gemini tools. AI Overviews in Search now reportedly has more than 2.5 billion monthly active users.

With AI usage growing rapidly, Google says its goal for 2026 is to place AI agents at the forefront of all its biggest services, including Search, Gmail, YouTube, Docs and the Chrome browser.

One of the biggest announcements at the event was Ask YouTube, a new conversational search feature for YouTube. Instead of typing simple keywords, users can now ask longer and more complex questions, and even continue asking follow-up questions naturally.

Google says Ask YouTube will search across the platform's entire catalogue, including long-form videos and Shorts, before presenting an interactive and structured response. The idea is to make YouTube feel less like a video library and



more like an AI assistant that understands what users are actually looking for.

Google also introduced Docs Live, a feature designed to make document creation feel more natural. Earlier, users had to type detailed prompts into Gemini to generate documents. With Docs Live, users can simply speak naturally, and Gemini will turn those spoken thoughts into a document automatically.

The feature is aimed at reducing the need for carefully written AI prompts and making AI tools easier for regular users.

Google introduced Gemini Omni, a new family of AI models that combines reasoning with content creation. Gemini Omni Flash can accept text, images, audio and video as input and generate editable videos grounded in real-world knowledge.

In simple terms, Google is trying to build an AI system that can understand different forms of information at once and create content through conversation instead of traditional editing tools.

One of the biggest announcements was Gemini 3.5 Flash, Google's latest AI model. The company says the new model performs better than Gemini 3.1 Pro

across most benchmarks, while making major improvements in coding and real-world economically valuable tasks. Google confirmed that Gemini 3.5 Flash is now available to everyone through the Gemini app and AI Mode in Search.

Google also expanded its Antigravity project with the launch of Antigravity 2.0. Earlier focused mainly on coding environments, Antigravity has now evolved into a broader platform for developing and managing groups of autonomous AI agents. Google described Antigravity 2.0 as a standalone desktop application that acts as a central hub where users can interact with and orchestrate multiple AI agents for different tasks.

The company further announced Gemini Spark, a personal AI agent inside the Gemini app designed to complete tasks on behalf of users under their direction. Powered by Gemini 3.5 and the Antigravity system, Spark is built to handle long and complex tasks in the background, bringing Google's AI agent ambitions directly to consumers.

Google also shared updates to SynthID and Content Credentials, its tools designed to help users identify AI-generated content online. The company says Content Credentials verification is now expanding across more Google products, including Search and Chrome. The system can show whether content originated from a camera or AI tool and whether it has been edited using generative AI. Google also revealed that companies including OpenAI, Kakao and ElevenLabs are adopting SynthID technology as well.



## OpenAI's AI solves 80-year-old maths problem, marking major breakthrough for artificial intelligence

For decades, one of mathematics' most famous unsolved problems quietly frustrated some of the world's brightest minds. Now, OpenAI says one of its AI models has cracked it — not with step-by-step human guidance, but autonomously.

The breakthrough involves the "planar unit distance problem," a mathematical question first posed by legendary mathematician Paul Erdős in 1946. While the name sounds intimidating, the core question is surprisingly simple: if you place points on a flat surface, how many pairs of points can be exactly one unit apart from each other?

For nearly 80 years, mathematicians believed the best possible arrangements looked roughly like square grids. Researchers kept refining the theory, but nobody could fully disprove the long-standing assumption.

According to OpenAI, its internal reasoning model has now done exactly that.

The company says the AI discovered an entirely new family of mathematical constructions that performs better than the traditional grid-like approach. In simple terms, the AI found a smarter way to arrange points than humans had believed possible for decades.

While the planar unit distance problem may sound highly theoretical, the mathematics behind it has applications in areas such as network design, computer chip layouts, wireless communication systems, robotics, and materials science. Problems involving how points are arranged efficiently in space are important in everything from sensor networks to crystal structures.

What makes the result especially significant is not just the solution itself, but how it was achieved.

OpenAI says the system was not specifically designed to solve this particular puzzle or even mathematics problems alone. Instead, it was a general-purpose reasoning model capable of handling long and complex chains of thought. The proof was later checked by external mathematicians, who verified the result.

This marks the first time an AI system has autonomously solved a prominent open problem considered central to an active field of mathematics.

## Ancient moonpocalypse may explain Neptune's odd moon Nereid

Neptune's moon Nereid may be the sole survivor of an ancient moonpocalypse.

A new study suggests that the strange satellite was born in a steady, circular orbit around Neptune, then tossed into its current elongated orbit during a chaotic encounter with a Pluto-sized body that ejected or pulverized all its sibling moons. This idea counters the assumption that Nereid formed in the Kuiper Belt, the cold reservoir of space rocks in the outer solar system, and was pitched into its present orbit later, researchers argue May 20 in Science Advances.

"Maybe it got perturbed outward, rather than kicked inward," says planetary scientist Matthew Belyakov of Caltech. "Nereid is that last remaining signature of the original satellite system."

Neptune's largest moon, Triton, orbits backward and makes up more than 99 percent of the mass of all the planet's moons combined. Most of Neptune's other moons orbit the planet from a



shorter distance and are small and rubbly, suggesting they've been through a lot of collisions. Planetary scientists think Triton came from the Kuiper Belt and wreaked havoc on the rest of the moons when Neptune captured it billions of years ago.

Nereid stands alone. It orbits in a wide ellipse far from Neptune. That puts it in a family of moons from across the solar

system called irregular satellites, many of which are also thought to be captured Kuiper Belt objects. But it's brighter, larger, more eccentric and closer to its host planet than other irregular satellites in the solar system. "Nereid always is an outlier," Belyakov says. Maybe its origin story was an outlier, too.

Belyakov and colleagues compared James Webb Space Telescope observations of Nereid's makeup with those of other Kuiper Belt objects. Nereid wasn't a good match for any of them.

That left the possibility that Nereid formed locally. Belyakov and colleagues ran computer simulations of Triton's known chaotic arrival at hundreds of different masses and orbits for Neptune's original moons, including the destroyed ones.

# Why economists say rupee at 100 against \$ is not a crisis for India

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The rupee has been on a roller-coaster ride in recent months, sliding sharply against the US dollar as the global oil shock deepens and tensions in West Asia continue to disrupt energy markets.

With crude oil prices remanding above \$100 per barrel amid the ongoing West Asia conflict, many economists now believe the rupee touching 100 against the dollar may no longer be unthinkable.

And interestingly, a growing number of experts also argue that the real risk for India may not be the rupee touching 100 itself, but what happens to inflation, jobs and economic stability alongside it.

Former IMF Deputy Managing Director and Harvard University professor Gita Gopinath recently captured this shift in thinking when she argued that policymakers should focus less on the symbolic exchange-rate level and more on the broader economy. "The relevant number is not the actual value of the exchange rate," Gopinath said in a recent interview.

"What matters is jobs, inflation and output," she said.

That view is increasingly finding support among economists and market experts as India navigates a worsening global energy crisis.

For years, rupee weakness was often viewed almost entirely as a sign of economic stress. But economists say



currency depreciation during a major external shock is not automatically a bad thing.

In fact, a weaker rupee can sometimes help economies adjust.

When the rupee falls, imports become more expensive. That naturally reduces demand for foreign goods, lowers pressure on India's foreign exchange reserves and can improve export competitiveness by making Indian products cheaper globally.

"Rupee depreciation is partly a problem and partly a solution to the problem," said Dr. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited.

"Rupee depreciation boosts exports and at the same reduces foreign exchange expenditure. Expensive dollar can curtail forex expenditure more than austerity appeals. That way it is a solution to the problem," he added. This logic becomes especially important during oil shocks.

India imports the majority of its

crude oil requirements. With tensions around the Strait of Hormuz disrupting global energy flows, elevated oil prices are already increasing pressure on India's import bill and dollar demand.

In such situations, economists argue that allowing the currency to weaken gradually can help absorb part of the shock instead of forcing the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to aggressively burn through forex reserves defending a symbolic exchange-rate level.

The growing argument against aggressively defending the rupee has also found support from former NITI Aayog Vice Chairman and Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission Arvind Panagariya.

In a recent post on X, Panagariya directly urged the RBI not to allow the "psychology" of the Rs 100 mark to shape policy decisions.

"100 is just a number, like 99 and 101," he wrote.

According to Panagariya, allowing the rupee to depreciate during an oil shock may actually be the more sustainable strategy, especially if elevated energy prices persist for a prolonged period.

"If the oil shortage is long-lasting, a resort to anything other than depreciation will be a losing proposition," he argued, warning that aggressively defending the rupee could eventually drain India's forex reserves.

Source: India Today

## India-US partnership driven by trust and shared economic growth: Piyush Goyal

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** India and the US are working more closely than ever, with both countries complementing each other in areas such as technology, defence, innovation and manufacturing, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday, May 21.

Speaking at the Annual Leadership Summit of the American Chamber of Commerce in India in New Delhi, Goyal said India has become a trusted partner for global businesses and is well-positioned to benefit from changing global economic trends.

The minister said the partnership between the two countries is strengthened by mutual trust and shared economic interests. According to him, American companies are increasingly seeing India as a dependable destination for investment, manufacturing and innovation.

Goyal said commitments from US companies in the last six months are estimated to be over \$60 billion. He highlighted major investments in data centres by companies such as Amazon and Google as examples of growing confidence in India.

The minister said India and the US complement each other instead of competing directly in many sectors. He pointed to areas such as quantum computing, digital infrastructure, medical devices and high-precision defence as key spaces for collaboration.

He said the US is looking for reliable partners and India has consistently shown that it can deliver high-quality work on time, even during global crises. India's large skilled workforce, rising middle class and strong domestic demand make it attractive for global companies, he added.

Goyal also said India is moving beyond simply assembling products and is increasingly becoming a hub for design, research and intellectual property creation. He added that global firms are now choosing India for setting up global capability centres rather than shifting talent overseas. Talking about manufacturing and exports, Goyal said the government is planning an area-based industrial development model through the Bhavya scheme, which aims to create 100 industrial parks across the country.

He added that these industrial hubs would include worker housing, recreation and social infrastructure, creating complete industrial ecosystems.

# US mortgage rates climb to 6.51% reaching their highest level since last summer

MAY 22, 2026

**NEW YORK (TIP):** The average long-term U.S. mortgage rate has surged to its highest point in nearly nine months this week, significantly increasing borrowing costs for prospective homebuyers during what is traditionally the busiest period for the housing market.

Freddie Mac, a major mortgage buyer, reported Thursday that the benchmark 30-year fixed rate mortgage climbed to 6.51%, up from 6.36% last week. Despite this sharp increase, the current average rate remains below the 6.86% recorded a year ago.

Mortgage rates have been on an upward trend since the onset of the war with Iran. The resulting closure of the Strait of Hormuz has disrupted energy markets, leading to a sharp rise in crude oil prices, which is a key contributor to inflation.

Several factors influence mortgage rates, including the Federal Reserve's interest rate policy decisions and bond market investors' economic and inflation

expectations. These rates generally mirror the trajectory of the 10-year Treasury yield, which lenders use as a benchmark for pricing home loans.

Expectations of higher oil prices, coupled with concerns over the substantial and growing debts of the U.S. government and other entities, have pushed up long-term bond yields, consequently driving mortgage rates higher.

The yield on the U.S. 10-year Treasury note stood at 4.6% in midday trading Thursday, up from 4.47% a week prior and 3.97% in late February before the conflict began.

That average rate increased to 5.85% from 5.71% last week, though it was 6.01% a year ago, according to Freddie Mac.

When mortgage rates climb, they can add hundreds of dollars to borrowers' monthly payments, thereby diminishing their purchasing power.

As recently as late February, the

average rate on a 30-year mortgage briefly dipped just under 6% for the first time since late 2022, a threshold it has not fallen below since. It is now at its highest level since August 28, when it reached 6.56%.

While average long-term mortgage rates are still lower than they were at this time last year, their recent ascent has contributed to dampened sales during the current spring homebuying season.

Sales of previously owned U.S. homes were largely flat last month, following declines earlier in the year, extending a nationwide housing slump that began in 2022 as mortgage rates started to rise from pandemic-era lows.

Mortgage applications, encompassing both home purchases and refinances, fell by 2.3% last week from the previous week, reaching their lowest level in five weeks, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association (MBA). A significant portion of this decline was attributed to a sharp drop in home purchase applications.



**BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA**

### ARIES



Ganesha says that the people of Aries may face some problems at the beginning of the week, but the second half will prove to be very auspicious for you. During that time, you will be successful in improving your work area. At the beginning of the week, due to a lack of timely support from close friends and colleagues, the mind may be a little disappointed. During this time, you will need to fulfill your family responsibilities properly. From the point of view of health, this time can be a bit painful for you. You can be a victim of seasonal diseases; in this case, keep food and routine right. In the second half of the week, employed people will get the full support of both seniors and juniors in the field. People connected abroad can get unexpected benefits. There can be profit from buying and selling land and building. There will be intensity in love relations. Sweetness will remain in married life. Normal happiness and cooperation will remain on the child's side.

### TAURUS



Ganesha says that this week, the natives of Taurus can achieve success in the work done, even if it is late. New sources of income can be created at the beginning of the week. This week can be normal in terms of health, and you can get full support of luck. More time for women will be spent in worship or auspicious work. In the second half of the week, there will be great success in economic matters. The decision can also come in your favor in matters related to the court. However, be careful while signing any paperwork, and sign only after reading and understanding. There will be an increase in material comforts and resources in the family.

### GEMINI



Ganesha says that this week is going to bring happiness and good fortune to the people of Gemini. Good news can be received from the child's side at the beginning of the week. Those who are preparing for competitive exams will also get some good news. During this, you can get the full results of hard work and effort. However, avoid taking any big steps by getting excited or getting carried away by emotions. Especially do not make the mistake of ignoring the feelings of family members. Desired progress will be seen in both career and business. This week will be good from the point of view of income, but the expenditure will also

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - MAY 25, 2026 TO MAY 31, 2026

By Chirag Daruwalla - Son of Astrologer Bejan Daruwalla

be in the same proportion. At the end of the week, you can buy any expensive item related to comfort. There will be strength in a love relationship. Sweetness will remain in married life.

### CANCER



Ganesha says the first part of the week is going to be better for Cancerians. At the beginning of the week, you may see sudden progress in your career or business. There will be relief in matters related to the court. The opponents themselves may come to you to initiate the agreement. This week, working women may face some difficulties in coordinating between home and office. In the second half of the week, there will be an excess of work in the workplace. Due to some obstacles in the planned work, the mind will remain a little upset. During this, more hard work and effort will be required for success at work. Take a step forward carefully in a love relationship; otherwise, you may get into unnecessary trouble. To keep married life sweet, do not ignore the feelings of your spouse. There will be mental concerns about the health of an elderly person in the house.

### LEO



Ganesha says the people of the Leo zodiac may have to take full care of the fact that if caution is removed, an accident may happen. This week, you will need to work harder to achieve the desired success in the field of employment. Beware of hidden enemies in the workplace and ignore the small things people do. During this time, your opponents may try to distract you from your goal. Drive carefully this week and take full care. There is a possibility of an old disease emerging once again. If you get an opportunity to settle the case going on in the court outside, do not miss it at all. Proceed thoughtfully in the love affair and avoid interfering excessively in the personal life of the love partner. In difficult times, your life partner will be with you like a shadow.

### VIRGO



Ganesha says for the people of Virgo, this week can be like the fulfillment of dreams. At the beginning of the week, good news related to career business can be heard. For those who have been waiting for their transfer or promotion for a long time, their wish can be fulfilled this week. At the beginning of the week itself, it is possible to meet a senior and influential person, with the help of which profitable plans will be made in the future. During this period, through your intelligence and hard work, you will be able to make progress in your field of work, career, business, etc. This week, more money can be spent out of pocket on things related to comfort. Problems related to land-building will go away. Will get the happiness of the ancestral property. In the second half of the week,

some health-related problems may emerge. Love relations will be strong, and there will be an opportunity to spend quality time with the love partner.

### LIBRA



Ganesha says that at the beginning of the week, you may have to travel long or short distances in connection with work. During this time, new sources of your income will be created, but the excess of expenditure can be a bit high. The behavior of relatives and best friends couldn't be more positive. The mind will remain troubled due to not getting timely help from relatives. Those who have been wandering for employment for a long time may have to wait a little longer to achieve their desired success. In the second half of the week, do not make any decisions related to home or business in haste. The interference of a third person in love affairs can be the cause of your troubles. Try to solve any problem through dialogue. A spouse's health can become a major cause of worry.

### SCORPIO



Ganesha says this week is a sign of being careful with the people of the Scorpio zodiac. If you are thinking of changing jobs or investing money somewhere in the business, then before taking such a decision, consult your relatives. Think carefully before making any major decision; otherwise, you may have to repent later. While making decisions on any matter related to family, take full care of the feelings of your relatives. During this, it would be appropriate to move ahead by meeting friends and family members. Do not disclose your plans in the workplace; otherwise, opponents may put obstacles in it. Take a step forward with caution in your love affair; otherwise, things may get spoiled. At the end of the week, there can be a big concern regarding the child's side. Take full care of your health and routine.

### SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says the week has brought good fortune for the people of Sagittarius. At the beginning of the week, with the help of a close friend or influential person, you may feel relieved by completing a long-pending task. There will be full cooperation of senior and junior colleagues in the field. The mind will be happy by getting the desired position or work. The power of people associated with politics will increase. There will be an increase in respect, etc. In the field of social prestige. In the second half of the week, you may have to run a lot in connection with the purchase and sale of property like land, vehicle, house, etc., but your hard work will give you both success and profit. Long or short-distance travel with family is possible at the end of the week. The journey will prove to be pleasant. You will continue to receive maximum happiness and cooperation from the

parents.



### CAPRICORN

Ganesha says the people of Capricorn who were worried about the progress of their careers and business, their wishes can be fulfilled this week. Seniors in the workplace will appreciate your work. You may get some important responsibilities. An earlier investment in any scheme or business will bring profit. Students engaged in the preparation for examination competitions can get good news. In the second half of the week, due to the arrival of a dear person in the house, there will be an atmosphere of happiness. Any auspicious work can be completed in the family, or there will be an opportunity to participate in any auspicious occasion. Material comforts will increase. In matters related to love affairs, there will be a need to maintain better coordination with the love partner. Happiness and cooperation will remain with the spouse.

### AQUARIUS



Ganesha says the people of Aquarius should take full care of their pockets while spending this week. At the beginning of the week, more money can be spent out of pocket on things related to amenities. If you are thinking of buying a new land, building, or vehicle, then make this decision very carefully. The help and advice of a friend will prove to be very effective in taking the business forward. In the first half of the week, long or short-distance travel is possible with the spouse. The journey will prove to be enjoyable and create new relationships. In the second half of the week, the mind will be worried about the health of an elderly person in the house. During this, be alert to the opponents in the workplace and avoid making any such mistake, due to which there will be a decrease in your social prestige. There is a need to make better coordination with the loved partner in a love affair. Sweetness will remain in married life.

### PISCES



Ganesha says that this week is going to be very auspicious for the people of Pisces. At the beginning of the week, there can be chances of profit and progress. During this time, you can be successful in influencing others with your speech and behavior. There will be harmony with siblings. If you have been planning to buy land or a building for a long time, then your wish may be fulfilled this week. You can get the full support of your parents. With the help of best friends, there will be chances of profit in the workplace or business. Students engaged in the preparation for examination competitions can achieve great success. His interest in studies will increase. You will be successful in a love affair. Mutual trust will increase with a love partner. Will have a pleasant time with the spouse. Health will be normal.

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : MAY 25 TO MAY 31  
BY VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR BEJAN DARUWALLA****MAY 25**

Ganesha says don't pursue a career because of fame or money. Doing what you love can help you achieve success. You may be in a positive frame of mind, which may help you recognize proper growth opportunities coming your way. You may commit to multiple tasks at the same time, which is likely to improve your productivity in all aspects of life. This day may bring important events for you.

**MAY 26**

Ganesha says today may be the best day for you. Your boss may be supportive today. You are likely to get a promotion for your consistent hard work. You may plan to go somewhere with the family. Your enthusiasm may be at its peak today, and you may try something new at the workplace. Your communication with your colleague may be good, which may make you learn new things. Today, you may witness a lot of changes, which may give you more time to relax and channel your positive energy. This is the

right time to plan for the future.

**MAY 27**

Ganesha says that today can be a very auspicious day for you. You may be in a good position as far as professional and personal success is concerned. Peace and harmony may bring good progress in all areas of your life. Your happiness levels may make solid progress in areas of concern today. Today, you may enter a new phase of life. This phase may motivate you to work hard and make you competitive. You may get a lot of success today. Your hard work may impress your boss. Today, you may show interest in spiritual activities.

**MAY 28**

Ganesha says that today can be a very promising day for you. Your communication skills may be able to impress everyone around you. Today, you may be in a sociable mood, ready to network with people who can help both professionally and personally. Today, you may lead the project at the workplace.

You may start new tasks and show great ease in executing them. Plan an outing with your friends today.

**MAY 29**

Ganesha says that today can be the best day for you. This day can bring a lot of opportunities at the workplace that can lead you to a good plan. Today, your energy level may be at an all-time high, which will help you move forward. May this day bring a lot of happiness and joy to your life. Your day may begin with a lot of positivity. You may dedicate your entire day to yourself and your interests. A changed attitude towards work may keep you ahead of your competitors.

**MAY 30**

Ganesha says that today can be the best day for you. You may be able to solve a problem at the workplace, which may make your boss happy. You may plan a business trip with your colleague. Today can be a good day; you may meet some new people in the office. You may learn something new from them and share



**VEDIC ASTROLOGER NASTUR  
BEJAN DARUWALLA**

different stories related to work. You may travel to a place where the weather is completely different.

**MAY 31**

Ganesha says that today you may get good mental strength. You may enjoy working in the office. You are likely to implement new ideas in the family business. Today, your hard work may help you implement the plan successfully. Today, you may choose to work hard, and the financial gains you get today will remain with you for a long time. Today, your love life can also be as great as your professional life.

Nastur Bejan Daruwalla is available for astrological consultations. He can be reached at [www.bejandaruwalla.com](http://www.bejandaruwalla.com) | [info@bejandaruwalla.com](mailto:info@bejandaruwalla.com) | +91 81412 34275

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Ganga Dussehra, one of the most sacred festivals in Hindu tradition, marks the divine descent of Goddess Ganga from heaven to Earth. Celebrated on the tenth day of the waxing moon in the Hindu month of Jyeshtha, the festival holds immense spiritual significance for millions of devotees across India. It is believed that on this auspicious day, the holy River Ganga descended to Earth to cleanse humanity of sins and liberate souls from the cycle of birth and death. Revered as a goddess, a mother, and a purifier, the Ganga occupies a unique place in the spiritual and cultural consciousness of India.

The term "Ganga Dussehra" is derived from two Sanskrit words - "Ganga," the sacred river goddess, and "Dussehra," meaning the destruction of ten sins. According to Hindu belief, bathing in the waters of the Ganga on this day washes away ten kinds of sins committed through thoughts, words, and deeds. Devotees throng riverbanks and ghats from early morning, chanting hymns and prayers while taking ritual dips in the holy river. The atmosphere becomes charged with spirituality, devotion, and faith as temples echo with the sounds of bells, conch shells, and devotional songs.

The origins of Ganga Dussehra are deeply rooted in ancient Hindu mythology. The legend begins with King Sagara, a mighty ruler whose sixty thousand sons were reduced to ashes by Sage Kapila after they mistakenly accused him of stealing a sacrificial horse. Their souls could not attain salvation, and generations later, King Bhagiratha undertook severe penance to seek divine intervention for the liberation of his ancestors. Pleased by his devotion, Lord Brahma agreed to send the celestial River Ganga down to Earth. However, the force of her descent was so powerful that it could have destroyed the planet. Bhagiratha then prayed to Lord Shiva, who compassionately received the mighty river in his matted locks and gently released her streams onto Earth. Flowing behind Bhagiratha, the sacred river finally touched the ashes of King Sagara's sons and granted them liberation. Since then, the Ganga has been worshipped as the giver of salvation and spiritual purification.

The story of Ganga's descent carries profound symbolic meaning. Bhagiratha's intense penance represents determination, devotion, and selfless purpose. Lord Shiva's role symbolizes spiritual discipline and the power to channel divine energy. The flowing waters of the Ganga signify purity, compassion, wisdom, and the eternal flow of life. In Hindu philosophy, the river is not merely a geographical entity but a living manifestation of divine grace that nourishes both body and soul.

On Ganga Dussehra, devotees gather in large numbers at sacred cities such as Haridwar, Varanasi, Prayagraj and Rishikesh, where the river is worshipped with elaborate rituals and ceremonies. Pilgrims wake before sunrise to bathe in the sacred waters, believing that the holy dip cleanses accumulated karma and brings spiritual merit. Priests conduct

# Ganga Dussehra: Celebrating the divine descent of Mother Ganga



## Important information

**Ganga Dussehra | Dasha Paap Hara Ganga Dashami**

**Monday, 25 May 2026**

**Dashami Tithi starts : 25 May 2026 at 04:30 AM**

**Dashami Tithi ends : 26 May 2026 at 05:10 AM**

special pujas on riverbanks, offering flowers, incense, lamps, fruits, and sacred chants to Goddess Ganga. Many devotees float lighted earthen lamps on the river in a ritual known as Deep Daan, symbolizing the removal of darkness and ignorance from human life.

One of the most enchanting sights during Ganga Dussehra is the grand Ganga Aarti performed in the evening at famous ghats. Priests holding large flaming lamps move in synchronized rhythm as devotional hymns fill the air and thousands of devotees join in prayer. The reflection of flickering lamps on the flowing river creates an atmosphere of divine serenity and spiritual awe. The aarti is not only an act of worship but also an expression of

gratitude toward nature and the life-giving river.

The festival also emphasizes charity and compassion. Donating food, water, clothes, fruits, and essentials to the needy is considered highly auspicious on this day. Many devotees observe fasts, meditate, chant mantras, and read sacred scriptures associated with the glory of the Ganga. Spiritual discourses and cultural programs are organized in temples and pilgrimage centers, highlighting the religious and philosophical significance of the river.

Beyond its religious importance, the Ganga has played a defining role in shaping Indian civilization for thousands of years. The fertile plains nourished by the river became centers

of agriculture, trade, learning, and spirituality. Ancient cities, temples, universities, and kingdoms flourished along her banks. Saints, poets, and philosophers across centuries have praised the Ganga as the visible form of divine compassion. From Vedic hymns to medieval devotional literature, the river continues to inspire reverence and devotion.

In modern times, Ganga Dussehra also serves as a reminder of humanity's responsibility toward nature and environmental preservation. Despite being worshipped as sacred, the River Ganga faces serious threats from pollution, industrial waste, plastic dumping, and ecological degradation. Many spiritual leaders and environmental activists stress that true devotion to Mother Ganga lies not only in rituals and prayers but also in protecting the purity of her waters. Awareness drives, cleanliness campaigns, and conservation initiatives are increasingly becoming part of the festival celebrations.

Spiritually, Ganga Dussehra conveys a timeless message of inner purification and renewal. Just as the sacred waters cleanse physical impurities, spiritual wisdom purifies the mind and soul. The festival encourages individuals to let go of negativity, ego, anger, and attachment while embracing humility, compassion, and devotion. The continuous flow of the Ganga reminds humanity to move through life with grace, resilience, and purity of heart.

For millions of devotees, Mother Ganga remains an eternal symbol of hope, healing, and liberation. Her waters are believed to carry divine blessings capable of uplifting even the most troubled soul. As devotees gather along the sacred riverbanks with folded hands and unwavering faith, Ganga Dussehra becomes more than a festival - it transforms into a spiritual experience that connects humanity with the divine flow of life itself.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

## GOP senators balk at Trump's \$1.8...

reportedly contentious private meeting about it between Senate Republicans and acting Atty. Gen. Todd Blanche. He also conceded midterm politics had added to the tension.

"It's hard to divorce anything that happens here from what's happening in the political atmosphere around us," Thune told reporters. "You can't disconnect those things."

A day earlier, Sen. Bill Cassidy, a Louisiana Republican who lost his primary race on Saturday to a Trump-backed challenger, expressed strong disagreement with the creation of the fund, which would be controlled by appointees without congressional oversight.

"People are concerned about paying their mortgage or rent, affording groceries and paying for gas, not putting together a \$1.8 billion fund for the president and his allies to pay whomever they wish with no legal precedent or accountability," Cassidy wrote on X. "If there needs to be a settlement, the administration should bring it to Congress to decide."

Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) also had harsh criticism for the fund.

"So the nation's top law enforcement official is asking for a slush fund to pay people who assault cops? Utterly stupid, morally wrong - take your pick," he said in a statement.

The discord was striking, partly because Republicans have largely steered clear of checking the president's power, and Congress has been largely sidelined under the second Trump administration on the war in Iran and other issues.

"I don't think the Republicans had any choice but to pull the plug until we come back in June, because they're facing a bit of a mutiny within their conference," Sen. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) told *The Times*, saying he had heard that the meeting between Blanche and Republicans "didn't go well."

As tension simmered on the background, Trump seemed unbothered by the group of Republicans' public rebellion against his agenda. When asked whether he was losing control of the Senate, he said he didn't know.

"I only do what is right," he told reporters in the Oval Office. However, he expressed annoyance at lawmakers who would not support \$1 billion in federal funding for security costs related to the ballroom project. He said the structure is being privately funded by him and other "great patriots." "We are making a gift to the United States," Trump said. "This is being made as a gift from me and other people that are great patriots and spent a lot of money. We are building what will be the finest ballroom anywhere in the world." The \$1 billion for security funding would be "very much a good expenditure," he said. If Congress does not sign off on the money, Trump said the "White House won't be a very secure place."

Trump did not immediately comment on Thursday about the Senate's delaying of the funding bill. The White House declined to comment on the matter.

Trump's second-term actions have frequently tested the loyalty of Republican lawmakers, who have largely stayed in line. The settlement fund, with its ethical questions, appears to have crossed a line for some senators in a party that has traditionally opposed wasting taxpayer funds.

The money comes from the judgment fund, which is a Congress-approved ongoing appropriation that allows the Justice Department to settle cases and make payments.

Stephen Miller, a top aide to Trump, told reporters at the White House that the \$1.8-billion settlement was "just a small measure of the justice" that many people are owed after being targeted by the federal government. Miller declined to say whether the White House was reaching out to senators to ease concerns about the fund.

Republicans in Congress decried the use of similar third-party settlements during the Obama administration, with House lawmakers repeatedly passing a bill aimed at stopping settlement slush funds, noted Molly Nixon, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute.

Though the Trump administration's plan is novel because the settlement money isn't going to a third party, the general concept has been offensive to Republicans in the past; the Republican-controlled House Judiciary Committee termed it an abuse in 2017.

"If you're taking a consistent view, you'd be at least equally as opposed to this settlement," Nixon said of Republican lawmakers.

That could be driving some of the opposition now, along with concerns about who is going to get the money and

whether it could be distributed to people who wouldn't have been able to make a successful case before a court of law, Nixon said.

"The fund is going to plaintiffs who were victims of lawfare or weaponization. ... Those are pretty ambiguous terms. They're sort of in the eye of the beholder," Nixon said. "It's pretty easy to see how this could very easily become a quiet political claims process."

Police officers who defended the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6, 2021, riot have already filed a federal lawsuit seeking to block the creation of the fund, arguing in part that it would compensate extremist convicted of committing violent crimes. "The fund's mere existence sends a clear and chilling message: those who enact violence in President Trump's name will not just avoid punishment, they will be rewarded with riches," the lawsuit says.

When Trump returned to office in January 2025, one of his first acts was pardoning or commuting the prison sentences of the 1,500 people who were charged in connection with the attack. Vice President JD Vance on Wednesday did not rule out that settlement money could go to those rioters, saying the money would be given out on a "case-by-case basis."

Thune told reporters on Thursday that the Justice Department would have to come up with some guardrails to ease concerns among senators.

"We need to get some clarity," he said.

Though the number of Republicans angry with Trump is significant enough to make or break legislation, the caucus appeared far from falling apart.

Senate Republicans blocked an attempt by Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Calif.) on Thursday to pass a bill to prohibit federal funds from reaching Jan. 6 rioters, an attempt to prevent the fund from being used to compensate them.

"I'm encouraged hearing some of my Republican colleagues agreeing with me," Padilla said on the Senate floor. "Let's stand up for congressional oversight as a unified Senate."

Sen. Tommy Tuberville (R-Ala.) objected to Padilla's bill, later writing on X: "PROUD to object today to Senator Padilla's RIDICULOUS bill and stand up for ALL FREEDOM-LOVING AMERICANS."

Schiff, who is working on an amendment that would target the fund, said other Republican colleagues he spoke to Wednesday evening were unhappy with the position Trump has put them in. He said Trump's actions have helped underscore Democrats' arguments against his party. "All [it's] doing is helping us make the case that the Republicans couldn't care less about people's cost of living ... that there's plenty of money for golden ballrooms for the president, there's plenty of money for the president's cronies, but there's no money for the average family," Schiff said. (Source: Los Angeles Times)

## Chandrayaan-3 Receives 2026 AIAA...

presence of key chemical elements in the lunar south polar soil, pointing to local resources that could one day sustain manufacturing operations on the surface.

India's Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Vinay Kwatra, accepted the award on behalf of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) at the AIAA ASCEND 2026 Conference. In his remarks, Ambassador Kwatra outlined Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Space Vision 2047, highlighting India's roadmap for deep space exploration, human spaceflight, and the rapid growth of its commercial space sector. He also called for strengthened collaboration between the governments, industries, and research institutions of India and the United States - underscoring the deepening partnership between the two nations in space exploration.

**Ambassador Kwatra posted his congratulatory message on X.**

**Congratulations to**

**@isro**

**and Chandrayaan 3 team on winning the prestigious 2026 Goddard Astronautics Award from The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics**

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Honored to accept the award on behalf of ISRO and to highlight Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Space Vision 2047 and the upcoming deep space exploration and human spaceflight missions, and growing commercial space ecosystem in India.

<https://x.com/AmbVMKwatra/status/2057471864419565827?s=20>

## BRICS Youth Entrepreneurship Working...

Pallavi Jain Govil, Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs; Nitesh Kumar Mishra, Additional Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs; Sarah Jayal Sawkmie, Director, Department of Youth Affairs; Rajesh Kumar Kanaujia, Deputy Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs, along with senior officials and delegates from BRICS countries. Addressing the valedictory session, Nitesh Kumar Mishra, Additional Secretary, Department of Youth Affairs, emphasized the importance of collective action in strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems across BRICS countries. He stated, "Entrepreneurship is not a privilege of the few; it is a right that every young person, regardless of geography, gender, or background, must have access to."

He further noted that the challenges faced by young entrepreneurs, including access to capital, digital infrastructure, mentorship, and regulatory support, are shared concerns across BRICS nations and require collaborative solutions through sustained partnerships and dialogue.

Delivering the Vote of Thanks, Sarah Jayal Sawkmie, Director, Department of Youth Affairs, appreciated the contribution of delegates, panelists, moderators, and organizing teams for the successful conduct of the meeting. She said, "You did not come here to simply represent your countries. You came here to build something together, and that has made all the difference."

Sawkmie also acknowledged the support extended by the Government of Madhya Pradesh and highlighted that the deliberations and partnerships developed during the meeting would contribute meaningfully towards advancing the BRICS youth entrepreneurship agenda.

The meeting brought together youth entrepreneurs, delegates, policymakers, and stakeholders from BRICS countries, providing a platform to exchange ideas, share best practices, and explore avenues for strengthening youth-led entrepreneurial ecosystems across BRICS nations.

The programme commenced with the inauguration of an exhibition showcasing innovations and entrepreneurial initiatives across sectors including technology, sustainability, clean energy, and social enterprise. Over the course of the meeting, delegates participated in plenary discussions, country presentations, panel discussions, networking engagements, workshops, and interactive sessions focused on fostering collaboration and innovation.

A dedicated session on "From Local Innovation to Global Impact: BRICS Cooperation for a Youth-Led Startup Ecosystem" enabled participating countries to present their initiatives, experiences, and best practices in entrepreneurship and startup development. The discussions highlighted opportunities for deeper collaboration and exchange among BRICS startup ecosystems. The meeting also featured thematic panel discussions on digital innovation and technology-driven entrepreneurship, inclusive and social entrepreneurship, green entrepreneurship and climate-positive business models. The sessions explored emerging opportunities in sectors such as AI, fintech, agritech, sustainability, and clean energy, while emphasizing the importance of inclusive growth and youth-led enterprise.

Interactive networking engagements and a fireside conversation with young entrepreneurs further encouraged dialogue, peer learning, and cross-country collaboration among participants.

The second day of the meeting included a workshop on Entrepreneurship Competency and Leadership Development, followed by an interactive question-and-answer session. The programme concluded with a valedictory session featuring certificate distribution and experience sharing by participants. Delegates also visited Crystal IT Park in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India, as part of an entrepreneurial excursion aimed at providing insights into the region's growing innovation ecosystem.

The deliberations during the meeting contributed towards strengthening dialogue and cooperation among BRICS countries in the field of youth entrepreneurship and innovation.

The BRICS Youth Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting reflected India's continued emphasis on youth as key stakeholders in shaping resilient and future-ready economies while further strengthening cooperation and engagement among BRICS countries during its Chairship. (Source: ANI)

# Kudremukh: Western Ghats trekker's paradise with misty peaks

Popular and named after a mountainside that resembles a horse's face, Kudremukh is famous for its biodiversity and scenic beauty. A popular hill-station among the Bangalore crowd, Kudremukh is actually a hill range in the Chikmagalur district of Karnataka. Kudremukh Peak is a paradise for trekkers and naturists alike, with its mountainous paths and floral and faunal diversity.

With its rolling meadows, grasslands and dense forests, this place is a biodiversity hotspot. Kudremukh is an enchanting place to visit, still retaining much of its natural beauty despite persistent threats from various sources to its ecology. Varaha Parvatha, another mountain range nearby at a height of 1458m above sea level is a part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site.

## Kudremukh Trek

At an altitude of 1894 m above sea level, the Kudremukh Peak is a paradise for trekkers and naturists alike, with its mountainous paths and floral and faunal diversity.

The scene from the peak is breathtaking with the view of the skies and clouds over the Arabian Sea. One of the unique characteristics of this trek is the myriad landscapes that it offers en route, ranging from tall bamboo shrubs and shola forests to gushing streams and rolling hills. The peak is located in the Kudremukh National Park which is rich in flora and fauna. Kudremukh along with its beauty of the Western Ghats and the surreal landscapes also offers various treks on the lush green hills of Western Ghats. The most famous and scenic trek of Kudremukh is the trek to Kudremukh peak. The trek takes you through the wildlife sanctuary of Kudremukh which is a habitat for tigers, leopards, wild dogs, deer among other species of fauna.

The trek begins from the small hamlet of Mullodi. The short distance of 9 km (one way) takes you at an altitude of 1,894 km above the sea level offering some of the most breathtaking views of the Western Ghats. From the beauty of the Western Ghats, various streams, and waterfalls and the aromatic coffee plantations you get to see all at one place. The most important attraction along with the Kudremukh peak is the Hanuman Gundi Falls, which falls on your way uphill to the highest peak. Located amidst the hilly terrain of Western Ghats, Hanuman Gundi falls is a beautiful water cascade of Kudremukh.

## Kudremukh National Park

Located amidst mountains, Kudremukh National Park is popular for its scenic beauty. Designated the status of a national park in the year 1987, the 600-



kilometre square area is one of the most well preserved national parks in the state. The Kudremukh National Park is jewelled with natural beauty, high rising peaks studded with a plethora of flora and fauna to picturesque trekking routes overseeing verdant grasslands, there is much to experience here! The wildlife

protected area is the second-largest belonging to a tropical wet evergreen forest in the zone of the Western Ghats.

The area gains its name from the native language. Kudremukha translates to horse-face, referring to the highest mountain peak in the park which resembles the face of a horse from a

particular side. It rises to a height of 1,894 meters (6,214 feet) and is the second highest peak in Karnataka. The area is the habitat of many endangered and endemic species of plants and animals, with mammals such as tigers, leopards and wild dogs as the primary predators of the region.

## Hanuman Gundi Falls

Gushing down from a height of more than 100 feet onto natural rocks, this calm and serene site is an attraction for those looking for a laidback day amongst nature's beauty.

## Kalasa

Kalasa, also known as the temple town is located in Chikkamagaluru district in Karnataka. The beautiful city lies on the banks of the Bhadra River. The reasons behind the birth of the place are both mythological and etymological. It is surrounded by rainforest and is a perfect place for a nature getaway. Being largely an agricultural economy this place depends on the River Bhadra for water. It plays fair with its name as Kalasa's soil is blessed with great fertility which produces the best coffee and other herbs. Also, Kalasa is renowned for a shrine of Goddess Bhagavathi and a Varaha within a cave.

Kalasa is home to Sri Kalaseshwara Temple which is dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is also known as a temple town in Karnataka showcasing the architectural heritage of Southern India comprising of a variety of styles as well as design philosophies representing the rich culture of the land. Pilgrims from all over the region come down to the temple town to offer their prayers. Though it is considered as a pilgrimage spot, today it is also recognised as a tourist place. As it lies in the heart of Western Ghats, it enjoys a relatively pleasant climate throughout the year except for summers.

## Gangamoola

Also known as the Varaha Parvatha, this mountain at a height of 1458m above sea level is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The source of the Rivers Tunga, Bhadra and Nethravati lie here.

The main attractions here are the temple of Goddess Bhagavathi and a cave with a 6 feet tall image of Varaha. This area is mineral rich with magnetite-quartzite deposits. It is also a hotspot with more than 107 species of birds.

## Janta Market

The Janta Market of Kudremukh is the prime shopping center of the small albeit picturesque town, and one can find items of basic utility and small souvenirs there. It was earlier known as Bhadra Market



BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

MAY 22, 2026

**NAIROBI (TIP):** It was a gala event designed to mark the completion of the glorious 100 years by the oldest sports club of Sikhs outside India. Known by different names—Khalsa Club, Khalsa Union, and Simha Club—since its inception in the early 20th century, the Sikh Union Club in Nairobi has come to be known as a feeding channel to Kenyan hockey, cricket, and motorsport. Between 1952 and 1988, it produced 26 hockey Olympians and 11 World Cup players, as well as a plethora of motorsport icons and a large number of cricket players who wore Kenya and East Africa colors.

The week-long celebrations included competitions in hockey, cricket, badminton, darts, golf, and a treasure hunt. Among the participating teams, Roundglass Hockey Academy, a team trained by the 1980 Moscow Olympic champion Indian hockey team player Rajinder Singh, was the cynosure of all eyes, reviving memories of vintage hockey. This harkened back to a time when Indian teams dominated the global hockey scenario for most of the 20th century. Despite an opening game 1-4 loss to the hosts Sikh Union Club, the visitors from Punjab rebounded, defeating their conquerors by the same margin in the gold medal match. Other teams came from the United Kingdom—Satellites and Sikh Union, London—and Niger Flickers from Nigeria, making the competition a truly international affair.

Meanwhile, on the veteran side of the tournament, the hosts, Sikh Union Club, pocketed the gold by defeating the Satellite Veterans from the United Kingdom. Notably, the British teams were trained by Olympian Harvinder Singh Sibia and internationals Kuljit Singh Dhatt and Ravinder Laly, continuing the tradition of excellence present throughout the festivities.

Sikh Union's centenary celebrations got a boost when Punjab-based Roundglass, a leading hockey academy, decided to send its young team to participate in the hockey festival that has touched its competitive peak with separate competitions for men and masters.

Beyond the field of play, the centenary program led by chairman Hardial Kalsi has leaned heavily into legacy projects and global engagement. The club has now started academies in various sports to spot talent at the grassroots level, bringing together members and stakeholders to mark a century of sporting excellence.

"Standards have been set, and only the sky's the limit," Kalsi said, framing the ambition driving Sikh Union's next chapter as it builds on its status as one of Kenya's premier multi-sport institutions.

For the grand ceremonies—opening and closing—of the centenary celebrations, Harbinder Singh Sethi, a prominent Sikh businessman from South Africa, was the chief guest. There were several big names of yesteryear to be part of the celebrations and future development programs of the club. They included hockey Olympians from India, Malaysia, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Canada, the USA, and Uganda.

"We are delighted to have teams from

# Avtar Singh Tari, Del Mudher given lifetime achievement award



India, the United Kingdom, Malaysia, and Nigeria joining our local teams, including the Sikh Union Club, in a competition that will hopefully have its medal round matches on a brand new deep blue synthetic surface being laid at Dasmesh Stadium of the Club," says Manjinder (Munai) Singh Bansal, Chairman of the Centenary Celebrations Committee.

After hockey competitions started at a makeshift nearby school ground, finishing touches were being given to the deep blue surface under the watchful eyes of six-time Olympian Avtar Singh Sohal. Avtar Singh, "Tari" to his ardent fans, had taken upon himself the onerous responsibility of generating millions of dollars to lay a brand-new surface at the club to mark the centenary celebrations.

"Our hopes came true as the new deep blue surface was ready in time for the semis and finals. Incessant rains in April and the first week of May had delayed the commissioning of the new surface," commented Avtar Singh Sohal, who had been watching the work round the clock. "It is the first private club in Kenya to have the latest deep blue surface," he added.

The organizing secretary, Del Mudher, claimed that it was not hockey alone that had been keeping the Sikh Union Club in the news all these years of its golden existence. Besides contributing 26 Olympians and several hockey World Cuppers, the club has been a known force in cricket and the home ground of East African cricket. It has a rich history of producing some of the top cricketers in East Africa. Besides, one of the top motor rallyists, Tiger Joginder Singh, has also been a product of this club. The club has

been organizing the Guru Nanak Motor Rally since 1973.

Del Mudher and his daughter have worked out together to bring out a huge anthology chronicling the origin and growth of the club since the early 20th century. Their painstaking efforts have produced a beautiful coffee table book that has not only all government notifications, pictures, and reports related to the development of the club but also highlights its monumental achievements.

The celebrations marked the culmination of a month-long program that has fused sport, culture, and community engagement into a landmark 100-year milestone. The cricket tournament, 8 overs a side, was staged at the club's historic international-standard cricket ground. The hosts, Sikh Union Club, were a little unlucky to end without the title and finished as runners-up.

The Club also had a packed schedule of competitions in other sports that have already seen strong participation in badminton, golf, football, darts, and a treasure hunt, underscoring the club's enduring multi-sport footprint.

Kenya international Sukhdeep Singh set the early tone of the cricket festivities with a commanding display for the host team.

The hockey tournament provided the climax to the celebrations, and on May 10, the curtain came down with a grand banquet at the club, bringing together members and stakeholders to mark a century of sporting excellence.

Hockey legend Avtar Singh Tari was felicitated with the lifetime achievements award for his glorious seven-decade career in international hockey. Also celebrated was the club historian, Del Mudher.



Manjinder Singh, also known as Munai Bansal, Chairman of the Centenary Celebration Committee, while expressing satisfaction over the successful conduct of the program, said that the club was now looking forward to restoring its pristine glory of becoming the main feeding channel for both hockey and cricket teams of Kenya while continuing to provide modern training facilities at the grassroots in other sports, including swimming, tennis, and golf.

The gala banquet that marked the conclusion of the celebration witnessed a program featuring African dances, Punjabi folk dances, and music besides the felicitation of all heroes of yesteryears, including the three Marwa brothers—Amarjeet, Harvinder, and Satpal—and Surjit Singh Rihal, Harvinder Pal Singh Sibia, Resham Singh Bains, Ravinder Singh Lally, Tarlochan Singh Channa, Kuljit Singh Dhatta, Ranjeev Deol, and Avtar Singh Sohal.

*(Prabhjot Singh is a Toronto, Canada based senior journalist. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)*



## Drums and tears: Cristiano Ronaldo celebrates Saudi league title, X post goes viral

They said he went to the desert to retire. They said the hunger would fade, buried under the weight of a 200-million-euro contract and the twilight of a legendary career. But on a sweltering Thursday night at Al-Awwal Park, as the final whistle blew to confirm Al-Nassr as the Saudi Pro League champions, Cristiano Ronaldo proved once again that his obsession with winning defies both time and critics.

At 41 years old, a man who has conquered Manchester, Madrid, and Turin stood on a football pitch in Riyadh and wept like a teenager winning his very first medal.

The stakes could not have been higher on the final night of the season. Al-Nassr held a razor-thin advantage, knowing anything less than a victory could hand the crown to their relentless arch-rivals, Al-Hilal. The atmosphere inside the stadium was electric, a sea of yellow and blue roaring for a domestic title that had eluded the club since 2019. Early goals from Sadio Mané and Kingsley Coman put Al-Nassr in control, but a tense penalty from Damac brought the score to 2-1, stretching the nerves of everyone in the arena to a breaking point.

Then came the 62nd minute, the moment the script belonged to Ronaldo. Standing over a free-kick twenty-five yards out, he took his trademark deep breath, his eyes locked onto the top corner. With a devastating blend of power and dip, he struck the ball. It bypassed a desperate wall and a forest of legs, rocketing into the far corner of the net. The stadium exploded. It was vintage, peak Ronaldo, delivered precisely when his team needed a saviour. Nine minutes from time, he put the final exclamation point on the season, smashing home a sharp cut-back from the edge of the six-yard box to make it 4-1.

With the victory guaranteed, manager Jorge Jesus substituted his captain to grant him a standing ovation. Sitting on the bench, watching the final seconds tick away, the gravity of the moment caught up with the Portuguese icon. The tough, stoic exterior melted away. Ronaldo buried his face in his hands, visibly weeping.

IPL 2026

# CSK crash and burn in Ahmedabad, exit IPL 2026 with 89-run loss to Gujarat Titans

AHMEDABAD (TIP), MAY 22, 2026

Chennai Super Kings' IPL 2026 campaign ended up in smoke as Gujarat Titans condemned them to an 89-run loss in Ahmedabad on Thursday, May 21. With the loss, CSK finished the season with just 12 points from 14 matches and officially got eliminated from the tournament. This was the third consecutive year that Chennai finished out of the top four and without playing in the play-offs.

For Gujarat, the win means that they strengthened their chances of playing qualifier 1 after they dominated Chennai in all three departments. The win was setup by Sai Sudharsan's 84, Shubman Gill's 64 and Jos Buttler's explosive 57, which helped them post 229 runs in the first innings.

In response, Chennai were bundled out for 140 runs in 13.4 overs, with Shivam Dube being the only batter who got going on the track.

When the team sheets were out on Thursday, it felt like CSK decided to make a lot of changes with their season on the line. In times like these, you usually sit down and go with your tried and tested formula. But they decided to bench Prashant Veer and Akeal Hosein and brought back Matt Short and Gurjapneet Singh.

Ruturaj said that the decision was made on match combinations and one expected Short to be used as a bowling option. However, the Aussie all-rounder never got a chance to come in and bowl.

Gill and Sudharsan have good memories while facing CSK in Ahmedabad, as the duo scored hundreds in a 210-run stand back in 2024. And the way they started out, it seemed like Chennai was in for a déjà vu moment.

The duo made a flying start, which



ended up hurting CSK in more ways than one. They lost Sanju Samson early on to a finger injury and he was off the field. It seemed the guidance from behind the stumps seemed to be missing as the Chennai bowlers struggled to find any inspiration on a track that looked like a belter.

The result was Gill and Sudharsan piling on 62 runs in the powerplay. With the absence of a spin partner, Noor Ahmad struggled back at his former stomping ground, as he was welcomed with a six by Gill.

The one thing that the GT skipper has done this season is to be more aggressive in his approach and he was putting the Chennai bowlers to the sword.

He reached his fifty with a six off Noor and in 23 balls. Sudharsan wasn't to be left behind in terms of the big-hitting and he took on Anhsul Kamboj, who seemed like he was still left in the shock he got in Lucknow.

Sudharsan got to his fifty in 35 balls,

putting him in an elite list of batters to score five consecutive fifties in the IPL. There seemed to be no hurry from the GT batters. It looked calm, calculated and without any chaos.

But Gill's innings ended in the 13th over and that gave Sudharsan and Buttler the license to go for the kill.

The duo ensured that Noor conceded 22 runs in the third over and the Afghan spinner wasn't called back to bowl another one. But that left the rest of the CSK pacers to the onslaught.

They conceded 78 runs in the last six overs. Kamboj's time in the IPL went from bad to worse as he got the unwanted record of conceding the most sixes in a single edition of the IPL with 34 maximums next to his name.

Once Buttler also got to his fifty and powered the total to 230, it seemed CSK missed a trick by not having another bowling option in the mix. While Ruturaj said that it felt like they played a batter or bowler less.

## Sports Ministry proposes jail terms for doping traffickers

NEW DELHI (TIP), MAY 22, 2026

The Indian Sports Ministry has initiated proceedings to amend the National Anti-Doping Act to impose jail terms on individuals involved in the trafficking, sale, and supply of prohibited substances in India.

The ministry has published a draft of the amendments on its website for consultation and feedback. It has invited all stakeholders to submit comments and suggestions by June 18.

The proposed amendments will target only traffickers, illegal suppliers,

organised syndicates, and support systems involved in doping networks. Athletes not involved in these offences will not face jail terms for anti-doping rule violations.

"If you remember, I spoke about the same subject in my speech when the WADA chief, Witold Banka, was visiting. We are serious about breaking this syndicate, especially those supplying to minors," Sports Minister Dr Mansukh Mandaviya told the media on Thursday.

Banka, during his visit for Global Anti-Doping Intelligence and Investigations Network (GAIIN) Asia

and Oceania meeting in New Delhi last month, had called India the biggest producer of illegal performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) and steroids.

"Operation Upstream is a global operation. It is not limited to India. It involves many law enforcement agencies. There is no doubt that the biggest production of illegal performance-enhancing drugs and illegal steroids is in India. We have a big problem with this in India. So the main target, the biggest producer in the world, is in India," Banka had said in April.



## An Eye Institute in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh combating avoidable blindness in children.

On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MD. I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautifully facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctors, nurses, and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion.

Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



New Goutami Institute to be constructed 2024



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