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Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi says draft U.S. deal includes ending naval blockade, Hormuz arrangements

Says Israel looking to derail potential deal with U.S.

JUNE 12, 2026
TEHRAN (TIP)

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday, June 12, 2026, that an "Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)" for addressing the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran had "never been closer", but urged media outlets to refrain from speculating about its contents until it was finalized. He said Iran would share all details with the public in due course, in what he called Tehran's responsible and transparent approach. U.S. President Donald Trump on Friday, June 12, 2026, accused Iran of carrying out a drone

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Iran Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

File Photo/ Credit: PTI

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Musk becomes world's first trillionaire as SpaceX shares jump

JUNE 12, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

Shares in Elon Musk's SpaceX jumped 11% to \$150 on their first day of trading Friday (June 12, 2026) after the biggest initial public offering in history, making the polarizing entrepreneur the world's first trillionaire as he vowed to take humanity to Mars.



SpaceX CEO, Elon Musk, speaks via video link on the day of SpaceX's initial public offering (IPO) at the Nasdaq MarketSite in New York City, U.S., on June 12, 2026.

Photo Credit: Reuters

The blockbuster operation, which raised more than \$75 billion, is expected to kick off a series of major IPOs by AI companies in the coming months. The debut on the Nasdaq exchange in New York capped weeks of investor frenzy over the rocket company turned AI and satellite conglomerate.

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Judge keeps order in place to remove Trump's name from Kennedy Centre



People gather outside the John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts as workers prepare to remove lettering from the facade, following a federal judge's order to remove U.S. President Donald Trump's name from the institution, in Washington, D.C., U.S., June 12, 2026. -Photo Credit: Reuters

JUNE 13, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

A federal judge in Washington on Friday, June 12, 2026, declined a request to temporarily pause an order to remove President Donald Trump's name from the Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts. U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper said he would not lift the order while a federal appeals court considers his ruling that

CONTD ON PAGE 48

Hyderabad-based Bharatanatyam dancer Rajeswari Sainath conferred with Sangeet Natak Akademi award

JUNE 12, 2026
HYDERABAD (TIP)



Rajeswari Sainath

It was an honor she never dreamed of, but Hyderabad-based Bharatanatyam dancer and guru Rajeswari Sainath was ecstatic when she heard that she was conferred with the Sangeet Natak Akademi award in the category of dance for the year 2024. The award will be presented to her by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.

"I learnt about it on Wednesday, June 10 around 9.30 p.m. when the list was announced and felt deeply satisfied," says the artiste who has been in the performing arts field for more than 50 years. Congratulatory messages from across the world have kept Rajeswari busy since morning.

CONTD ON PAGE 48

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EDITORIAL**AMERICA AT 250: A TIME FOR COMPASSION, NOT FEAR**

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

As America celebrates the 250th anniversary of its independence, it is appropriate to reflect not only on the nation's achievements but also on the values that have made it a beacon of hope for millions around the world.

America has long been known as the land of liberty, opportunity, and freedom. It is a nation built by immigrants. From the earliest European settlers to successive waves of newcomers from every continent, immigrants have helped shape the American story. They built railroads, tilled farms, established businesses, enriched culture, advanced science, and strengthened the economy. The American experiment itself is inseparable from the immigrant experience.

It is therefore troubling to witness the growing anxiety and unhappiness

among many Americans regarding the treatment of immigrants in recent years. Every sovereign nation has the right and indeed the obligation to secure its borders and enforce its laws. But the manner in which those laws are enforced matters. A nation is judged not merely by its power, but by its humanity.

America has traditionally drawn inspiration from values of compassion, charity, justice, and respect for human dignity. These values are deeply rooted in both the nation's founding ideals and the religious and moral traditions that have influenced its development. Virtues are meant to be practiced, not merely proclaimed.

Many immigrants came to America seeking the same things that generations before them sought: safety, opportunity, and a better future for their children.

They are not statistics. They are human beings. They are workers, parents, students, entrepreneurs, neighbors, and contributors to the life of the nation.

As the United States marks a quarter millennium of independence, it should also celebrate the diversity and vitality that immigrants have brought to the country. The promise of America has never been based on ancestry alone. It has been based on the belief that people from different backgrounds can come together under a common commitment to liberty, democracy, and equal opportunity.

The debate over immigration policy will continue, as it should in a democracy. Reasonable people may disagree on numbers, procedures, and enforcement mechanisms. But there should be no disagreement on the fundamental principle that every human being deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

America at 250 should send a message to the world that strength and compassion are not opposites. A nation can secure its borders while preserving its humanity. It can uphold the law while extending kindness. It can protect its interests without losing sight of its ideals.

The anniversary of American independence is more than a celebration of the past. It is an opportunity to reaffirm the values that have made America exceptional. Among those values is the belief that human dignity is universal.

Let America celebrate its 250th birthday not only with fireworks and parades, but also with a renewed commitment to justice, compassion, and the enduring promise that all who contribute to this nation can live in peace, security, and dignity.

READERS WRITE

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By June 15, 2026

Dear Sir,

Re: Your Editorial: America at 250: The Perils of Excessive Power (June 5 edition)

Your Editorial has really been a feast for the mind. You have beautifully compiled the real challenges the democracy of the United States of America is facing and the need for checks to balance the power of a frenzy president.

The fundamental problem in any society is that the majority of people simply "swim with the current." They are often apathetic toward the nation's future, morality, and constitutional conscience, focusing instead on their own vested interests.

The world is moving towards polarization and there is a big fraction of society, which likes such ideology. And as the institutions are also made from people within society, many of such institutions are manned by such people, who see an opportunity under such circumstances and exploit them for personal gain. Very few stand up to fight for the National Interest, Integrity and Pride.

Once again, please accept my sincere appreciation for such a beautifully articulated editorial.

Thanks and regards.

Ravi Nath Tandon

Bhopal, India

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'Paid for by Suozzi for Congress'

26 Indian Americans on Forbes list of top immigrants

Forbes published the list in the spirit of the country's 250th anniversary celebration

JUNE 11, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

Twenty-six Indian Americans have been featured on Forbes' inaugural "FORBES 250 America's Most Successful Immigrants" list, published June 10 to recognize immigrants who have shaped American business, innovation and society.

Forbes published the list in the spirit of the country's 250th anniversary celebration, ranking America's 250 greatest living immigrants and also looking at immigrants' impact as a whole on the nation.

VINOD KHOSLA

The first Indian American entrant on the list, 71-year-old Vinod Khosla came to the U.S. in 1976 and co-founded Sun Microsystems in 1982 before becoming one of Silicon Valley's most powerful venture capitalists.

NAVAL RAVIKANT

The 51-year-old co-founder of investment platform AngelList, Ravikant made early bets on Uber, Twitter and delivery service Postmates, which Uber acquired for \$2.7 billion in 2020.

HEMANT TANEJA

Founder of General Catalyst, the 50-year-old's portfolio of investments includes Stripe, social media platform Snap and defense firm Anduril.

SANJAY MEHROTRA

The CEO of Micron rode the computer memory boom to a trillion-dollar valuation as of early June. Prior to that, he founded memory chip giant SanDisk, which was acquired by Western Digital for \$19 billion in 2016. Mehrotra is 67 years old.

SUNDAR PICHAI

Fifty-three-year-old Pichai joined Google in 2004 to lead development of its Chrome browser. Its success helped him rise all the way to CEO in 2015.

ABHIJIT BANERJEE

Banerjee is the co-founder of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), which tests economic policy with randomized controlled trials. He won the Nobel Prize in economics in 2019 and is currently 65 years old.

PADMA LAKSHMI

Lakshmi is an American television host, model, author, entrepreneur and activist. The 55-year-old rose to prominence by hosting the Bravo cooking competition program "Top Chef." She came to the U.S. as a child in 1974.

SATYA NADELLA

Since taking the reins at Microsoft in 2014, the 58-year-old has guided the company toward cloud computing and AI while spearheading acquisitions of Activision Blizzard and LinkedIn.



Vinod Khosla, Naval Ravikant, Hemant Taneja and Sundar Pichai / Forbes

JAY CHAUDHRY

Chaudhry was born in a remote Himalayan village in India and moved to the U.S. in 1980 at age 22 for graduate studies at the University of Cincinnati. The 67-year-old is the founder, chairman and CEO of cloud security leader Zscaler.

ROMESH T. WADHWANI

Wadhvani is 78-year-old who moved to the U.S. in 1969 from India. He now serves as chairman of SymphonyAI and founder of SAIGroup, a private equity and software investor that has built dozens of tech companies.

KAVITARK RAM SHRIRAM

Shriram, 69, is an early Google investor, founding board member and venture capitalist via Sherpalo Ventures.

JYOTI BANSAL

The 48-year-old is a serial entrepreneur who first moved to the U.S. in 2000 at around age 23. She is the founder of AppDynamics, which she sold to Cisco for \$3.7 billion, and is the co-founder of Harness and Traceable.

NEHA NARKHEDE

Forty-one-year-old Narkhede co-founded data streaming platform Confluent, which was acquired by IBM in March for \$11 billion.

DAVID PAUL

Paul moved to the U.S. from India for a master's degree at Temple University in the early 1990s. The 59-year-old is the founder and executive chairman of Globus Medical, a spine implant and medical device manufacturer.

JITENDRA MOHAN

The 52-year-old moved to the U.S., after studying at IIT Bombay, for an MS at Stanford and is the co-founder and CEO of Astera Labs, an AI semiconductor networking

firm.

NIKESH ARORA

Arora has been active in the U.S. tech space since the 1990s and is currently the chairman and CEO of cybersecurity company Palo Alto Networks.

SHYAM SANKAR

Sankar, 44, is the CTO and EVP of Palantir Technologies. He joined the company as an early employee, the 13th employee to join, and gradually rose through its ranks over the years.

RAJ SARDANA

Sixty-six-year-old Sardana moved to the U.S. in 1981 for a master's degree in mechanical engineering at Georgia Tech and is the founder and CEO of Innova Solutions, an IT services and staffing firm.

AMAN NARANG

Forty-two-year-old Narang is the co-founder and CEO of Toast, a restaurant POS and management platform.

ARVIND KRISHNA

Sixty-four-year-old Krishna moved to the U.S. in the late 1980s and joined IBM in 1990. He is currently the chairman and CEO of IBM.

SHANTANU NARAYEN

Narayan, 63, moved to the U.S. in the 1980s for graduate studies. He holds an MS from Bowling Green and an MBA from UC Berkeley. Narayan is currently the chairman and CEO of Adobe.

K.R. SRIDHAR

The 65-year-old is the founder and CEO of Bloom Energy, a clean-energy fuel cell company.

PREMAL SHAH

Shah is the co-founder and president of microfinance firm Kiva and is now involved in impact investing and philanthropy.

RAKESH GANGWAL

Gangwal is a 70-year-old who moved to the U.S. for higher education. He is the co-founder of IndiGo airlines and is also an investor. He has also served as the CEO of US Airways Group.

RAJIV JAIN

The 60-year-old is the founder of global investment firm GQG Partners, which has more than \$162 billion in assets under management.

INDRA NOOYI

Seventy-year-old Nooyi moved to the U.S. in 1978 for an MBA at Yale and is the former CEO of PepsiCo, a board member of companies including Amazon, and a published author.

Indian American Agarwals donate \$5.5M to Sugar Land Hospital

The record gift to St. Luke's Health-Sugar Land Hospital will fund expanded clinical services and a new community clinic in the Houston suburb

JUNE 10, 2026
HOUSTON (TIP)

An Indian-American couple donated \$5.5 million to support healthcare services in Texas, marking the largest philanthropic gift ever made to St. Luke's Health-Sugar Land Hospital.

Brij Agrawal, an entrepreneur originally from Chhattisgarh, and his wife Sunita Agrawal made the donation to expand clinical programs at the hospital and help establish a new Primary Care Community Clinic in Sugar Land, a suburb of Houston.

The gift was announced by CommonSpirit Health Philanthropy and St. Luke's Foundation.

Jennifer Nicely, vice president of philanthropy for

CommonSpirit South Region, said the donation comes at an important time for the Houston healthcare market.

"This is an incredibly important gift at a critical time for our Houston St. Luke's Health market," Nicely said. "It's been inspiring to see the momentum of our Texas philanthropy team."

Hospital leaders said the investment will help expand access to care for residents, particularly underserved and underrepresented populations who often face barriers to obtaining consistent healthcare services.

"Brij and Sunita Agrawal's gift is truly unprecedented and will quite literally change the landscape of patient care for the Sugar Land community," said Al Seminsky,



The generous donors Brij and Sunita Agrawal / egr.uh.edu

associate vice president of philanthropy at Baylor St. Luke's Medical Center.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)



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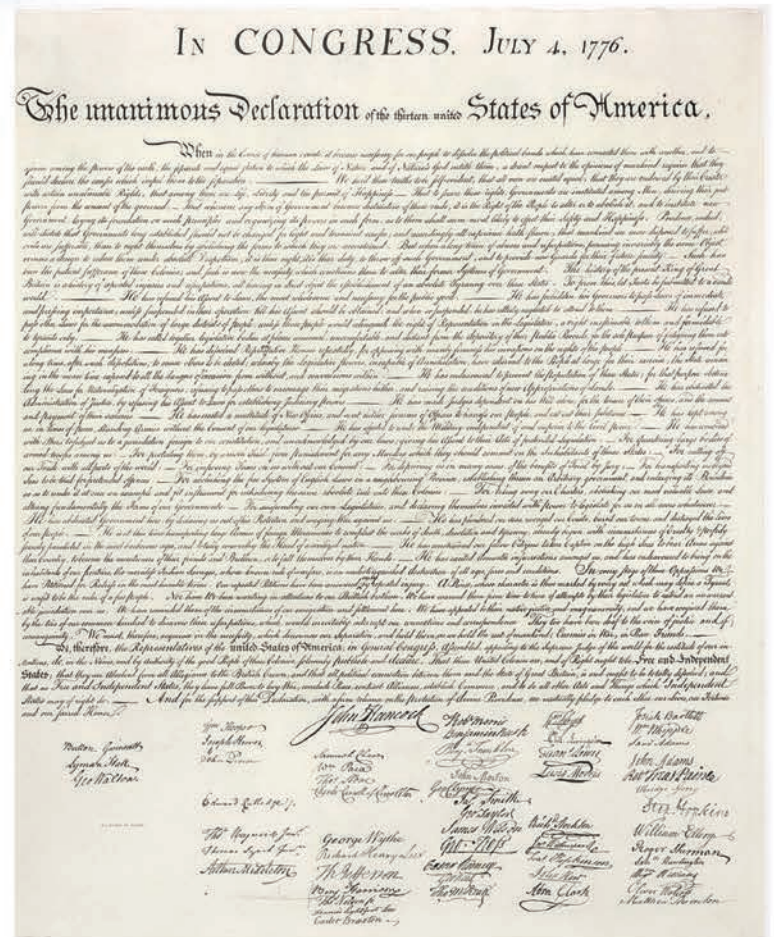
A Grand Commemorative Publication on America's Journey: 1776-2026

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:

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- Editorial comments and readers' reflections
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- Rare photographs, timelines, and archival material
- Greetings and advertisements from businesses, institutions, and community organizations

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Last date for submission:
June 10, 2026

AIA-NY Honors Seven Exceptional Individuals for Their Outstanding Contributions at a Benefit Gala



Honorees and AIA leadership -Photo / AIA-NY



Honoring Mr. Thomas P. DiNapoli, New York State Comptroller. L to R: Beena Kothari, Ravishankar Bhooplapur, Thomas P. DiNapoli, and Kanak Golia

**JUNE 11, 2026
QUEENS, NY (TIP)**

The New York chapter of the Association of Indians in America (AIA-NY) honored seven Indian-American professionals at its Annual Benefit Gala 2026 on June 7, recognizing their achievements in medicine, law, entrepreneurship, research and technology.

The organization described the seven individuals as "Ratnas," or jewels of the community, for their professional excellence, leadership and service.

The honorees included oncologist Dr. Dattatreya Nori, a Padma Bhushan recipient known for his contributions to cancer care; interventional cardiologist Dr. Sahil Khera of Mount Sinai Heart Hospital; entrepreneur and philanthropist Manish Dhadda; transplant nephrologist Dr. Aprajita Mattoo of NYU Langone Health; physician and community leader Dr. Jagat Rawal; attorney Jessica Kalra; and technology entrepreneur Pulkit Kini, currently pursuing an MBA at Harvard Business School.

Held at the iconic Terrace on the Park in Flushing, the gala drew more than 300 guests, including diplomats, elected officials, healthcare professionals, business leaders and community members from across the tri-state area.



Honoring Mr. Tsewang Gyaltsion, Consul, Community Affairs, Consulate General of India, New York. From L to R: Dr. Sameen Sharma, Mr. Tsewang Gyaltsion, Mr. Ravishankar Bookpaper, and Mrs. Beena Kothari

Several public officials and dignitaries including Mr. Tsewang Gyaltsion, Consul, Community Affairs from the Consulate General of India in New York and New York State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli participated, while State Sen. John C. Liu, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman and Suffolk County

Executive Edward P. Romaine sent their messages.

During the evening, AIA-NY also announced its 39th Deepavali Celebration and Live Fireworks Festival, scheduled for Oct. 3 at Overlook Beach in Babylon, Long Island.

AIA-NY president Beena Kothari



AIA-NY President Mrs. Beena Kothari giving her remarks. -Photos AIA-NY

thanked attendees, sponsors and volunteers, emphasizing the collective effort behind the organization's community initiatives. The gala concluded with a musical performance by New York-based singer Kunal Lamba.

"While I may stand at the podium, success is always the result of unwavering and unconditional support all along from my family and the Team working tirelessly behind the scenes," Kothari said.

Founded in 1967, AIA is the oldest national association of Indian Diaspora in the United States.



Senator John Liu

SENATOR JOHN LIU INVITES PUBLIC TO CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY TIME CAPSULE AS PART OF AMERICA 250 CELEBRATION

**JUNE 10, 2026
QUEENS, NY (TIP)**

State Senator John C. Liu is inviting New Yorkers to contribute their own mementos to a community time capsule in honor of America's 250th anniversary. The time capsule project aims to offer the public a chance to share their hopes and dreams for the future while sharing a snapshot of the present day.

Acceptable items are photos, artwork, letters, or other present-day memorabilia or messages to the future that convey the state of the world today and the community's hopes and aspirations for future generations. Contributions must be small in size (approximately the size of a deck of cards) and may be declined if they do

not meet size or material requirements. For more information, contact Senator Liu's office at 718-765-6675 or liu@nysenate.gov.

Community members will have the opportunity to contribute to the time capsule during Senator Liu's America 250 Celebration on June 28th at Francis Lewis High School at 1 p.m. The event will feature free food, live music, games, activities, historical reenactments, and will culminate with items being placed in the time capsule. Following the event, the time capsule will be moved to the Main Street, Flushing branch of the Queens Public Library, where it will be put on public display for the next 50 years and opened during the nation's tricentennial celebration on July 4, 2076.

State Senator John Liu stated, "If you could leave one message to the world 50 years from now, what would it be? Would it be a statement of hope? A piece of art? A letter to your grandchildren? On this 250th anniversary of our country's founding, we're asking our neighbors to reflect on how far we've come as Americans and to share what's possible for the future. This time capsule will preserve these hopes and dreams for the next 50 years and serve as a living record of our voices and values as Americans that will offer insights and wisdom to our fellow Americans celebrating the tricentennial in 2076. I invite everyone in our community to participate in this fun and meaningful, once-in-a-generation opportunity."

Tirlok Malik to Host International Happy Life Yoga 2026 in Association with GOPIO and the Consulate General of India in New York

Worldwide virtual Yoga Day celebration brings laughter, breath, wellness, Ayurveda-inspired wisdom, VIP guests, and global community together on Zoom. All are invited.

**JUNE 13, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)**

In celebration of International Yoga Day 2026, Emmy-nominated filmmaker and Happy Life Yoga Founder Tirlok Malik will host International Happy Life Yoga, a worldwide virtual wellness event on Saturday, June 20, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM EST on Zoom.

The event is presented in association with GOPIO, the Consulate General of India in New York, The Indian Panorama, and the Indian American Forum, bringing together community leaders, wellness voices, cultural ambassadors, media partners, and distinguished guests for an uplifting session centered on breath, laughter, light chair-based yoga, and simple reminders for a happier and healthier life.

Unlike traditional yoga sessions that may require mats, physical postures, or prior experience, Happy Life Yoga is designed to be accessible to all. Participants can join while seated in a chair and experience the power of conscious breathing, laughter, gentle movement, positive thinking, and practical wellness insights.

Hosted by Tirlok Malik, Happy Life Yoga has been shared widely across New York and beyond through workshops at major hospitals, community centers, corporate offices, government offices,

senior centers, and online platforms. Mr. Malik has relentlessly continued this work with the belief that happiness, breath, and laughter are not luxuries but essential tools for everyday wellbeing.

The program will be graced by Chief Guest Shri Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York. Special leadership presence includes Thomas Abraham, GOPIO Chairman, and Prakash Shah, GOPIO President.

The event will also feature an inspiring lineup of guest speakers and VIP participants, including Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Publisher of The Indian Panorama; Indu Jaiswal, Director of Nutrition, Promenade RHC; Meera Gandhi, Philanthropist; Beena Kothari, President, AIA; Rev. Paul Sladkus, Founder of Good News Corporation; Neha Lohia, Conscious Filmmaker; Anil Narang, Vegan Ambassador; Tara Sajan, Assistant Director of Nursing; Annmarie Bhola, Engineer and Author; Carolina Pretto, Ayurveda Expert; Megi Kurdadze, President of Powerful Management & Tech Center; and Victoria Moran, Author and Podcast Host.

At a time when stress, loneliness, anxiety, and mental health challenges are rising globally, the wisdom of breath, laughter, and mindful living has become more relevant than ever. Ayurveda and India's ancient wellness traditions have

long understood that the mind, body, breath, digestion, emotions, and daily habits are deeply connected. Laughter, in particular, supports emotional release, lightens the nervous system, creates connection, and reminds us that joy itself can be a form of healing.

International Happy Life Yoga 2026 will offer participants a warm, entertaining, and deeply human experience that blends India's wellness heritage with practical tools for modern life.

EVENT DETAILS:

International Happy Life Yoga 2026 with Tirlok Malik
Date: Saturday, June 20, 2026
Time: 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM EST, New York Time
Platform: Zoom
Zoom Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7095368686?pwd=c3J5UUdncDJYOExpR3ByTU14OXRZz09&omn=88284190252??>
Meeting ID: 709 536 8686
Passcode: gopio

ABOUT TIRLOK MALIK AND HAPPY LIFE YOGA

Tirlok Malik is an Emmy-nominated filmmaker, actor, wellness advocate,



Emmy-nominated filmmaker and Happy Life Yoga Founder Tirlok Malik

and founder of Happy Life Yoga. Through his accessible and uplifting approach, he has brought breath, laughter, positivity, and practical wellbeing tools to people across hospitals, community centers, corporations, government offices, senior groups, and virtual communities. Happy Life Yoga is rooted in the idea that happiness can be practiced through small daily choices, breath awareness, laughter, gratitude, and conscious living.

Mayor Mamdani's World Cup traffic game plan will convert 42nd Street into a shuttle and MTA bus corridor on match days

**JUNE 12, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)**

During the eight match days of the FIFA World Cup Final between next month and July, Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration will convert all of Manhattan's 42nd Street into an east-west corridor for shuttle buses to the games as well as MTA local buses.

The announcement is part of the Mamdani administration's broader transportation plan for each World Cup match day.

"Even as the eyes of the world turn to our city, our responsibility remains the same to make sure New Yorkers can still get where they need to go safely, affordably and without unnecessary disruption," the mayor said in a statement.

When it comes to buses, along with the changes to 42nd Street, the city plans to convert the two easternmost traffic lanes on 6th Avenue between 42nd and 59th Streets into shuttle bus and MTA bus lanes, while taking advantage of existing bus lanes on 5th Avenue between 42nd and 59th Streets.

West 40th Street between 8th and 11th Avenues, and West 41st Street between 8th and 10th Avenues, will also be dedicated exclusively for shuttle and local buses.

All of these street conversions will take effect six hours before each match, and end three hours afterward.

World Cup match days will have 'Gridlock Alert'

The changes are intended to speed up travel to and from the World Cup for ticket-holders headed to the games, without preventing other New Yorkers from getting around the city.

"This plan will also help ensure the vast majority of ticketholders will be able to get to matches seamlessly by mass transit, without driving or adding excessive congestion to our streets," said city Department of Transportation Commissioner Mike Flynn, in a statement.

The city will also designate each match day as a "Gridlock Alert Day" - when it expects Midtown traffic to be the most congested. On those days, it is encouraging New Yorkers to take public transit - particularly the subway, walk, or bike for non-essential travel.

It is also restricting truck deliveries between 30th and 60th Streets, spanning from the Hudson River to the East River, during matches. The limits will kick in six hours before the games begin and end three hours after.

(Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news)

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The SpaceX IPO made Musk a trillionaire. The old rules of capitalism no longer apply

BY ROBERT REICH



The economic principles taught in school aren't as relevant as hype, connections and total, arbitrary control

SpaceX went public on the Nasdaq on Friday, June 12.



Elon Musk is now the world's first trillionaire, after his SpaceX exploration and satellite company went public on the Nasdaq on Friday, June 12.

With shares priced at \$135 each, Musk's aerospace and satellite maker soared to an overall market valuation of approximately \$1.77tn - which raised Musk's net worth (which had already hovered at the astronomical \$813bn) into the \$1tn stratosphere.

What does this tell you about capitalism in this era? That it's no longer based on economic principles as they're taught in school - prices set by supply and demand. It's now based on hype, connections and total, arbitrary control.

First, the hype.

Musk priced SpaceX stock at roughly 100 times the company's total revenue in 2025. This is ballsy, to say the least, given SpaceX's consistent negative profitability and its failure to meet prior goals.

Granted, it's difficult to predict the value of activities that don't yet exist, such as SpaceX's stated mission to "extend the light of consciousness to the stars". Interstellar space travel and interplanetary habitation are inherently speculative endeavors.

But SpaceX's initial public offering is nothing more than a show of faith in Musk.

Much of SpaceX's "value" comes out of

a deal Musk negotiated between SpaceX and his artificial intelligence startup, xAI. Musk essentially made that deal with himself. A magic trick, out of thin air!

The closer you look at the SpaceX IPO, the more it looks like Musk's ill-fated Doge. It also bears a striking resemblance to Trump's takeover of the US government.

All of it is arbitrary - based on the hype and will of one man with a giant ego and an insatiable thirst for money and power. It's built on self-dealing. There's no accountability. No checks. No balances.

As to connections, look no further than Brendan Carr, the chair of the Federal Communications Commission. He's been a Musk booster from the start. In fact, Musk recommended him to Trump as the perfect leader for the agency.

Since then, Carr has approved regulatory requests for Elon Musk's SpaceX and its Starlink satellite internet - allowing Musk to gain control of two-thirds of all active satellites, more than 10,300, in low Earth orbit, and giving SpaceX dominance over global internet access and defense communications.

Even as Carr led the way to Musk's near monopoly on low-Earth orbit satellites, Carr also commenced an investigation into a rival satellite company, EchoStar, after Musk's company complained about it. Carr also threatened to revoke the broadcast

licenses of NBC and ABC over their unfavorable coverage of Trump.

Finally, Musk will have total control over SpaceX. Shareholders won't have any voice whatsoever. Each share held by Musk will have 10 times the voting power of a share offered to the public. SpaceX's board of directors will engage in a pantomime. They'll have no meaningful authority.

None of this would be of particular cause for concern if investors could decide for themselves whether the downside risks and potential upside gains from buying SpaceX stock were worth the price. That's called a "market". Caveat emptor.

But many of us, if not most of us, with any savings parked in major stock indices (yours truly included) won't have any choice. We'll invest in SpaceX whether we want to or not. That's because the major indices have been rigged.

Normally, major stock indices have a waiting period before they plow their investors' money into a newly formed company, in order to test whether that company is worth it. But SpaceX has lobbied index funds to change the rules.

On 1 May, for example, the Nasdaq 100 implemented a new "fast entry" rule that will include companies among the top 40 most highly valued companies - which will almost certainly include SpaceX just days from now.

Presto! A big chunk of Americans' retirement savings and pensions (as well as university endowments) will automatically be tied to SpaceX's market value. At the same time, all that automatic infusion of investment will artificially jack up the value of SpaceX, at least in the short term.

But here's the real kicker. SpaceX insiders will be able to sell their shares sooner than is usually the case with an IPO, because that's the way the SpaceX IPO has been organized.

This means they can enjoy the stocks' upward tide as the major indices force millions of investors to buy it, and then they can exit SpaceX before the tide goes out.

Musk is now a trillionaire, but a lot of innocent people could be shafted by this IPO, perhaps without their even noticing. It could be a huge redistribution from most of us to Elon and his buddies.

I don't want to sound cynical, but this is the sort of thing that brings out the cynicism in me. It's the story of rot at the core of American capitalism in this Second Gilded Age.

(Robert Reich, a former US secretary of labor, is a professor of public policy emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley. He is a Guardian US columnist and his newsletter is at robertreich.substack.com. His new book, *Coming Up Short: A Memoir of My America*, is out now in the US and in the UK)

Modi, Nehru & Rahul: Leadership matters

Regularly touring the country, meeting people at the grassroots, sharing meals with them, Rahul seems to be slowly developing the image of a popular leader

BY AJAY K
MEHRA



"The BJP's celebration of PM Modi surpassing Nehru, despite his victory in election after election, is far-fetched. We cannot forget that Nehru inherited a divided country, a ruptured social fabric and an empty treasury. He and his team, of which Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an integral part, proceeded to build a violence-torn nation brick by brick. They bound the dissimilar regions and communities of the country by the thread of a nationhood that barely existed. Factories, educational institutions, dams, institutions of governance and his insistence that India would be a full-fledged democracy was unprecedented - notice, that hardly any other nation that shed the colonial yoke followed India's example. He built a foreign policy, the touchstone of which was the Non-Aligned Movement."

Even as author and analyst Ramachandra Guha stirred a hornet's nest by demolishing Rahul Gandhi, a fourth generation scion of the Nehru-Gandhi family, as incapable of challenging Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a recent article and TV show, the day has arrived when the PM - whose party has often used the comparison with Jawaharlal Nehru as a yardstick - surpassed Nehru as the longest serving prime minister of India.

Nehru, who ruled democratically from 1952-1964, was in power for 4398 days. On June 10, Modi completed 4399 days of his premiership. But there was no word from the BJP about counting the days since August 1947, when India became independent, to 1952, when the results of the first election came out in which the Congress, and Nehru himself, had won a huge victory.

Nehru and his great grandson can be compared with each other in two very different ways. Nehru was PM for almost 17 years; Rahul was an MP for 20 years, when in 2024 he became the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha.

In Guha's assessment, Rahul Gandhi 'lacks gravitas' (endorsing the Pappu and Rahul Baba taxonomy); 'lacks a CV for a claim to India's premiership'; 'his only



Most damaging to Rahul's image was the hostile 'Pappu' campaign launched by the BJP. -Photo / PTI

claim to fame is his Nehru-Gandhi lineage'; 'lacks Modi's charisma (and) instead of stating his constructive agenda, makes personal attacks on Modi'; under his leadership the Congress has been losing elections since 2014, and has shrunk both in legislative bodies both at the national and state levels as well as on the ground. The party, Guha adds, has become a 'family firm' and is completely out of breath to reach the goalpost. All these characteristics, he says, only display Rahul's political incompetence with no capacity for hard work.

I believe that Guha's objectivity is seriously in question. An analysis of political developments in the country since 2009 is completely missing. Can he say, with authority, that PM Modi possesses all the qualities he has declared Rahul Gandhi lacks?

Rahul won the 2004 Lok Sabha elections from Amethi by 300,000 votes - a seat he retained in 2009 - and declined PM Manmohan Singh's invitation to join his Cabinet. He remained a reticent backbencher in Lok Sabha for nearly a decade and was only noticed for his controversial public trashing of his own government's ordinance to protect convicted lawmakers from immediate disqualification on September 27, 2013, at the Press Club of India. In 2019 when the Congress lost for the second time, party president Mallikarjun Kharge resigned as party president and took the blame, although it was widely known that Rahul had called the shots.

The most damaging to Rahul's image since 2014 was the hostile 'Pappu' campaign launched against him by the BJP. However, after taking over as LoP following the 2024 election, when the party won 99 Lok Sabha seats, his image began changing. The Bharat Jodo Yatra in 2022-23 and the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in 2024 helped mitigate the impact of the 'Pappu' campaign, on which Rahul

alleged the BJP spent Rs 2 crore. But the BJP's derision, right from the top leadership, continued.

As Rahul began raising issues by assertively leading discussions in the Lok Sabha, he was disqualified from his membership of the House in March 2023. The Supreme Court reinstated him in August. This incident of his expulsion also reflects the partisanship of the presiding officers of Parliament.

Regularly touring the country, meeting people at the grassroots, sharing meals with them, Rahul seems to be slowly developing the image of a popular leader. With his white T-shirt and jeans, he has adopted simple middle class attire. As LoP he participates in policy debates in Lok Sabha - the PM mostly attends when he has to speak himself. However, given the weaknesses of the Congress at the organizational, multi-level leadership pool, Rahul needs to build the party organization, leadership, cadre and bases in states.

As Modi overtakes Nehru on the longest-serving PM parameter and consolidates his party's hold on India's politics, Rahul Gandhi, two years ago, managed to dent the PM and BJP's invincible image by leading the Congress in the 2024 election limiting the NDA from reaching an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha.

The BJP's victory in several states - Haryana, Maharashtra, Delhi, Bihar and West Bengal - has called Rahul's leadership into question. Party insiders point to several faulty decisions. They believe he must be open to suggestions of grassroots leaders in framing party strategies. The recent decision of the party to end the long-time association with the DMK in Tamil Nadu shows that he does not value old alliances.

Back in 2001, RSS swayamsevak Narendra Modi was rewarded by then Deputy Prime Minister Lal Krishna Advani with the chief ministerial chair

in Gujarat for facilitating his rath yatra. However, within his first four months in office, Modi had to face his first major test as a leader when brutal riots broke out in the aftermath of the burning of the Sabarmati Express. About a thousand people were killed in the violence that followed, in the wake of which then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee's advice to Modi to follow 'rajdharm' will go down in history.

I will argue that the BJP's celebration of PM Modi surpassing Nehru, despite his victory in election after election, is far-fetched. We cannot forget that Nehru inherited a divided country, a ruptured social fabric and an empty treasury. He and his team, of which Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was an integral part, proceeded to build a violence-torn nation brick by brick. They bound the dissimilar regions and communities of the country by the thread of a nationhood that barely existed. Factories, educational institutions, dams, institutions of governance and his insistence that India would be a full-fledged democracy was unprecedented - notice, that hardly any other nation that shed the colonial yoke followed India's example. He built a foreign policy, the touchstone of which was the Non-Aligned Movement. He turned down luxury - in 1958, at the age of 69, his 10-day journey to Bhutan by vehicle, trekking and on mules is an example never followed.

The great grandfather stood tall despite challenges all around; his great grandson is still taking baby steps under adversity of a different kind. But Guha's analysis shows that India is being failed by its intelligentsia too. Rahul Gandhi's efforts may not be perfect, but they are sincere.

(Ajay K Mehra is a political scientist and Visiting Senior Fellow, Centre for Multilevel Federalism. His X handle is @AjaykmehtaK)

Religious Freedom, Reciprocity, and the Future of India's Democratic Promise

BY GEORGE
ABRAHAM



"The United States may reasonably ask whether the openness it extends to visiting religious leaders is being reciprocated elsewhere. More importantly, India itself may benefit from reflecting on whether such restrictions enhance or diminish the democratic values it seeks to uphold. The Indian diaspora, too, would serve both itself and its homeland well by taking a principled stand in favor of religious freedom and equal treatment for all not only in their adopted countries, but also in the motherland. Such consistency would lend greater moral credibility to their advocacy and reinforce the universal values they seek to defend. A confident democracy does not fear peaceful religious discourse; it protects individuals' right to express their beliefs, even when those beliefs may be unpopular or controversial."

There have been persistent reports of attacks on religious minorities in various parts of India, with many human rights organizations, church groups, and civil society activists expressing concern over what they describe as the growing influence of Hindutva organizations and the perceived inadequacy of official responses. These concerns extend beyond isolated incidents of violence and raise broader questions about the protection of constitutional rights, particularly the freedoms of religion, expression, and association guaranteed to all citizens since India became a republic.

In recent years, Christians have increasingly found themselves among the communities most affected by these developments. Reports from numerous states have documented incidents of harassment, intimidation, disruption of worship services, vandalism of churches and Christian institutions, arrests and detention of pastors and church leaders under various legal provisions, and social and economic discrimination. In some cases, Christian families have reportedly faced exclusion from their villages, denial of employment opportunities, restrictions on access to community resources, and pressure to abandon their faith. There have also been allegations of violent assaults and even killings linked to religious tensions, although the circumstances and motivations behind such incidents often remain contested.

Moreover, another development has deeply concerned several Christian organizations, particularly within the Christian diaspora in the United States. Authorities in Kerala reportedly prevented a few distinguished religious leaders of Indian origin from addressing religious conferences in the state. These individuals were born in India, later became naturalized U.S. citizens, and hold Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) status.

For many observers, the incident raises broader questions about the state of democratic freedoms and religious liberty in India. Particularly troubling is the perception that such actions may run counter to the spirit of religious pluralism that has long been one of the nation's defining strengths. The Indian Constitution guarantees the right to freely profess, practice, and propagate one's faith. When members of any religious community feel restricted or marginalized because of



Religious freedom under siege in India

their beliefs, concerns naturally arise about the functioning of democratic institutions and the equal application of the law.

However, it is equally important to examine the other side of the equation when discussing the treatment of religious leaders across national boundaries. The United States has historically maintained a broad commitment to religious freedom and has generally welcomed religious leaders from around the world, including India, regardless of their faith tradition. Through mechanisms such as R-1 religious worker visas, Hindu priests, spiritual leaders, and religious workers are regularly permitted to serve in temples and related institutions throughout the United States. In addition, numerous religious figures from India routinely travel to America on visitor visas to address public gatherings, conferences, and religious events.

Notably, even individuals whose public statements have generated significant controversy and have been criticized for promoting divisive rhetoric have, at various times, been granted entry into the United States. Figures such as Sadhvi Ritambhara and Sasikala Teacher have been able to travel, speak, and publicly advocate their controversial views before American audiences. Whether one agrees with their message or not, the fact remains that they were afforded the opportunity to express their beliefs under the protections guaranteed by a democratic society committed to freedom of speech and religious expression.

It is against this backdrop that many members of the Indian diaspora are evaluating recent developments in India. They ask a simple but important question: Is it fair that individuals born in India who continue to maintain Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) status and retain deep cultural and familial ties to their homeland be denied the opportunity to address religious gatherings in the country of their birth? Is there a consistent principle being applied, or are different standards being imposed depending on the religious affiliation of the speaker?

These questions become even more pressing when viewed through the broader lens of reciprocity and international engagement. India rightly seeks greater global mobility for its citizens, advocates for easier travel arrangements, and consistently presses for expanded opportunities such as H-1B visas and other pathways for Indians to live and work abroad. Such aspirations are understandable and legitimate in an increasingly interconnected world. Yet many observers argue that a nation seeking openness and accommodation from others must also demonstrate a comparable commitment to openness within its own borders.

The concern expressed by many in the diaspora is not

merely about visa policy or administrative discretion. Rather, it is about the principles that underpin a democratic society. When religious leaders are prevented from speaking solely because of their religious identity, institutional affiliation, or perceived viewpoints, it raises broader concerns about freedom of expression, religious liberty, and equal treatment under the law. These concerns are amplified when the individuals involved are not foreign strangers, but persons born in India who maintain a continuing legal and emotional connection to the country through OCI status.

India's Constitution enshrines the principles of religious freedom, equality before the law, and secular governance. The nation's global reputation has long rested on its pluralistic traditions and its remarkable ability to accommodate people of diverse faiths, cultures, and viewpoints. It is therefore reasonable to ask whether actions that restrict religious speech or selectively limit participation in public religious life are fully consistent with those constitutional ideals.

Perhaps the time has come for a thoughtful reassessment. The United States may reasonably ask whether the openness it extends to visiting religious leaders is being reciprocated elsewhere. More importantly, India itself may benefit from reflecting on whether such restrictions enhance or diminish the democratic values it seeks to uphold. The Indian diaspora, too, would serve both itself and its homeland well by taking a principled stand in favor of religious freedom and equal treatment for all not only in their adopted countries, but also in the motherland. Such consistency would lend greater moral credibility to their advocacy and reinforce the universal values they seek to defend. A confident democracy does not fear peaceful religious discourse; it protects individuals' right to express their beliefs, even when those beliefs may be unpopular or controversial.

At its core, this debate is not about privilege or special treatment. It is about fidelity to constitutional principles and the equal protection of fundamental rights. The ability of an individual to speak peacefully in the land of his or her birth should not depend upon religious affiliation, political considerations, or ideological preference. Ultimately, the strength of a democracy is measured not by how it treats the majority, but by how faithfully it safeguards the rights, freedoms, and dignity of all its people. The preservation of India's democratic character and pluralistic heritage depends upon that commitment.

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



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HEALTH IS WEALTH

Yoga now part of daily US life: Ambassador Kwatra

JUNE 10, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

As preparations gather pace for the 12th International Day of Yoga across the United States, India's Ambassador to the U.S. Vinay Mohan Kwatra has said yoga has become so deeply embedded in American society that "pretty much in every street" one can find a yoga studio, underscoring the growing global appeal of what he described as "a great treasure of our civilizational heritage".

"If you walk around in Washington, DC, indeed anywhere in the United States it would be a very common site for you to come across a yoga studio pretty much in every street," Kwatra told IANS ahead of nationwide celebrations marking the International Day of Yoga.

From Washington's Lincoln Memorial to New York's Times Square and Chicago's Navy Pier, Indian diplomatic missions across the U.S. are preparing for large-scale public events under the theme "Yoga for Healthy Ageing", highlighting yoga's role in promoting physical mobility, mental well-being and healthy lifestyles.

The Indian Embassy in Washington will host its flagship celebration at the Lincoln Memorial on June 19. Inviting the public to participate, the Embassy said: "Join us for the largest yoga session of the year!"

Kwatra said the annual observance reflects the worldwide acceptance of an

ancient Indian tradition that has steadily expanded far beyond its place of origin.

"The International Day of Yoga was decided upon by the UN through a resolution in 2014 whereby they declared 21st of June as the International Day of Yoga. It was a singular initiative driven by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, which was supported by 175 countries who supported the passage of this resolution," he said.

Describing yoga as one of India's enduring contributions to the world, the ambassador said: "Yoga is not just one of the ancient traditions of Bharat. It is also a great treasure of our civilizational heritage."

He added: "Prime Minister Modi himself has said that yoga is an invaluable gift from our ancient tradition."

According to Kwatra, yoga's lasting appeal lies in its ability to connect different dimensions of human life.

"It's a heritage. It's a tradition which has this unique ability to bring together a very harmonious convergence of your body, with your mind, with your thought, and all three, with your soul," he said.

He said that deeper connection explains why yoga continues to gain followers across the world.

"It is perhaps for this reason that it connects to somewhere very deep inside a human being and through that connection, and it's probably because of

that connection that yoga transcends borders. It is universally adopted and very widely practiced across all cultures and beliefs," Kwatra said.

Linking this year's observance to the global theme, he said: "This year's International Day of Yoga theme is Yoga for Healthy Aging. Clearly recognizes yoga as a path for vitality, resilience, and having, generally a good holistic health."

A major attraction of this year's celebrations will be the participation of Padma Shri H.R. Nagendra, the Bengaluru-based yoga scholar widely recognized as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's yoga mentor.

Nagendra is scheduled to lead and attend major Yoga Day engagements in New York, including the Times Square gathering on June 21 that has become one of the world's most visible Yoga Day events.

The Consulate General of India in New York is partnering with the Times Square Alliance for the annual "Mind Over Madness Yoga" program. The session will be led by Ruchika Lal of the Art of Living Foundation, while Nagendra will participate as chief guest.

The International Day of Yoga was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 2014, after India proposed a resolution that received support from a record 175 member states. June 21 was selected because it marks the summer solstice,



Kwatra said the annual observance reflects the worldwide acceptance of an ancient Indian tradition that has steadily expanded far beyond its place of origin.

TIP File Photo

the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.

Since the first observance in 2015, Yoga Day has evolved into one of India's most successful global cultural initiatives. Millions of people now participate annually in events organized by governments, community groups, schools, universities, and wellness organizations around the world, making yoga one of the country's most visible expressions of soft power and civilizational outreach.

(Source: IANS)

Los Angeles City Councilmember Nithya Raman clinches spot in LA mayoral runoffs



Nithya Raman, a former close aide and supporter of incumbent Mayor Bass, is now gearing up for the Nov. 3 runoff election.

Photo / Wikimedia commons

JUNE 9, 2026
LOS ANGELES (TIP)

Indian-origin LA mayoral candidate Nithya Raman has secured her spot in the upcoming November runoff election after finishing second in the mayoral primary.

Raman, who was trailing both incumbent Mayor Karen Bass, who is still holding the top position, and TV host Spencer Pratt when the votes were counted on Election Day, experienced a dramatic momentum shift once the mail-in ballots started being counted.

The race was called in Raman's favor by both The Associated Press and CNN late on June 8.

As the standings are right now, Bass leads with 34.4% of the vote, and Raman is trailing with 28.5%. The two Democrats will now advance to face off in November in a Democrats-only finale

after defeating Pratt, the top GOP candidate.

Accepting the mandate, Raman said on X, "I'm incredibly honored that voters have given us the opportunity to advance to the general election for mayor of Los Angeles."

She continued, "Now our fight for a healthier, safer, more affordable, and more joyful Los Angeles continues. For too long, City Hall has prioritized giving political advantage to powerful interests that fund elections. Meanwhile, working people pay the price in higher rents, depleted services, and a city that has stopped working for them."

Raman, a former close aide and supporter of incumbent Mayor Bass, is now gearing up for the Nov. 3 runoff election.

Raman has attacked Bass' policies on multiple fronts since announcing her candidacy. She criticized the existing homelessness strategies, including Bass' "Inside Safe" program, calling for changes in spending and approach.

She has also decried the sitting mayor's positions and policies on housing, cost of living and crime, among other issues.

Raman is an urban planner by training and a homelessness activist. She became the first woman sworn in to the LA City Council in 2022. She holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in urban planning from Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Foreign policy analyst Sumantra Maitra Appointed as a Washington Fellow

Maitra is best known for developing the concepts of "Dormant NATO" and burden shifting within the alliance

JUNE 9, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

The Institute for Peace & Diplomacy has appointed geopolitical analyst Dr. Sumantra Maitra as a Washington fellow.

In his new role, Maitra will work to advance U.S. grand strategy and the future of the world order from a realist perspective, both as a scholar and editorial manager, noted Arta Moeini, managing director of the Institute for Peace & Diplomacy.

Moeini said on X, "Very happy to announce that my friend, first-rate mind, and fellow realist Dr. Sumantra Maitra has joined The Institute for Peace & Diplomacy as a Washington Fellow in residence."

Dr. Maitra is also an elected fellow of the Royal Historical Society and a senior fellow at the Center for Renewing America.

His research and academic work have appeared in leading publications, including Foreign Affairs, American Affairs, International Affairs, Political Studies Review, the Canadian Military Journal and the Centre for Land Warfare Studies Journal.

Announcing the appointment, the institute said on X, "The Institute for Peace & Diplomacy is pleased to welcome Dr. Sumantra Maitra as a Washington Fellow."

It added, "Dr. Maitra is an elected fellow of the @RoyalHistSoc and a senior fellow at the @amrenewctr. He is known for coining the doctrine 'Dormant NATO'



Sumantra Maitra's appointment poster

Pic / The Institute for Peace & Diplomacy

and burden shifting within NATO."

Sharing the post, Maitra remarked that he was "delighted" to be a new Washington fellow for the institute.

Maitra is best known for developing the concepts of "Dormant NATO" and burden shifting within the alliance.

He is the author of the book *The Sources of Russian Aggression* and holds a master's degree in international studies from the University of Otago in New Zealand, where he received a Coursework Masters Scholarship and graduated with distinctions in international politics and global trade and macroeconomics.

He later completed his doctorate in international relations at the University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom as a recipient of the Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship for Research Excellence.

The Institute for Peace & Diplomacy is a North American nonpartisan foreign policy think tank dedicated to promoting sustainable peace through diplomacy, dialogue and constructive engagement.

US judge strikes down Trump's H-1B fee

JUNE 9, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

A federal judge struck down President Donald Trump's controversial \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visa petitions, ruling that the administration exceeded its authority and imposed what amounted to an unlawful tax without approval from Congress.

In a major setback for the administration's immigration agenda, US District Judge Leo T. Sorokin of Massachusetts sided with a coalition of 20 states challenging the policy and vacated it nationwide.

"The Court finds that the Policy imposes a tax on H-1B petitions without the requisite delegation by Congress," Sorokin wrote. "There are no statutory powers authorizing Defendants to implement a \$100,000 tax on H-1B petitions."

The ruling overturns a September 2025 presidential proclamation that required employers filing new H-1B petitions to make an additional \$100,000 payment. The administration had argued that the H-1B programme was being exploited to replace American workers and suppress wages in key sectors, particularly science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields.

The states contended that the measure would make it significantly more difficult

for public schools, universities and healthcare systems to recruit skilled foreign professionals, worsening existing staffing shortages. The court agreed that the policy threatened to impede hiring in education, academic research and healthcare.

Sorokin rejected the administration's argument that broad presidential powers under immigration law allowed the fee to be imposed as a condition of entry into the United States.

"While the Executive has broad discretion over the admission and exclusion of aliens, . . . that discretion is not boundless," the judge wrote. He added that such discretion "may not transgress constitutional limitations" or "the statutory authority conferred by Congress."

At the center of the case was whether the fee was a legitimate immigration restriction or an unauthorized tax. Sorokin concluded it was the latter.

"Taxes are not 'restrictions,'" he wrote while rejecting the government's interpretation of presidential powers under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

The judge said Congress had never delegated its taxing authority to the President through the immigration statutes cited by the administration.

"These considerations preclude reading INA §§ 212(f) and 215(a) as delegating Congress's exclusive power to tax," Sorokin wrote.

Beyond the constitutional issues, the court found that federal agencies violated the Administrative Procedure Act by implementing the policy without following the required notice-and-comment rulemaking process.

"Defendants issued a legislative rule without engaging in notice-and-comment rulemaking," the ruling said.

The court also found the policy arbitrary and capricious, saying agencies failed to adequately explain the unprecedented increase in costs imposed on employers.

"The administrative record is devoid of any indication that Defendants reasonably considered the relevant issues and reasonably explained the decision to implement a \$100,000 tax on H-1B petitions," Sorokin wrote.

As a remedy, the judge declared the policy unlawful and vacated all agency actions implementing the payment requirement.

"The Policy implementing the Proclamation is declared unlawful and is VACATED in its entirety," the ruling said.

The H-1B programme allows US employers to hire foreign professionals in



President Donald Trump
File photo

specialty occupations requiring highly specialized knowledge and at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent.

Congress currently caps most new H-1B visas at 65,000 annually, with an additional 20,000 reserved for holders of advanced US degrees. Universities, affiliated non-profit institutions and certain research organizations are exempt from those annual limits.

(Source: IANS)

Trump moves to strip Caribbean nationals of US citizenship



Acting U.S. Attorney General Todd Blanche

JUNE 12, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

President Donald J. Trump's Department of Justice (DOJ) moved to strip citizenship from 17 individuals, including Caribbean nationals, accused of crimes ranging from sex abuse of a minor to drug distribution.

Among those Trump plans to strip of US citizenship are nationals of Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The others are nationals of Mexico, Colombia, Yugoslavia, India, Somalia, China, Congo, and the Philippines.

The DOJ said that, under the Immigration and Nationality Act, a naturalized US citizen's citizenship may be revoked, and certificate of naturalization canceled, if the naturalization was illegally procured or procured by concealment of a material fact or by willful misrepresentation.

"When criminal aliens exploit the naturalization process by breaking the law, there are consequences. Criminal aliens are lying about their past crimes, including drug dealers, sexual predators, and fraudsters," said Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche.

"Gaining US citizenship is a privilege and, under the steadfast leadership of President Trump, this Department of Justice maintains a zero-tolerance policy for the abuse of this process.

"We continue to work around the clock with our interagency partners to make sure US citizenship is granted to those who truly deserve it," he added.

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Markwayne Mullin said: "American citizenship is a privilege, and it must be earned honestly.

"If you come here break our laws, and lie in your immigration proceedings, you forfeit that privilege," he added. "DHS will not stand idly by while Americans are harmed by criminals including sex offenders, perpetrators of fraud, and drug traffickers who have exploited our generosity and gamed our immigration system. We will continue to use every lawful avenue to denaturalize and remove aliens."

The Caribbean nationals Trump plans to strip of US Citizenship, according to the DOJ, are: Leidys Delmas Garcia, 54, a native of Cuba who was convicted of conspiracy to commit health care fraud; Jean Claude Alfred, 68, a native of Haiti who sexually abused his minor daughter; Talman Harris, 49, a native of Jamaica who conspired to manipulate the price and volume of stock shares; Federico Michel Fermin, 54, a native of the Dominican Republic who conspired with others to distribute more than US\$1.7 million in prescription drugs without a license.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Comptroller Lierman Joins Coalition of 13 State Financial Officers Urging SpaceX to Strengthen Governance Ahead of IPO

JUNE 11, 2026
ANNAPOLIS, MD. (TIP)

Maryland State Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman joined a coalition of 13 state financial and investment officers led by the Council of Institutional Investors (CII), urging Space Exploration Technologies Corp. (SpaceX) to adopt stronger corporate governance protections ahead of its proposed initial public offering.

Addressed to SpaceX Founder, Chief Executive Officer, and Chairman Elon Musk and the company's Board of Directors, the letter warns that the governance structure outlined in SpaceX's public offering documents would significantly limit the ability of Class A public investors to hold the board and management accountable. The Council of Institutional Investors is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association of U.S. asset owners and related members with approximately \$5.2 trillion in combined assets under management.

"Maryland's retirees and public employees are counting on us to protect their financial future, and that means demanding the same accountability from SpaceX that we expect from every company in our portfolio," said Comptroller Lierman. "A governance structure that concentrates control in one individual while sidelining public shareholders isn't innovation; it's a red flag. We will always use our voice as



Maryland State Comptroller Brooke E. Lierman

investors to push for transparency and accountability that long-term value depends on."

Among the governance provisions disclosed in SpaceX's amended Form S-1/A, the signatories highlight a dual-class share structure in which Class B shares would carry 10 votes per share compared to one vote for each Class A share. Additional concerns include a separate Class B right to elect and

remove 51 percent of the board, controlled-company exemptions from board and committee independence standards, mandatory arbitration and class-action waiver provisions, and limits on shareholder litigation and proposal rights tied to the company's reincorporation in Texas.

The letter calls on SpaceX to go to market with a single class of voting stock or, at a minimum, adopt a time-based sunset provision that would convert the company to a one share, one vote structure within a reasonable period. It further urges SpaceX to establish a substantially independent board, remove mandatory arbitration and class-action waiver provisions, preserve shareholders' ability to bring meritorious legal claims and submit proposals, and adopt stronger procedures governing conflicts of interest and related-party transactions.

(Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news)

Ambassador of India to Romania and Moldova Visits Chisinau to Strengthen India-Moldova Partnership



Ambassador & Mr. Karan Gupta met H.E. Ms. Corina Calugaru, State Secretary, MFA Moldova



Ambassador met with H.E. Mr. Alexandru Munteanu Prime Minister of Moldova



Ambassador met with Deputy Mayor of Chisinau, Mr. Victor Pruteanu

**JUNE 7, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

The Ambassador of India to Romania, concurrently accredited to the Republic of Moldova, visited Chi?in?u on 4 June 2026 and held a series of high-level meetings with senior Moldovan leaders and municipal authorities aimed at further strengthening bilateral relations and exploring new avenues of cooperation.

The Ambassador called on H.E. Mr. Alexandru Munteanu, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova. Discussions focused on enhancing economic cooperation and expanding engagement in areas such as infrastructure development, transport, logistics, energy, digital transformation, innovation, and investment. The Ambassador highlighted India's expertise and experience in these sectors and conveyed the interest of Indian companies in contributing to Moldova's development priorities. Both sides exchanged views on promoting business-to-business partnerships and fostering greater economic cooperation.

During the visit, the Ambassador also met H.E. Ms. Corina Calugaru, State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Moldova. The discussions reviewed the positive trajectory of India-Moldova relations and explored opportunities to deepen cooperation in trade, investment, connectivity, education, capacity building, and cultural exchanges. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining regular political dialogue and agreed to work towards holding the next round of India-Moldova Foreign Office Consultations at an early date.

The Ambassador further met Mr. Victor Pruteanu, Deputy Mayor of Chi?in?u, to discuss opportunities for strengthening cooperation between Indian and Moldovan cities. The discussions covered cultural and community initiatives, including forthcoming celebrations of the International Day of Yoga and India's Independence Day. The Ambassador highlighted opportunities under the Indian Technical and

Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme and discussed the possibility of future exchanges and the visit of Mayor-led delegation to Indian cities to share best practices in urban governance, smart city development, sustainable mobility, and municipal infrastructure management.

The visit reaffirmed the growing warmth and dynamism of India-Moldova relations and underscored the shared commitment of both countries to expanding cooperation across political, economic, developmental, and cultural domains. India remains committed to working closely with the Republic of Moldova to build a stronger and forward-looking partnership based on mutual respect, shared interests, and common aspirations for prosperity and sustainable development.

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

Ambassador of India's visit to Iasi promotes India-Romania Economic Cooperation and Regional Connectivity

**JUNE 8, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

The Ambassador of India to Romania, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, visited Iasi on 3 June 2026 and held a series of high-level engagements with local and regional authorities aimed at strengthening India-Romania economic cooperation, promoting investment opportunities, and exploring collaboration in infrastructure, energy, and regional connectivity.

The Ambassador, accompanied by Mr. Karan Gupta, Managing Director of Mahavir Group, met Mr. Mihai Chirica, Mayor of Iasi. Discussions focused on opportunities for Indian participation in infrastructure development, including railways, highways, logistics, energy, and sustainable urban development projects. Particular attention was given to the growing importance of Iasi as a regional hub and gateway for connectivity initiatives linking Romania and the Republic of Moldova.

The Ambassador highlighted India's expertise in infrastructure development, engineering, renewable energy, digital public services, and smart city solutions, and conveyed the interest of Indian companies in contributing to the region's development priorities. The Mayor welcomed closer engagement with Indian businesses and emphasized the city's commitment to facilitating investment and economic cooperation.

The Ambassador also highlighted opportunities available under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, India's flagship capacity-building initiative. The two sides discussed the potential for greater participation of municipal officials



Ambassador & Mr. Karan Gupta met H.E. Mr. Mihai Chirica of Iasi to discuss investment opportunities.

from Ia?i in professional training programs in India, as well as the possibility of future exchanges in areas such as urban governance, sustainable mobility, digitalization, and municipal services.

In a separate meeting, the Ambassador and Mr. Gupta held discussions with Mr. Constantin Dolachi-Pelin, Prefect of Ia?i County, and Mr. Marius Sorin Dang? and Mr. Sorin Alexandru Afloarei, Vice Presidents of the Ia?i County Council. The discussions focused on regional development priorities, cross-border infrastructure projects, energy cooperation, logistics, and investment opportunities.

Both sides exchanged views on strengthening business-to-business engagement and encouraging greater



Ambassador & Mr. Karan Gupta met Hon'ble Prefect Constantin Dolachi Pelin and Hon'ble VPs Marius Sorin Danga & Sorin Alexandru Afloarei of Iasi County Council.

participation of Indian companies in infrastructure and development projects in the region. They also emphasized the importance of continued institutional dialogue and cooperation in identifying new areas of mutual interest.

The engagements in Iasi reflected the growing momentum in India-Romania relations and underscored the shared commitment of both sides to expanding economic cooperation, enhancing regional connectivity, and fostering partnerships that contribute to sustainable growth and prosperity.

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

Visit of India's Ambassador in Romania to Craiova and Slatina highlights India-Romania friendship and growing economic cooperation

JUNE 7, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)

The Ambassador of India to Romania visited Craiova on 5 June 2026 and Slatina on 6 June 2026, holding a series of engagements aimed at strengthening India-Romania ties through people-to-people connections, economic cooperation, and partnerships with regional authorities.

In Craiova, the Ambassador attended a special ceremony hosted by the Municipality of Craiova to honor Mr. Vipin Kumar, an Indian national who courageously rescued a five-year-old Romanian girl from the frozen waters of Front Lake earlier this year. In recognition of his exceptional bravery and selfless act, Mr. Kumar was conferred the title of Honorary Citizen of Craiova by H.E. Ms. Lia-Olguta Vasilescu, Mayor of Craiova.

Addressing the gathering, the Ambassador commended Mr. Kumar's courage and noted that his actions embodied the universal values of compassion, humanity, and solidarity. He expressed appreciation to the Municipality of Craiova for recognizing Mr. Kumar's heroism and highlighted the positive contribution of the Indian community to Romanian society.

During the visit, the Ambassador, accompanied by Mr. Karan Gupta, Managing Director of Mahavir Group, also met H.E. Mr. Eugen Costel Calinoiu, Prefect of Dolj County, H.E. Mr. Marian Popa, Vice-Prefect of Dolj County, and representatives of the Dolj Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Discussions focused on opportunities for Indian investment in infrastructure, automotive manufacturing, renewable energy, logistics, energy storage, and agri-processing. Both sides agreed to encourage closer business-to-business engagement and explore avenues for expanding economic cooperation.

As part of the visit, the Ambassador and Mr. Karan Gupta, also met with H.E. Mr. Vasile Dorin-Cosmin, President of the Dolj County Council. Discussions focused on expanding economic cooperation and exploring investment opportunities across a range of strategic sectors, including infrastructure development, green energy, logistics, agri-processing, automotive manufacturing, and industrial development. Both sides exchanged views



Ambassador with H.E. Ms. Olguta Vasilescu, Mayor of Craiova



Mr. Vipin Kumar being made Citizen of Honor by H.E. Ms. Olguta Vasilescu



Ambassador met with Hon'ble Prefect Eugen Costel Calinoiu of Dolj County



Ambassador and Mr. Karan Gupta meeting with and Mr. Ioan Valentin Mihalache, Deputy Mayor of Slatina



Ambassador and Mr. Karan Gupta met with Hon'ble President of the Dolj County Council, Mr. Vasile Dorin-Cosmin

on Dolj County's economic potential and the opportunities available for Indian companies seeking to establish a long-term presence in the region. The meeting underscored the shared commitment to promoting sustainable investments, fostering industrial partnerships, and creating new avenues for economic growth and job creation.

On 6 June 2026, the Ambassador visited Slatina and met H.E. Mr. Mario De Mezzo, Mayor of Slatina, and Mr. Ioan Valentin Mihalache, Deputy Mayor of Slatina. The discussions focused on promoting economic partnerships, encouraging Indian investment, and enhancing cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including urban development and municipal governance. Both sides acknowledged the growing importance of local-level partnerships in strengthening bilateral relations.

The visits to Craiova and Slatina reflected the strong and multifaceted nature of India-Romania relations, combining economic engagement with people-to-people ties and regional cooperation. They further underscored the shared commitment of both countries to deepening collaboration and building a dynamic partnership for the future.

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

NYS Senator John C. Liu

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FIFA World Cup makes its debut on Canadian soil with a colorful bash



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

JUNE 12, 2026

TORONTO (TIP): The FIFA World Cup 2026 got off to a colorful bash, thanks to an amazing ceremony of music and dance. The ceremony marked a new chapter in the history of Canadian soccer playing its third World Cup and the first ever to be held on its soil. Though it got only 13 of 104 matches, its preparedness and enthusiasm were visible in the way its people responded as they started filling the stands much longer before the first whistle to mark the start of first ever World Cup match on its soil was blown.

Shortly after noon, the cultural ensemble took to the centerfield as mascots and emblems were escorted onto the ground.

When Canadian players arrived on the ground, they were greeted by a strong home crowd. Will Canada make it? was the mute question on every lip. The crowd that responded by an overwhelming standing ovation after Canada drew level with its European opponents late in the second half reflected their trust, faith, and expectation from this team.

Their expectation of this team scripting history by getting its first ever World Cup point was met. "It has been more than a win," remarked Navtaj Singh, a real estate educator. "This team has scripted by winning first ever point in the World Cup after failing to do so in the first two participations."

Along with this being the first time that Canada was playing a World Cup match on home soil, it also represented an opportunity for the red and white to lock in its first point. Canada's men's team has played in two World Cups in the past - in 1986 and 2022 - but fell flat in the six matches as part of those tournaments. Incidentally, it has been for the first time



Alanis Morissette sings the Canada national anthem before the FIFA World Cup 2026 match between Canada v Bosnia and Herzegovina in Toronto, Canada, June 12, 2026

Kevin Sousa/IMAGN Images via Reuters



Singers Elyanna and Jessie Reyez perform during the opening ceremony for FIFA World Cup 2026, before the Canada v Bosnia and Herzegovina - game in Toronto, Canada, June 12, 2026

Claudia Greco/Reuters

that Canada is playing in back-to-back editions of the World Cup.

Hopes were running high as everyone in the stands and out in streets in Toronto

wanted either a draw or a win to end the losing spree. Canada made history, with one point and not three. These outcomes may help the team advance past the Group Stage, a feat it has never accomplished in the men's program's history.

The sold-out Toronto Stadium opened its doors four hours ahead of the match, as fans from around the world got ready for a new chapter in soccer history. To mark the special occasion, the opening ceremony featured performances from Alessia Cara, Elyanna, Jessie Reyez, Michael Bubl , Nora Fatehi, Sanjoy, Vegedream and William Prince.

Ambassador, actor and comedian Will Arnett also participated in the pre-match ceremony, while "O'Canada" was sung by Alanis Morissette, and the Bosnia and Herzegovina national anthem was sung by Aleksandar Gaji?.

Following a kick-off that honored Indigenous Peoples, several Canadian artists helped begin the 2026 FIFA World Cup opening ceremony with a bang.

Alessia Cara offered an upbeat performance of her hit song "Wild Things," taking the circular stage in front of a gold soccer-ball structure in the center.

Canadian singer Nora Fatehi then teamed up with Sanjoy and Vegedream to continue bringing the electrifying energy, giving fans an exciting performance of their FIFA World Cup collaboration "Siir Siir."

Palestinian singer Elyanna and Toronto artist Jessie Reyez then wrapped up the first part of the opening ceremony, showing up with their FIFA World Cup song "Illuminate," which many fans raved over. And Team Canada capped it with a remarkable fight back to snatch its first ever World Cup point.

Read more stories of FIFA World Cup on page 52.

(Prabhjot Singh is a Toronto-based senior journalist who writes on Sports, politics and community.

He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)



Nora Fatehi, French singer Vegedream and Bangladeshi-American DJ/producer Sanjoy bring "Siir Siir" to the opening ceremony stage.



'Not justified': Jaishankar to Rubio on killing of 3 Indian mariners in US strike off Oman coast

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday informed that he conveyed India's strong protest to the United States over attacks by their Navy on commercial vessels in the Gulf that resulted in the deaths of three Indian mariners, asserting that the use of lethal force against civilian shipping was "unjustified". Jaishankar said he spoke with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio last evening and reiterated New Delhi's concerns over the attacks, which have escalated tensions between the two countries and raised alarm over the safety of Indian seafarers operating in the region.

"Spoke to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio this evening. I reiterated India's strong protest at the attacks by the US Navy in the Gulf that killed three Indian mariners. Such lethal actions against commercial shipping are not justified," Jaishankar said.

The minister's intervention came hours after India summoned US Chargé d'Affaires Jason Meeks and lodged a formal protest over the continuing attacks on merchant vessels carrying Indian crew members in the Gulf of Oman. The Ministry of External Affairs had earlier described the deaths of the three Indian sailors as "tragic and avoidable" and expressed deep concern over the use of deadly force against civilian shipping, warning that such actions undermine the safety and stability of international maritime commerce.

IAF jet crashes while landing at Assam

An Indian Air Force AN-32 transport aircraft met with an accident while landing at an airbase in Assam on Saturday, triggering a fire and prompting an emergency response from authorities.

The incident took place at the Indian Air Force station in Jorhat. According to officials, firefighting operations were launched immediately after the accident and were continuing at the site. An initial statement from the Indian Air Force said, "Today an AN-32 of IAF met with an accident. Further update will be provided once more details are available." The aircraft reportedly caught fire after landing within the airbase premises. Images and videos from the scene were not immediately available, and officials have yet to share details on the extent of the damage. A defence spokesperson said the AN-32 aeroplane crashed while landing at the Indian Air Force's airbase in the Rowrah area of Jorhat district.

Team rebel swells to 64, late-night raid at Abhishek Banerjee's residence: TMC split worries mount

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Trinamool Congress is facing a big crisis, both in West Bengal and in Parliament with leaders uniting to break away and form their own faction. Amid mounting worries for former chief minister Mamata Banerjee, an expelled leader claimed that the strength of rebel MLAs willing to split away has now grown to 64. Meanwhile, a police team accompanied by central security forces arrived at TMC General Secretary Abhishek Banerjee's residence in Kolkata late at night and conducted a four-hour raid on Saturday. The development came amid rising dissent within the party against Mamata's nephew.

The developments have added to worries of a TMC split. Buzz grew stronger on Friday after a letter with signatures from 19 rebel MPs emerged, with some claiming they forwarded it to the Speaker. However, the Speaker's office has not confirmed receipt of the letter yet.

The letter that surfaced on Friday was dated May 18, days after the TMC was dealt a crushing blow in the Assembly elections and Mamata Banerjee's uninterrupted reign as chief minister came to an end.

There were 19 signatures on the letter, but the serial numbers were 20, triggering speculation that a multi-term MP could be the 20th to align with the rebel group.



There is no clarity on whether the faction wanting to split wants to merge with the BJP or not. "So far, these MPs have only indicated that they want to be seen as a separate parliamentary group," a person familiar with the developments told HT. However, some leaders, like Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar and suspended TMC leader Riju Dutta have said the rebels wish to support the NDA.

"As far as I know, these MPs are likely to meet Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday, and a major meeting is scheduled for Sunday, which, according to my information, the Chief Minister of Bengal might also attend," Dutta told news agency ANI on Friday.

According to provision, if at least two-thirds of a party's legislators agree to merge with another party, they are protected. This is where the number 19

holds importance, because it decides whether the rebels can switch sides.

Just as the TMC is trying to cope with a possible split in the Lok Sabha, the rebellion is also growing back in Bengal. According to expelled Trinamool leader Sandipan Saha, the number of rebels has grown to 64 from 58 in a matter of days. "We did not think that so many MLAs would join us..." Saha told ANI.

As reported by HT earlier, 58 Trinamool legislators in Bengal had written to Mamata Banerjee, asking her to be their chief adviser as they staked claim to become the principal opposition party in the Bengal assembly.

The faction had raised strong reservations with Abhishek Banerjee's leadership, saying they would have no interaction with Mamata's nephew. "We are the real TMC now in the assembly," said Ritabrata Banerjee, who is leading the rebel team of MLAs.

A large contingent of police personnel from Kolkata Police's Kalighat Police Station and Shalboni Police Station, accompanied by central security forces, arrived at the residence of Trinamool Congress MP Abhishek Banerjee on Saturday morning.

According to PTI, Banerjee's home was raided for four hours, starting 3am on Saturday. He later alleged that police personnel had forcibly entered the residence after breaking open a lock and searched the entire premises. "They broke the lock and searched the entire house," he told reporters. *Source: HT*

Govt likely to redefine 'urban' in new Census

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's next urban transition may not be taking place inside its cities. As the country has already begun Census 2027, and with rapid urbanisation, a discussion is going on whether the traditional definition of urban India still reflects the realities on the ground. The government is likely to change the definition.

The discussion centres on a growing category of settlements that are neither fully rural nor formally urban, but increasingly display characteristics of both.

A senior Union Urban Ministry official said, "These are the times when there are chances that the government would want to change the definition of what is urban because the time has changed and demography has changed."

The question has acquired greater significance at a time when economic



activity, mobility and infrastructure needs are expanding beyond municipal boundaries.

Settlements on the outskirts of major cities, along industrial corridors and around emerging economic hubs are witnessing changes once associated only with urban centres. Residents work in manufacturing, services and logistics, travel daily to nearby cities and depend on transport, housing, sanitation and digital connectivity that mirror urban requirements. Yet many continue to be governed as rural

areas.

India's census classifies urban areas as either statutory towns, which are governed by urban local bodies, or census towns that meet specified thresholds relating to population, density and non-agricultural employment. While these categories have long guided urban planning, a growing view among planners is that they may not fully capture the pace and nature of contemporary urbanisation.

The issue goes beyond classification. Whether a settlement is categorised as rural or urban influences planning priorities, infrastructure investments, fiscal allocations and institutional responsibilities. In a way, it affects all major indicators. Urban local bodies generally have greater planning powers and resources than rural institutions, making classification a critical factor in how rapidly growing settlements are governed.

Diesel sale capped at 200 litre/vehicle a day

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The government has prohibited industrial, commercial, and institutional customers from purchasing petrol and diesel from retail pumps, urging them instead buying fuel from authorised bulk sale points, according to an official notification issued by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas on Friday, June 12.

These regulations are temporary measures, initially valid for up to 90 days, ensuring diesel availability to all retail consumers.

Petroleum Ministry notified the "Motor Spirit and High-Speed Diesel (Temporary Regulation of Supply through Retail Outlets) Order, 2026" to curb black marketing and hoarding of diesel by unscrupulous elements.

It highlighted that the increase was driven by industrial, commercial and institutional consumers shifting to retail outlets due to price gap between retail and bulk sale prices.

Retail fuel pumps in Delhi charge Rs 95.20 per litre, while bulk diesel sales cost Rs 134.50 per liter. Following the West Asia crisis in late February, state-owned oil marketing companies (OMCs) maintained retail pump prices lower to protect regular consumers from cost increases, which caused the price disparity to expand.

'Europe sells weapons used to attack India': Jaishankar hits back over Russia-Ukraine stance

JUNE 12, 2026

HELSINKI (TIP): Defending India's decision to buy oil from Russia, External Affairs Minister Dr Jaishankar pointed out the double standards of the West. The remarks from the Indian diplomat came during his visit to Finland, where he was asked about India's stance on the Russia-Ukraine war. The journalist on Thursday accused India of being "too sympathetic to Russia" and "too willing to buy oil from Russia".

To this, Jaishankar replied: "I'll make two observations. I buy oil based on cost and availability. So at that point of time, much of the oil available in the market was Russian because Europeans were essentially buying oil from the Middle East, which was our traditional supplier. So circumstances pushed us in a certain direction." He went on to highlight Europe's moral ambiguity regarding what is happening around the world. "No European country has been attacked with Indian weapons. I wish I could say that for Europe weapons vis-à-vis India," he said.

When the Indian diplomat was asked to elaborate on his point, Jaishankar reiterated that "Europe sells weapons, which are used to attack India. Not just now but for many years. We Indians have never done anything to endanger Europe. I think that's a reasonable point."

'US asked for Russian oil to be purchased'

It is pertinent to note that this is not the first time Jaishankar has had to defend India's decision to purchase oil from Russia during his trip to Europe. According to Bloomberg, the minister of external affairs said that India began actively purchasing



EAM Dr S Jaishankar participated in a panel discussion at Kultaranta. Talks with Finland FM Elina Valtonen and Assistant FM of UAE, Lana Nusseibeh on 'Emerging Powers and the New Geopolitical Competition'.

Russian oil after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine not only because of favourable prices but also at the request of the United States. He pointed out that in 2022, the US asked India to purchase Russian oil in order to stabilise the global oil market and prevent a sharp rise in prices after Europe imposed sanctions against Russia. "At that time, the US directly asked India to buy Russian oil to stabilise the oil market. We buy oil based on cost and availability," Jaishankar said during a speech in Finland. Jaishankar also criticised the US's contradictory policy regarding sanctions on Russian oil and urged against attaching excessive moral significance to the issue.

BJP poaching Opposition MPs to push women's quota, delimitation Bill, says Cong

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Congress on Friday, June 12, accused the BJP of attempting to engineer a two-thirds majority in Parliament by breaking Opposition parties after reports claimed that the NDA was preparing to revive the Constitution amendment Bill, linking delimitation with women reservation, once it secured the required numbers.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh alleged that Union Home Minister Amit Shah was trying to secure the numbers needed for the passage of the 131st Constitution amendment Bill, 2026, after the legislation was defeated in Parliament earlier this year.

"Never before has anybody tried to engineer a two-thirds majority for his party in the Lok Sabha as the Home Minister is desperately doing these days in the run-up to the monsoon session," Ramesh said.

Referring to the Bill's defeat on April 17, Ramesh said the NDA had failed to secure the required support for the "dangerous Constitution amendment Bill dealing with delimitation".

Claiming that the setback had intensified the BJP's efforts to expand its numbers in Parliament, the Congress



leader alleged that attempts were being made to break Opposition parties and undermine democratic processes.

"Stung by that resounding defeat, he (Shah) is now busy breaking Opposition parties and making a complete mockery of democracy. The fight is on. His evil designs must not and will not succeed," Ramesh said.

The remarks came after senior government sources indicated that the NDA was actively working to ensure the passage of the 131st Constitution amendment Bill, which links the implementation of women's reservation to the delimitation exercise.

According to top ministerial sources,

the government is prepared to bring the legislation either during the upcoming monsoon session or through a special session once it secures the two-thirds majority in both Houses.

"The Bill is our topmost priority. Once we cross the two-thirds mark, we will pilot the Bill. Why monsoon session? We will bring it even through a special session of Parliament provided we get the numbers," a senior minister had said.

The minister was speaking on the eve of the BJP-led NDA government completing 12 years in office under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sources said the ruling alliance was banking on support from the breakaway group of Trinamool Congress MPs who are expected to back the NDA in the Lok Sabha. With the NDA currently holding 293 seats in the House, support from 20 breakaway TMC MPs could take its strength to 313, bringing it closer to the numbers required for a constitutional amendment.

The Congress, however, has framed the BJP's efforts as an attempt to alter the parliamentary arithmetic through defections and vowed to oppose such move.

PM leaves for France, Slovakia and G7 Summit

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday departed on a six-day visit to France and Slovakia, during which he will hold talks with French President Emmanuel Macron, undertake the first-ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Slovakia since its independence and participate in the G7 Summit in France, where he said India would articulate the aspirations of the Global South.

In his departure statement, Modi said France occupies a special place in India's strategic vision and noted that bilateral ties had been elevated to a Special Global Strategic Partnership during President Macron's visit to India earlier this year. "At the G7, India will not only speak for itself, but it will also give voice to the aspirations of the Global South," the Prime Minister said, describing India's invitation to the grouping for the eighth consecutive summit as a reflection of the trust reposed in the country by its partners and its growing global profile.

Modi said he would meet President Macron in Nice to review the progress made since February and chart the next steps in bilateral cooperation, besides exchanging views on pressing global issues of mutual interest.

India in history this Week

JUNE 12 TO JUNE 18

JUNE 12

Allahabad High Court Verdict Against Indira Gandhi (1975)



June 12, 1975, marked one of the most dramatic days in India's democratic history. The Allahabad High Court found Prime Minister Indira Gandhi guilty of electoral malpractice during her 1971 Lok Sabha campaign from Rae Bareilly. Justice Jagmohanlal Sinha invalidated her election and barred her from holding elected office for six years.

Beginning of the Delhi Sultanate Era (1206)

Following the death of Muhammad Ghori, Qutb al-Din Aibak established independent rule in Delhi around this period in 1206, laying the foundations of the Delhi Sultanate.

Death of Balaji Baji Rao, the Maratha Peshwa (1761)

Balaji Baji Rao, also known as Nana Saheb Peshwa, died on June 12, 1761, after suffering emotional devastation following the Maratha defeat at the Third Battle of Panipat earlier that year.

INSAT-1D Strengthens India's Communication Network (1990)

India's growing technological ambitions received a boost with the launch of INSAT-1D on June 12, 1990. The satellite enhanced telecommunications, weather forecasting, television broadcasting and disaster warning systems.

JUNE 13

The Rise of Revolutionary Nationalism in Bengal
June often witnessed intense political activity in Bengal during the freedom movement. Around this period in the early 20th century, underground revolutionary groups such as Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar intensified anti-colonial operations against British authorities.

Remembering Literary and Cultural Icons

June 13 is associated with the remembrance of several Indian literary figures whose works enriched regional languages, theatre, poetry and journalism. Such commemorations reflect the cultural diversity that shaped India's intellectual history.

JUNE 14

Expansion of Modern Scientific Institutions in Independent India

During the Nehruvian period after independence, mid-June often marked announcements related to scientific planning, industrial growth and educational expansion. Institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, scientific laboratories and public sector industries reflected India's vision of becoming a

modern, self-reliant nation built on scientific temper and technological progress.

JUNE 15

Social Reform Movements Gather Momentum

By the late 19th century, India was witnessing powerful social reform movements aimed at ending caste discrimination, child marriage and gender inequality.

The Growth of Nationalist Journalism

Indian newspapers became major instruments of resistance against colonial rule. Publications such as Kesari, Amrita Bazar Patrika and The Hindu shaped public opinion and challenged British policies.

Expansion of Railway Networks Under British India

June also marks phases of railway expansion in colonial India during the 19th century. Railways transformed trade, administration and mobility across the subcontinent.

While built primarily to serve colonial economic interests, the railways later helped unite Indians politically by enabling communication and mass participation in the freedom struggle.

JUNE 16

Tribal Resistance Against Colonial Rule

Several tribal uprisings against British exploitation unfolded during the summer months in central and eastern India. Communities in present-day Jharkhand, Odisha and Chhattisgarh resisted oppressive taxation, forest laws and land policies.

These struggles are now increasingly recognized as important chapters of India's freedom movement.

JUNE 17

Prelude to the Battle of Haldighati (1576)



The day before the famous Battle of Haldighati witnessed intense military preparations between Maharana Pratap and the Mughal forces led by Raja Man Singh. The conflict represented not merely a territorial war but a clash of political visions. Maharana Pratap's resistance became a symbol of Rajput honour and independence.

Intensification of the Goa Liberation Movement (1946)

By June 17, 1946, anti-Portuguese sentiment in Goa had begun gaining momentum. Nationalist leaders demanded civil liberties and an end to colonial rule.

The protests inspired a larger movement that ultimately resulted in Goa's liberation and integration into India in 1961.

Growth of Student Politics in Colonial India

Student organizations became increasingly active during the freedom movement. Universities in Calcutta, Lahore, Allahabad and Bombay emerged as centres of

political activism.

JUNE 18

The Battle of Haldighati (1576)

One of the most legendary battles in Indian history was fought on June 18, 1576, between Maharana Pratap of Mewar and the Mughal forces under Raja Man Singh.

Though the Mughals held the battlefield, Maharana Pratap's refusal to surrender transformed him into a timeless icon of resistance and courage. Tales of his loyal horse Chetak and his relentless struggle remain deeply embedded in Indian folklore.

Martyrdom of Rani Lakshmibai (1858)



Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi died fighting British troops near Gwalior on June 18, 1858, during the Revolt of 1857.

Goa Revolution Day (1946)

June 18 is observed as Goa Revolution Day. Socialist leader Ram Manohar Lohia launched a civil disobedience movement against Portuguese rule in Goa on this day.

The movement challenged authoritarian colonial restrictions and inspired widespread public participation. It became the foundation of the larger Goa liberation struggle.

Hindu Succession Act Strengthens Women's Rights (1956)

A landmark reform in post-independence India came with the Hindu Succession Act, passed during this period in June 1956. The legislation modernized inheritance laws among Hindus and significantly improved women's property rights, marking a major step toward gender equality in Indian society.

M. S. Swaminathan and the Green Revolution (1987)

Agricultural scientist M. S. Swaminathan received the first World Food Prize on June 18, 1987, for his role in India's Green Revolution. His work on high-yield crop varieties transformed Indian agriculture, helping the country move from food scarcity to self-sufficiency. The Green Revolution remains one of the most significant economic and agricultural turning points in modern India.



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THE HEART OF YOGA



Chief Guest
Dr Dattatreyudu Nori



World-renowned Oncologist,
Padma Bhushan Awardee 2026,
Founder of 3 Shirdi Sai Baba temples
in NY-NJ

Program Highlights

- ✦ Devotion for Spiritual Growth
- Multifaith Panel
- ✦ Loving-Kindness Meditation
by Lama Aria Drolma
- ✦ Radha-Krishna dances by
Preya Patel & Vivarta Arts
- ✦ Kirtan & Chair Yoga

Panelists



Yakub Mathew
Banker, Author



Lama Aria Drolma
Buddhist Nun



Nayan Kishnadwala
Finance, Temple Trustee



Sharon Epstein
Yoga Teacher



Parveen Chopra
Moderator

Sunday, June 14, 2026
4:00 - 6:30 pm

*Followed by Vegetarian Meal
at*

Pandit Jasraj Auditorium
Vedic Heritage Hanuman Mandir
111 Jerusalem Avenue,
Hempstead, NY 11550

*For more information
Contact*

Parveen Chopra
Founding Editor, ALotusInTheMud.com
Ph - +1 516 710 0508
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Free Event
Register here

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SPACE COURTESY : THE INDIAN PANORAMA

DWF: LA, CONSIDERED LOS ANGELES'S LARGEST INDIE FILM FEST, RETURNS FOR ITS 29TH EDITION



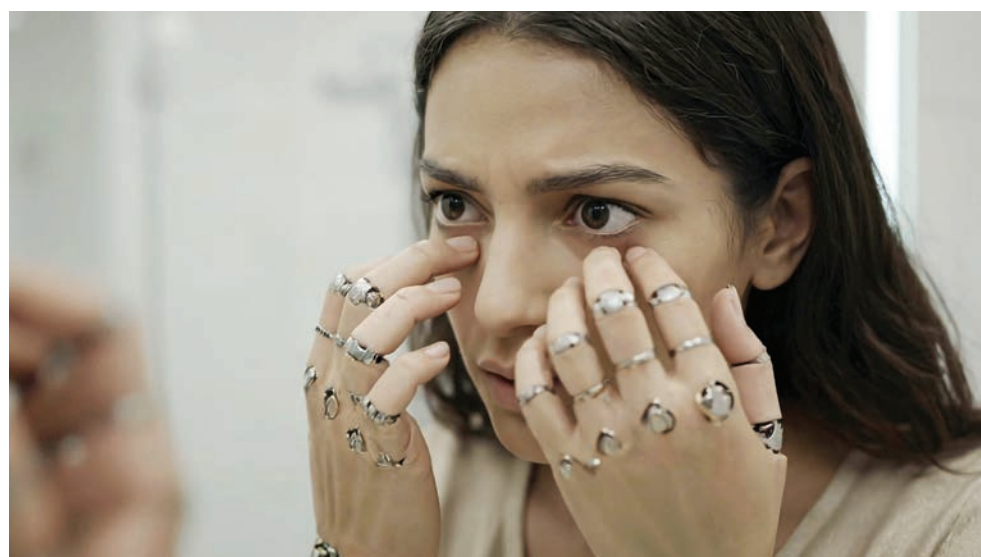
Banana



Aayat



Dual



Second Skin

Credit : <https://danceswithfilms.com>

BY MABEL PAIS

Featuring

Co-Director RAGHAV PURI's Pilot "BANANA"

Director SONIA BHATIA's World Premiere Short "AAYAT"

Co-Director NITASHA

BHAMBREE's Short "DUAL"

Director ANIL BARAL's World Premiere Short "SECOND SKIN"

And many more

The Los Angeles, California-based film festival, Dances With Films: LA, (DFW: LA) presents its film lineup for its return in June of Los Angeles' largest indie film-focused festival (June 18-28, 2026) at its 29th edition platforming films not produced by studios or with big budgets.

In an environment where multiplexes can struggle to consistently fill houses, DWF: LA expects to once again draw record-breaking audiences to its screenings and events at the TCL Chinese Theatre on 6925 Hollywood Blvd. in the Ovation Complex.

This year's DWF: LA's lineup includes 279 films, including 41 narrative features, 17 documentary features, 4 midnight features, 33 television and streaming pilots, and 184 short films (99 narrative and 21 documentaries, 32 midnight, 15 Kidz section, 17 Downbeat/Music), with an impressive number of films making world, North American, or U.S. premieres. The total number of world premieres (including shorts and pilots)

is 144 films: more than half of the total films in the film festival.

Dances With Films' founders, Leslee Scallon and Michael Trent, said, "For close to three decades Dances With Films has exhibited 'The Power of Indie Film' and this year's lineup is filled with unique and diverse voices from filmmakers working outside of the studio system and without the benefit of bigger budgets, will entertain and surprise film lovers with the cinematic magic DWF is well-known for. As always, we couldn't be more thrilled to introduce them all and connect our filmmakers with audiences, film distributors, and other industry veterans in the best way imaginable: at the TCL Chinese Theatres right in the heart of Hollywood."

For more information about the Dances With Films: LA film lineup, events, passes, and tickets, go to: <https://danceswithfilms.com>.

THE 2026 DANCES WITH FILMS: LA LINEUP

OPENING NIGHT

"Yale" - WORLD PREMIERE

DIR: Jay Silverman; USA; 2025; 123m

Based on a true story about a troubled woman who must confront her deadbeat father who abandoned her as a child as the last ditch effort to find a donor kidney for her dying son.

CLOSING NIGHT

"Tender" - WORLD PREMIERE

DIR: Adam Hoezel; USA; 2026; 95m

After inheriting a modest house in a dying town, Billie and Mick believe they've finally found stability, until crushing debt, old resentments, and a shocking discovery buried within their walls threaten to tear them apart. As the couple is forced into a dangerous alliance to protect their future, "Tender" becomes a darkly intimate portrait of marriage under pressure, where love, money, and survival blur into something unrecognizable.

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE FEATURES

There are 39 narrative features.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

Seventeen films are in this category.

MIDNIGHT FEATURES

There are four in this section.

PILOTS

Thirty three films are in this category.

SHORT FILMS

NARRATIVE SHORTS

There are ninety nine narrative shorts.

DOCUMENTARY SHORTS

Twenty three films can be found in this

section.

MIDNIGHT SHORTS

Thirty two films are in this category.

DOWNBEAT

Seventeen films fill this category.

DANCES WITH KIDZ PRO SHORTS

There are seven films in this section.

DANCES WITH KIDZ BY KIDZ SHORTS

Eight films can be found in this category.

DANCES WITH FILMS

Now in its 29th year, Dances With Films champions the unflinching spirit at the very core of the independent film scene. With most film festivals relying heavily on celebrity, DWF have relied on innovation, talent, creativity, and sweat equity that revolutionized the entertainment industry. And that reliance continues to prove successful with alumni moving on to write, direct, and produce celebrity-studded vehicles, star in blockbuster movies, and television series, produce multi-million-dollar films and create hot TV shows. Learn more at <https://danceswithfilms.com>.

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

NORTH TO SHORE SUMMER FESTIVAL HOSTS DRIVE FOR BUILDING FOOD SECURITY

BY MABEL PAIS

As the final “Standing in Solidarity” partnership of NJPAC with PSEG, NJPAC will host the event “Feeding Change, Building Food Security” to address building food security in New Jersey on Monday, June 22 at the Chase Room at 6 pm. Doors open at 5 pm. This is a free event.

In one of the country’s wealthiest states, one in nine New Jersey residents struggle with consistent access to healthy food. Food insecurity can be driven by a lack of transportation in neighborhoods without well-stocked grocery stores or by financial constraints that force individuals to prioritize essential costs, such as utilities and medication, over fresh produce.

NJPAC’s final Standing in Solidarity event of the spring season will discuss how to alleviate the growing crisis in feeding N.J. residents and will highlight the agility of local organizations that strive to meet the community’s needs.

REGISTRATION

RSVP is required to attend - <https://njpac.org/event/feeding-change-building-food-security/#register>

PROGRAM

FILM

The program includes a screening of



Building Food Security.

Credit: <https://njpac.org>

“Just Eat It: A Food Waste Story,” the PSEG Foundation Social Impact film and uncover the shocking reasons why more than 50% of food is thrown in the trash.

“NJPAC is a vital partner in bringing communities together and elevating meaningful conversations, especially during these challenging times marked by rising costs of living,” says Maria Spina, Senior Manager PSEG Foundation and Corporate Social Responsibility. “Addressing critical issues such as addressing food security remains essential, and the PSEG Foundation is proud to support programs that strengthen local voices and inspire learning and collaboration across New Jersey.”

RECOMMENDATION

Attendees are encouraged to bring a shelf-stable item for a food drive to benefit Growing Healthy Pantries.

Recommended items include canned fish, meat, vegetables and fruit, shelf stable milk, pasta, cereal, rice and peanut butter (plastic jars only).

RESOURCE TABLES

Doors open at 5PM. Samples of food made from locally-grown ingredients prepared by Newark Science and Sustainability, Inc. will be available. Resource tables from organizations including Center for Food Action, Newark Water Coalition, Plant It NJ, Tree House Cares and more will be on display.

OPENING PRESENTATION

In partnership with Dodge Poetry, the program will open with Brittany Barker, an award-winning poet, educator and Executive Director of Creative Soul House.

PANEL

MODERATOR

Jasmyne Beckford, Director of Inclusive Solutions at Prudential Financial.

PANELISTS

Bryan Barros, Program Associate at pantry+ at Rutgers University–Newark
Nicole Davis, Executive Director of the Center for Food Action

Tobias A. Fox, Founder and Managing Director of Newark Science and Sustainability, Inc. and Facilitator of the Newark Community Food System (NCFS)

Dr. Nicole Harris-Hollingsworth, EdD, MCHES, Senior Vice President, Social Determinants & Impact, Hackensack Meridian Health

Plus, corporate leadership from Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey.

NORTH TO SHORE EVENT

This free event is part of the fourth annual North to Shore Festival (<https://northtoshore.com>), running June 13 – 28 in Newark and Asbury Park. A portion of all ticket sales will directly benefit Growing Healthy Pantries — a statewide collaborative that addresses food security in partnership with New Jersey’s five primary food banks, supporting more than 1,000 local pantries across all 21 counties.

NJPAC MAKES READING AT THE PLAZA AN OUTDOOR SPORT FOR ALL

BY MABEL PAIS

The new READING AT THE PLAZA series continues on the newly designed Chambers Plaza, NJPAC’s front yard. The next event takes place on June 17 at 5:30 pm.

Lovers of reading and books are encouraged by NJPAC making reading an outdoor sport with the Reading at the Plaza series started in May 2026. Bring a lawn chair or blanket ... and get comfy on NJPAC’s redesigned front yard with the featured selection or a book of your own choosing.

“Reading at the Plaza” includes silent reading time, live poetry performances and a book talk facilitated by producing partner Source of Knowledge, (<https://sourceofknowledgebookstore.com>) a Black community center in the heart of Newark.

PROGRAM**

5:30 – 6PM, Silent reading
6 – 6:15PM, Poetry with Mia X
6:15 – 7:15PM, Book discussion
7:15 – 7:30PM, Conclusion

Join a community of book lovers and conversationalists on NJPAC’s front yard. Catch up on your reading during silent reading time and gain fresh insights — in the fresh air — with a book talk on this month’s special selection.

“Burn Down Master’s House” is the latest novel by Clay Cane, an award-winning journalist and New York Times bestselling author. It’s historical fiction



Reading discussion.-Credit: <https://njpac.org>

inspired by true, long-buried stories of enslaved people who dared to fight back.

Copies of the book will be available for purchase in advance order @ (<https://sourceofknowledgebookstore.com/store/ols/products>) or at a pop-up store at the event from Source of Knowledge (<https://sourceofknowledgebookstore.com>).

To make the reading more enjoyable, food is available at The Yard (<https://theyardnewark.com>), located in nearby Military Park. The Yard is offering a 15% discount to those who purchase food on June 17 from 5:30 – 7:30PM. Use discount code: SOK/NJPAC0617.

****In the case of inclement

weather, the June 17th session will move to July 2nd.

Chambers Plaza is the first piece of the NJPAC’s ongoing \$336 million redevelopment of its 12-acre campus.

THE NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

NJPAC located in downtown Newark, New Jersey, is an anchor cultural institution for both the city of Newark and the state of New Jersey. It is an artistic, cultural, educational and civic center where great performances and events enhance and transform lives every day.

NJPAC brings communities together both on and off of campus – on stages, in

schools and community settings – providing access to the arts for all and showcasing the state’s and the world’s best artists, while acting as a leading catalyst in the revitalization of its home city.

Through its extensive Social Impact programs, NJPAC leverages the arts to advance positive outcomes in education, health and well-being, civic engagement and community development. NJPAC has attracted more than 12.7 million visitors (including more than two million children) since opening its doors in 1997. Learn more at njpac.org.

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

JANELLE MONAÉ WILL PERFORM HER POWERHOUSE VOCALS AT NORTH TO SHORE'S FESTIVAL

Janelle Monáe

Credit: <https://njpac.org>



BY MABEL PAIS

The North to Shore Festival presents a live performance by Janelle Monáe at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) on Wednesday, June 17, at 7:30 p.m.

The audience can expect a performance that is equal parts dance party, visual feast, and cultural revolution. Prepare for powerhouse vocals that glide effortlessly from velvety soul to fierce, rapid-fire rap. Backed by a dynamic band, Monáe's intricate arrangements come alive with unmatched energy and precision. The spectacle is elevated by Broadway-level choreography, costume changes, and visual artistry — every moment deliberately designed to move both body and mind.

Watch Janelle Monáe perform "Tightrope" - <https://youtu.be/pwnefUaKCbc>

Video Credit: Courtesy of Warner Music Group

TICKETS

Tickets to witness Janelle Monáe are available at NJPAC - <https://njpac.org>, as part of the North to Shore Festival - <https://northtoshore.com>.

For information and updates, visit <https://northtoshore.com>.

B-Roll North to Shore - <https://youtu.be/mu9Os2hMHRo>

NORTH TO SHORE FESTIVAL 2026 SCHEDULE

June 11: I Am the Avalanche at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 13: Haiden Henderson at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 13: "Claypool Gold" featuring Primus, Les Claypool's Frog Brigade & The Claypool Lennon Delirium at Stone Pony Summer Stage, Asbury Park.

June 14: Brian Fallon at Stone Pony, Asbury Park.

June 15: Malibu, The Extensions, Blush at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 16: Hot Mulligan, Joyce Manor, Saturdays at Your Place, Koyo at Stone Pony Summer Stage, Asbury Park.

June 17: Janelle Monáe at Prudential Hall at NJPAC, Newark.

June 17: Lila Iké at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 17: Bad Cop Bad Cop at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 17: Luke Combs UK (tribute show) at Stone

Pony, Asbury Park.

June 18: Secondhand Serenade, Every Avenue at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 18: René Vaca at Prudential Hall NJPAC, Newark.

June 18: Surfing for Daisy at Stone Pony, Asbury Park.

June 18: Eric D'Alessandro at Victoria Theater, Newark.

June 18: Eddie 9V at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 19: Yellowcard, New Found Glory, Plain White T's at Stone Pony Summer Stage, Asbury Park.

June 19: Sublime, The Movement, Pepper, Codefendants at ParkStage, Freehold.

June 19: George Lamond at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 19: Chris Pinnella at Arthur Pryor Bandshell, Asbury Park.

June 19: October London, Eric Benet at Prudential Hall, Newark

June 19: The Weeklings & Friends at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 20: The Black Crowes, Whiskey Myers at Prudential Center, Newark.

June 20: Dark Star Orchestra, Grateful Dead tribute at ParkStage, Freehold.

June 20: Zarna Garg at Prudential Hall at NJPAC, Newark.

June 20: Gary Gulman at Victoria Theater at NJPAC, Newark.

June 20: Bernie Williams & His Band of Friends at Stone Pony, Asbury Park.

June 20: Mihali at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 21: Earthquake at Prudential Hall at NJPAC, Newark.

June 21: Marc Maron at Victoria Theater at NJPAC, Newark.

June 21: Kurt Vile & the Violators, The Sadies at Stone Pony, Asbury Park.

June 21: Black Uhuru at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 22: Gods, Latewaves, Modern Chemistry at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 22: Food Insecurity Panel Discussion at NJPAC Banquet Room, Newark

June 24: Winyah at Stone Pony, Asbury Park.

June 24: LaMP at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 25: Jimmy Eat World at Stone Pony Summer

Stage, Asbury Park.

June 25: Jesse & Joy at Prudential Hall at NJPAC, Newark.

June 25: Felix Hernandez's Rhythm Revue Dance Party, Horizon Sounds of the City series at NJPAC, Newark.

June 25: David Cross at House of Independents, Asbury Park.

June 25: King Kyote, The Animeros at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 26: The Head And the Heart at ParkStage, Freehold.

June 26: Alison Krauss & Union Station featuring Jerry Douglas, Theo Lawrence at Prudential Hall NJPAC, Newark.

June 26: DJ Wallah, Sounds of the City at Chambers Plaza NJPAC, Newark.

June 26: Jessica Kirson at Victoria Theater at NJPAC, Newark.

June 26: Streetlight Manifesto at Stone Pony Summer Stage, Asbury Park.

June 26: Joe P. at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 27: The Bouncing Souls, Less than Jake, Bane, The Lawrence Arms at Stone Pony Summer Stage, Asbury Park.

June 27: Iliza Schlesinger at Prudential Hall at NJPAC, Newark.

June 27: Lucas Zelnick at Victoria Theater at NJPAC, Newark.

June 27: The Ocean Blue, Brian Tighe at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

June 28: Joe Bonamassa at Prudential Hall at NJPAC, Newark.

June 28: Jordan Jensen at Victoria Theater at NJPAC, Newark.

June 28: The Church at Stone Pony, Asbury Park.

June 28: Juice at Wonder Bar, Asbury Park.

For the latest updates and new festival event listings, visit <https://northtoshore.com> or download the festival app.

THE NORTH TO SHORE FESTIVAL

The North to Shore Festival, launched in 2023, features all the talent, diversity and creativity that New Jersey has to offer, packed into two extraordinary weeks of performances, parties and conversations. Programs and events are held each June in two of the state's most iconic cities: Asbury Park and Newark. The North to Shore Festival brings hundreds of thousands of arts lovers together every summer, for events at hundreds of venues, for an over-the-top showcase of Jersey excellence. A celebration worthy of the Garden State's legacy of innovation and excellence in the arts, North to Shore is "the festival only Jersey can handle." In 2026, the festival is sponsored by several organizations. Learn more at northtoshore.com.

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Admission: \$35.00



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NEWS GROUP



Alpha teaser review: Alia Bhatt embracing gore is delightful

The teaser of Alpha, Yash Raj Films' long-awaited spy thriller, begins in a manner evocative of Luc Besson thrillers. The film has a older mentor, young female mentee dynamic that were signature of Besson's Leon and La Femme Nikita. The staging of Alpha's scene, featuring Bobby Deol and Alia Bhatt, is similar to one in Nikita (featuring Anne Parillaud and Jeanne Moreau). If it was an homage, it is a good choice; if it's a copy, then it gets at least one thing right: the focus on the actors' eyes.

Alpha teaser has its moments of action and violent deaths. But amid all this, director Shiv Rawail never loses focus on what is important - the emotion. The framing of the scenes - even the action set-pieces - keeps Alia's face and emotions dead at the centre of it all. That alone is enough to help Alpha stand out from the YRF Spy Universe stable. It may follow a formula, but at least it does it smartly enough.

The tease opens with the protagonist having a quiet dinner with her 'baba' (Bobby) at a restaurant. It's her 18th birthday and his gift to her is her first kill. In rustic Haryanvi, Bobby says this is the greatest gift - starting out on the journey you have been trained for all your life. We then see a montage of a young Alia being inducted into a secret program called Alpha. They are training soldiers of the future. Bobby says he is the wolf, and Alia replies that a wolf's daughter is wolf herself. Some smartly cut action scenes follow, where Alia looks comfortable kicking butt. The action is slick and even brutal. And it all comes together with a magnificently filmed final shot where Alia delivers her first kill, covered in blood as the Happy Birthday song plays in the background.

As the director of The Railway Men, one of the best shows on Indian streaming, Shiv Rawail has a different pedigree than the other directors to have helmed YRF Spy Universe films. And that distinction shows in the short teaser. Everything, from the sly smile on a bloodsoaked Alia's face to her vulnerability in the opening exchange, is a departure from the YRF norm of 'cooler is better'. Here, the coolness comes from the raw emotion, not merely the slickness of the execution. Don't get me wrong. Alpha still follows the same beats as a War of a Pathaan in terms of its slickness, but the world-building and emotional connect is very raw, akin to how Shiv Rawail did in his acclaimed series. That newness was necessary for the franchise after the blow it suffered with War 2.

Disha Patani bets big on comedy entertainer 'Welcome to the Jungle'

Actor Disha Patani may be standing at a crucial turning point in her Bollywood career as anticipation builds around the upcoming comedy entertainer Welcome to the Jungle.

Industry watchers believe the film could play a decisive role in determining the actor's position in the highly competitive Hindi film industry.

Disha, who made a strong impression with films like MS Dhoni: The Untold Story and Malang, has often been praised for her screen presence, fitness and glamour quotient. However, despite being one of the most followed celebrities on social media, the actor has struggled to consistently deliver commercially successful solo performances in recent years.

Her recent films have received mixed responses at the box office, with critics often pointing out that she has yet to land a role that fully showcases her acting potential. While Disha remains popular among younger audiences and brands, Bollywood's fast-changing landscape has increased pressure on actors to prove both box office pull and versatility.

This is where "Welcome to the Jungle" becomes important.

The film, part of the popular "Welcome" franchise, boasts a massive ensemble cast led by Akshay Kumar and several other established stars. The franchise itself carries strong recall value among audiences due to the success of earlier installments like Welcome and Welcome Back.

Trade analysts say the movie offers Disha an opportunity to reconnect with mainstream family audiences through a commercial entertainer with wide theatrical appeal. If the film performs well and her role leaves an impact, it could open doors to bigger projects and reposition her career trajectory.

At the same time, the stakes are high. In an industry increasingly driven by content-focused cinema and strong performances, actors can no longer rely solely on glamour and social media popularity. Several younger actresses have emerged with critically acclaimed performances, intensifying competition in Bollywood.

Film experts believe Disha now needs a breakout performance that goes beyond dance numbers and stylish appearances. A successful comic role or a memorable character in "Welcome to the Jungle" could help her shed the perception of being underutilised in films. The movie is also significant because large-scale comedy entertainers have recently



witnessed renewed audience interest in theatres. Producers are banking on nostalgia, humour and ensemble storytelling to attract viewers back to cinemas.

For Disha, the film may not entirely define her career, but it could certainly influence the direction of her next phase in Bollywood. Whether "Welcome to the Jungle" becomes a comeback vehicle or just another addition to her filmography will ultimately depend on both the film's box office performance and the strength of her role.

As fans wait for the film's release, one thing is clear - all eyes will be on Disha Patani to see whether she can turn this opportunity into a major career breakthrough.

Batwara 1947: Sunny Deol returns as protector-in-chief in new Partition drama

Actor Sunny Deol has announced a new title for his upcoming film with director Rajkumar Santoshi. The period drama, which was earlier titled Lahore 1947, has now been renamed Batwara 1947. After Gadar, Sunny returns in the role of a saviour and protector in the film, which also stars his son, Karan Deol.

Sharing the poster on Instagram, Sunny confirmed that Batwara 1947 will hit theatres on August 14, 2026. The announcement offers the first major update on the project in months, the film is set against the backdrop of India's Partition.

Alongside the motion poster, Sunny shared a message that read, "In times of hatred and fear, he chose courage. Watch Batwara 1947 in theatres from 14th August 2026."

According to reports, producer Aamir Khan was keen to change the original



title. A Bollywood Hungama report claimed that the rights to the title Batwara were held by the family of late

producer Salim Akhtar. The report further stated that Aamir met the family and secured the rights before the title change was finalised.

The film brings together a notable ensemble cast led by Sunny Deol. It also features Preity Zinta, marking her return to acting, alongside Shabana Azmi, Ali Fazal and Karan Deol.

Backed by Aamir Khan and directed by Rajkumar Santoshi, the film has generated interest since its announcement due to its historical setting and the collaboration between the veteran filmmaker and Sunny Deol.

While the makers have not revealed detailed plot information, the title and promotional material suggest that the story is set against the backdrop of the Partition of India in 1947.

Sunny was most recently seen in Border 2, which performed well at the box office earlier this year.



David Harbour says false Millie Bobby Brown reports triggered mental breakdown

David Harbour has spoken about a difficult period in his life, addressing both a mental health struggle and rumours of tension with his *Stranger Things* co-star Millie Bobby Brown. In an interview with *Variety*, the actor said the two issues were linked and that one triggered the other.

Harbour said he suffered a mental breakdown last year that was "confusing as hell" not only for him, but also for people around him. He said depression, mania and other mental health episodes can be hard for loved ones to understand in real time.

The actor said he was triggered by what he described as false reporting about his relationship with Brown, including reports that she had complained about his behaviour on set and that there had been friction between them behind the scenes. In December, Harbour was involved in a bizarre interaction at a California bar in which he took a man's hat. That incident came after reports that Brown had filed a bullying and harassment complaint against him.

Harbour is now acknowledging that there were disagreements between him and Brown, but said their dynamic was like that of a real family. He noted that they worked together for a decade during some of Brown's most formative years while playing a father-daughter duo on screen. According to Harbour, they always found their way back to each other.

Brown echoed that view in an email statement to the publication, saying that over the years their working relationship became increasingly collaborative and that they often pushed each other emotionally to get the best performances possible. Harbour also said fans may not have seen the last of the pair together, adding that he and Brown are already working on other projects and that the bond they built over the years remains as strong as ever. Harbour's comments bring together his account of last year's mental health episode, the reports about his relationship with Brown, and his insistence that despite disagreements, the two remain close and continue to work together.

Backrooms: Kane Parsons' horror is ambitious but gets lost in own maze

There are films that invite audiences in. *Backrooms* practically dares them to keep up.

That isn't necessarily a criticism. In fact, it is probably the most honest way to describe Kane Parsons' long-awaited feature adaptation of the internet phenomenon he helped popularise. Like the sprawling, unsettling universe that inspired it, *Backrooms* is less interested in answering questions than creating new ones. The problem is that what feels mysterious to one may feel frustratingly incomplete to another.

And that divide will likely determine whether the film works for you.

For those unfamiliar with Parsons' sprawling online mythology, *Backrooms* can feel like being dropped into the middle of a conversation everyone else has been having for years. The film follows Clark (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a troubled furniture store owner whose life appears to be quietly falling apart. Battling alcoholism, emotional outbursts and the lingering collapse of his marriage, Clark discovers strange electrical anomalies hidden within his failing business. What begins as curiosity soon becomes obsession.

Behind the walls of his store lies an impossible world – the Backrooms, an endless labyrinth of yellow corridors, abandoned office spaces and distorted realities that seem to exist outside the laws of time and physics. Alongside his employees and later a therapist played by



Renate Reinsve, Clark ventures deeper into this strange dimension, encountering creatures, unexplained phenomena and fragments of reality that feel both alien and oddly familiar. At least, that's the straightforward version.

Because *Backrooms* is ultimately less concerned with plot than atmosphere. And on that front, the film is genuinely impressive. Parsons, who rose to prominence through his viral YouTube shorts before making the leap to feature filmmaking, demonstrates a remarkable command of visual storytelling. The cinematography is exceptional. Empty hallways threaten. Fluorescent lighting becomes oppressive and endless spaces feel claustrophobic.

The production design hit it out of the park. Every corridor, office space and endless yellow room feels meticulously crafted to evoke unease. There is a tactile quality to the environments that many modern studio horror films struggle to achieve. The film understands that the Backrooms themselves are the attraction, and for much of its runtime, simply watching characters navigate these uncanny spaces is compelling enough. The visual grammar is particularly strong. Parsons knows how to use scale, silence and negative space to create dread. Some of the film's best moments arrive when absolutely nothing happens. That feeling of uncertainty is where *Backrooms* thrives.

Obsession breaks horror box-office records, crosses \$200 million globally

Curry Barker's horror film *Obsession* has crossed \$200 million globally, becoming Focus Features' biggest film of all time. According to industry tracker BoxOfficeMojo, the film has earned \$234,501,640 (Rs 2240 crore) worldwide in 26 days since its US release on May 15.

The film has already become the studio's highest-grossing title in the domestic market, where it stands at \$161 million. Its latest milestone comes after a strong fourth weekend, when it fell just 7 per cent and collected \$25.6 million, setting records for the best fourth-weekend hold for a horror film and the biggest fourth weekend ever for the genre.

The previous record-holder on both counts was *The Blair Witch Project*, which fell 9 per cent in 1999 and grossed \$24.2 million in its fourth weekend. *Obsession* had also earlier become the first film since 1982's *E.T.: The Extraterrestrial* to post increases in both its second and third weekends.

Focus Features had acquired *Obsession* at the Toronto International Film Festival for around \$15 million. The film has now gone past the global totals of several major titles from the Universal-owned label, including *Downton Abbey* (2019), which earned \$193.3 million worldwide, Robert Eggers' *Nosferatu* on \$181.8 million, *Burn After Reading* on \$164.3 million, and *Darkest Hour* on \$150.3 million.

Barker made *Obsession* independently on a budget of \$750,000 with a cast of lesser known actors. Before this film, he was best known for the horror short *The Chair*, the found-footage film *Milk & Serial*, which he had posted for free on



YouTube, and the sketch comedy channel *That's a Bad Idea*, which he runs with partner Dr Cooper Tomlinson.

The film's performance has also drawn attention in India, where it has benefited from strong word of mouth. According to trade website *Sacnilk*, *Obsession* had neared the Rs 46.8 crore in 13 days, after collecting Rs 3.35 crore on Tuesday and Rs 3.85 crore on Wednesday. The film released in India on May 29.



Legendary British painter David Hockney dies at 88

JUNE 12, 2026

LONDON (TIP): Legendary British artist David Hockney, regarded as one of the most influential and defining figures in contemporary art, whose paintings captured the world in brilliant colour, has died at the age of 88, his public relations agent announced on Friday, June 12.

Describing the iconic painter as "one of the most important figures in contemporary art in both the 20th and 21st centuries", his publicist Erica Bolton said in a statement that he had "passed away peacefully at home" in London on Thursday, June 11, a month before his 89th birthday.

"His seven-decade career and prolific oeuvre was characterised by his multimedia approach in image making, an intellectual inquiry into the nature of depiction and perspective, and a sustained commitment to celebrating and portraying the world around him," Bolton's statement, cited by news agency AFP, read.

According to the agent, Hockney is survived by his long-time partner and companion Jean-Pierre Goncalves de Lima, two brothers and "numerous nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews." Hockney was born to a clerk father and a devout Methodist mother in northern England's Bradford in 1937. His rebellious nature was apparent from his days as an art student. Hockney used titles such as "Going to be a Queen for Tonight" and "Doll Boy" for his abstract paintings at a time when homosexuality was punishable by prison in the United Kingdom.

In 1959, he left Bradford for London to continue his studies of art. There he emerged as one of the most prominent faces of the British pop art movement in the 1960s. Hockney, however, yearned for the excitement he saw in the work of American artists. Hence, he visited New York for the first time in 1961 using the money he earned from the sale of his art. In the US, he became friends with artist and filmmaker Andy Warhol. Three years later, Hockney moved to California. "I thought people who produced such work must live in colour, so I went in search of it," the British artist is quoted as saying, referring to the work of American artists, in a biography written by art critic and friend Peter Adam.

Three killed as Ukraine and Russia exchange cross-border attacks

JUNE 13, 2026

KHARKIV (TIP): Three people have been killed in the border region between Russia and Ukraine, according to officials, as the two sides launched attacks on each other in the latest exchange of fire.

In Russia, two civilians were killed and two wounded in the region of Bryansk after Kyiv struck the settlement of Suzemka with artillery, Acting Governor Egor Kovalchuk said in a post on Telegram on Friday, June 12.

A drone also hit an apartment building in Russia's central region of Tatarstan, injuring three people, while industrial facilities were hit, regional head Rustam Minnikhanov said on the Telegram messaging app.

Production work was not suspended, however, he added, but did not identify any plants. The region is home to key oil processing and petrochemical facilities, among others.

Russia's city of Togliatti, home to the country's biggest carmaker Avtovaz, also came under a drone attack overnight, Samara region Governor Vyacheslav Fedorishchev said on Telegram.

"Attention! Drone attack regime for Togliatti," he wrote. Togliatti is a city on the Volga River some 800 km (500 miles) southeast of Moscow.

These strikes are what Ukraine refers to as a "logistics lockdown", said Al Jazeera's Audrey MacAlpine, reported from Kyiv. She explained that they are mid-range strikes anywhere over 30 kilometres (17 miles) from the front line, using long-range drones and sometimes heavy weaponry to target things like oil refineries, bridges, logistics, and roads as a means of halting Russia's front-line operations.

At the same time, she said, Ukraine also launches what it calls "long-range sanctions" against Russian targets - a "tongue-in-cheek term ... that we've seen escalating over the past several months, where Ukraine is targeting Russia's oil refineries and oil industry," MacAlpine explained.

In Ukraine, a drone attack in the border region of Sumy caused casualties.

A 44-year-old woman working as a rail station operator died on her way to a shelter during the strike, according to the head of Ukrainian Railways, Oleksandr Pertsovkyi.

Another woman, a station attendant, was wounded in the



attack, Pertsovkyi added.

Three people were wounded in separate attacks on Ukraine's southern Mykolaiv region.

"We've seen continual threats by Russia before massive attacks, and we have certainly seen the results of those actions here in cities like Kyiv, where ballistics continue to be the Achilles heel for Ukraine", MacAlpine said.

On Friday, Russia said its forces had taken control of the settlement of Priyut, about 25 kilometres (15.5 miles) southwest of the city of Kramatorsk, in the Donetsk region of Ukraine, TASS news agency reported. Ukrainian authorities have yet to comment on the claim.

In recent months, Kyiv has carried out an increasing number of attacks on Russia and Russian-occupied territories.

On Thursday, fuel stations on the Russian-held Crimean Peninsula ran out of petrol after a Ukrainian campaign against the peninsula's supply lines escalated.

A witness in Sevastopol, the peninsula's largest city, told the Reuters news agency there was no fuel at most local petrol stations, with supplies struggling to keep up with a rationing regime imposed in recent weeks.

Another witness, in the resort town of Yevpatoriya, said there was a long queue outside the only petrol station open there.

'Spy turtles' and 'spy fish' being used to monitor Chinese waters, Beijing claims

JUNE 13, 2026

BEIJING (TIP): Foreign spies are fitting turtles and fish with sensors to create underwater maps of China's coastline, Beijing warned Friday, June 12, in apparent reference to its Western competitors.

In a social media post ominously titled "Under the deep blue, undercurrents are surging", the Ministry of State Security said international spy agencies are using "new types of espionage equipment" to steal sensitive marine data.

"Relatively large marine animals with sensors attached have been discovered in certain waters of China," the ministry said, in a section titled "spy turtles, spy fish". The clandestine creatures were found "swimming in a specific area, collecting sensitive data about the marine environment such as water temperature, salinity and ocean current, transmitting it overseas via satellite", it



said. Foreign groups also used solar-powered wave gliders, buoys with high-precision sensors, and devices loaded onto cargo ships capable of capturing "port dynamics" in real time, it added, without naming a particular agency.

The data collected would be used to create "underwater maps" that can "identify weak points in China's coastal defences, posing a serious threat to China's national security", according to the ministry.

The ministry urged proper security checks on equipment received from abroad, and called on fishers to report any fishy-looking buoys or devices found at sea.

Beijing and Western governments have long traded accusations of espionage.

Last year Beijing warned government workers to remain vigilant of "honeytrap" schemes, after a public servant was lured by the "seductive beauty" of a foreign agent.

This month, the Five Eyes alliance of Western security agencies said Chinese spies were posing as job recruiters online to seek sensitive information.

Trump blames Iran for 'attack on Indian ships'

JUNE 13, 2026

WASHINGTON (TIP): Donald Trump has accused Iran of spreading "fake news" about a possible peace agreement. The US President also alleged that Iranian forces carried out a drone attack targeting Indian vessels near the Strait of Hormuz.

On Truth Social, Trump claimed that reports circulating about the terms of an Iran deal were false and did not match what was "agreed to in writing." He said Iran's statements on the agreement were "dishonourable" and accused Tehran of acting in bad faith.

Trump also alleged that Iran tried to attack "Indian ships" exiting the Strait of Hormuz using drones. He called this "totally unacceptable" and said such actions must stop immediately. This came a day after the US admitted to bombing three vessels carrying Indian crew near the Hormuz Strait. Three people were killed.

"The terms that Iran leaked out to the Fake News have NOTHING to do with the terms that were agreed to, in writing," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "What they said, including their weak and pathetic statement on having a deal, bears no relation to the truth. Very dishonorable people to deal with. With them, there is no such thing as dealing in good faith. AMAZING! Also, their totally rebuffed Drone attack last night against Indian Ships leaving the Hormuz Strait is TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. They better get their act together, and FAST," he added.

US vice president JD Vance said there was "a lot of fake information" circulating about a potential Iran peace deal involving the reopening of the Strait and efforts to end its nuclear programme. He denied reports that Iran would receive cash or that any funds would be released simply for signing or attending meetings and said that economic benefits would only follow if Tehran met its obligations under any agreement.

Unions, opposition question need for extended state of emergency measures in Trinidad

JUNE 12, 2026

PORT OF SPAIN (TIP): As the administration of Prime Minister Kamla Persad Bissessar heads to parliament for an extension of current state of emergency measures, labor unions and opposition parties are railing against the plan, saying that Trinidad and Tobago cannot be under a perpetual state of emergency measures to fight violent crimes.

Beset by gun crimes, abductions, carjackings, and other felony crimes, successive administrations have imposed state of emergency measures, but opposition parties and civil society groups are beginning to question its effectiveness and for how long society must live under such restrictions.

The current three-month period expires on June 17. The prime minister says she will soon ask parliament for another three months to go along with 15 no-protest zones authorities imposed in the past week to curb civil society demonstrations. The zones ban public protests and assembly near state buildings such as the PM's office, the finance ministry, parliament, and a string of others. Union leaders and opposition parties say that the country is now headed in the wrong direction with basic freedoms being restricted by authorities.

Reacting to the latest developments, the umbrella National Trade Union Centre (NATUC) has asked government to justify another three-month extension and the continued imposition of the no-protest zones, saying these restrict basic freedoms.

"The government must provide clear, transparent, and compelling justification for any continuation of emergency powers. Any such measures must be necessary, proportionate, time-bound,



Trinidad and Tobago's capital, Port of Spain, at night. Wikimedia Commons/Unkownanylast

transparent, accountable, and respectful of constitutional freedoms," General Secretary Michael Annisette said in a statement. "NATUC therefore calls on parliament, all political parties, independent senators, civil society, religious bodies, and citizens of conscience to carefully scrutinize any proposed extension of the state of emergency."

For this year so far, police have recorded 164 murders, just four fewer than in the same period last year. The federation has been beset by gangland violence, weapons, and human smuggling from nearby Venezuela in addition to drive-by shootings and home invasions. Since taking office 14 months ago, the current government has imposed two three-month SOE's and is now headed for a third amid mounting opposition from several quarters.

For example, the main opposition People's National Movement (PNM) argues that extensions are not to be

treated as unlimited and should be used sparingly.

"It can't be that you're going to run a country with a perpetual state of emergency,' opposition leader Penelope Beckles told reporters this week. "If you have a reduction in crime, why would you want a State of Emergency? As an opposition, we have made it very clear about our willingness to work with the government. They have not at all indicated any support, even considering as it relates to that offer."

Before losing office in general elections in April of last year, the PNM had also imposed emergency measures to help curb murder rates that had averaged around 600 annually.

The umbrella labor body says that societal norms must be allowed to exist, noting that "NATUC remains firm in its position: security and democracy must coexist. The protection of one must never become the sacrifice of the other."

(Source: *The Caribbean*)

Not going to walk away: UK PM Starmer refuses to quit after top ministers resign

JUNE 13, 2026

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Friday rejected calls to step down after a week of political turmoil, insisting he would fight to remain in office despite the resignations of two senior defence officials and growing speculation about a leadership challenge.

In his first comments less than 24 hours after Defence Secretary John Healey quit, Starmer admitted Labour's recent setbacks and said he needed to "turn things around". However, he said he would not walk away from the job, arguing that any successor would face the same economic and spending pressures confronting his government.

"I'm not going to walk away," he told the BBC.

However, he also acknowledged the scale of the challenge ahead.

"Well, that's what I want to do. I recognise that I've got to turn things around. We had a very bad set of elections."

When asked whether he could still lead Labour into the next general election, Starmer admitted that his future depended on reversing the party's fortunes.

"I've always been clear that that's what

I want to do, but look, I recognise that given where we are, I need to turn that around, and that's what I intend to do."



The latest crisis began when John Healey resigned as defence secretary, accusing him and the Treasury of failing to provide enough resources to strengthen Britain's military.

In his resignation letter, Healey blamed that Starmer had been "unable, and the Treasury has been unwilling" to commit the funding required for the country's long-term

defence plans. His departure was quickly followed by the resignation of Armed Forces Minister Al Carns, who also criticised the government's defence investment strategy.

Carns warned that current spending plans were not ambitious enough to meet modern military challenges. According to him, the lessons from the war in Ukraine showed the need for a more transformative approach, particularly as drones and new technologies reshape warfare.

Despite his criticism, Carns asked Starmer to remain in office and "steady the ship", though he stopped short of ruling out his own leadership ambitions in the future.

Pakistan claims killing 26 Afghan fighters; Taliban says civilians killed

JUNE 12, 2026

KABUL (TIP): Pakistan has launched yet another round of air raids across the border with Afghanistan, with a minister saying 26 Taliban fighters have been killed. However, the Afghan government says the dead included 13 civilians, most of them children.

Pakistan's Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said in a post on X on Wednesday that the military carried out precision strikes along the border, targeting hideouts and safe havens of the Pakistan Taliban, known by the acronym TTP.

Tarar said 26 fighters were killed and four targets destroyed, including a training centre, an ammunition cache, as well as positions linked to TTP commanders Aleem Khan Khushali and Akhtar Muhammad Jani Khel.

He said the operations were carried out in response to a series of recent attacks, including a strike on a post of the paramilitary Federal Constabulary in Musa Dara on June 9, a vehicle-borne suicide attack on a military post in North Waziristan on June 2 and a suicide bombing at a police station in Bannu in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province on May 9.

Tarar described the strikes as "precise and calibrated", based on what he called credible intelligence.

However, Zabihullah Mujahid, chief spokesman for Afghanistan's Taliban government, said on X that Pakistan's attacks on the provinces of Kunar, Khost and Paktika had killed 11 children, one woman and an elderly man. He said 14 other women and children were wounded.

"We strongly condemn this humanitarian crime and act of aggression," he said.

The attacks were the deadliest in weeks and followed a period of relative calm at the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. An official in the Khost province told the AFP news agency that a house in the Spera district was struck, killing nine people and wounding 10 others. In the neighbouring Paktika province, residents told AFP that an attack killed three civilians in the Barmal district. The air raid hit a home, and those killed were children, one of the residents said.



People dig graves for victims who died in what the Taliban said was a Pakistani airstrike in Mani village, Spera District, Khost Province, Afghanistan [Reuters]

Pakistan Army guns down 16 protesters in POK's Rawalakot as demonstrations intensify

JUNE 13, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): At least 16 protesters were killed and more than 37 others injured after Pakistani Army personnel and Rangers opened fire on a large crowd of demonstrators in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir's (POK) Rawalakot, sources said on June 11. The firing took place during a mass rally against rising prices, electricity tariffs and what protesters described as the denial of basic political and economic rights.

The latest bloodshed came amid escalating unrest across POK, where demonstrations over economic hardships and governance issues have intensified in recent days. Protesters have been demanding affordable electricity, subsidised wheat and rice and greater rights. Authorities have also imposed internet restrictions in several areas as part of the security crackdown, further fuelling anger among the people.

According to local accounts, tens of thousands of people had gathered at Rawalakot's Eidgah Ground when security personnel opened fire on the crowd. Witnesses described scenes of panic as people fled the gathering, while hospitals reportedly struggled to cope with the influx of injured protesters.

The shootings triggered fresh protests in several towns, including Khai Gala, where markets were shut and residents marched against the crackdown. Women, children and elderly citizens joined demonstrations demanding justice for those killed.

Since the unrest began on June 5, 53 civilians, including 16 deaths in Rawalakot, have died in the ongoing crackdown on protests across POK.

The latest incident in Rawalakot follows days of unrest across POK after authorities banned the Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC), a civil society group that has spearheaded protests over economic and political grievances. Security forces have carried out arrests, imposed a Rs 1 crore bounty



on protest organisers, tightened movement restrictions and suspended internet services in parts of the illegally occupied region as protests spread.

Despite the brutality by Pakistani security forces, protest leaders have vowed to continue their movement, arguing that residents are seeking basic economic relief and democratic rights. Addressing supporters after the firing, movement leaders said the agitation would continue despite the loss of lives.

Addressing thousands of protesters, Sardar Aman Khan, a protester, said an unarmed population demanding hospitals, bread, jobs and basic rights were being branded as "terrorists" by the Pakistan Army and the Islamabad regime.

"Ask the people of Balochistan who the terrorists are. They will point at the Army. Ask the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They will say the same. Ask Sindh and Punjab, and today even the people of POK are saying it loud and clear: the real terror comes from those in uniform. Yeh jo dehshatgardi hain, iske peeche vardi hain (Those in uniform are the force behind this terrorism.)"

B'desh deploys armed villagers along border

JUNE 13, 2026

DHAKA (TIP): The Border Guards Bangladesh (BGB) has deployed armed village defence volunteers at several locations along the India-Bangladesh border in West Bengal and Tripura amid growing tensions over undocumented migration, cross-border infiltration and alleged "push-back" operations, Border Security Force (BSF) personnel on the ground said.

According to BSF officials familiar with the developments, armed Bangladeshi villagers and members of auxiliary paramilitary units have been spotted at more than a dozen locations across border districts adjoining India. The move comes at a time when India has intensified action against undocumented migrants and increased fencing activity along vulnerable stretches of the international border.

Over the past week, BSF personnel stationed in different sectors of West Bengal and Tripura reported multiple sightings of Bangladeshi villagers assisting BGB personnel and monitoring border areas where fencing work has recently begun.



The sightings were primarily reported in Bangladesh's border districts of Chapainawabganj, Thakurgaon and Dinajpur, which share long stretches of the border with West Bengal, mid-level BSF officers said.

Officials further confirmed that the Bangladesh home ministry has deployed personnel from Bangladesh Ansar and the Village Defence Party - a paramilitary volunteer force - at several locations to strengthen surveillance and prevent people from crossing back into Bangladesh illegally.

"Local villagers in both West Bengal and Tripura, along with BSF personnel on the ground, have spotted armed

villagers who are doubling up as volunteers for the BGB," a BSF officer said on condition of anonymity.

"The villagers on our side of the border were told by Bangladeshi citizens across the fence that training was conducted by the BGB before deployment. This appears linked to the ongoing crackdown on infiltrators, which has also led to hundreds of Bangladeshi nationals voluntarily attempting to return to Bangladesh. The BGB has trained villagers to guard the border round-the-clock in shifts and ensure even their own citizens do not re-enter illegally," the officer added.

There was no official response from the BSF headquarters in New Delhi regarding the latest ground situation.

India shares a 4,096.7-km-long border with Bangladesh, of which West Bengal accounts for the longest stretch at 2,216.7 km. The BSF maintains at least 1,185 border outposts along the frontier. Officials estimate that every year between 1,500 and 2,000 undocumented migrants are apprehended while attempting to cross into India, often with the help of touts and through unfenced terrain.

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INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY 2026 WITH TIRLOK MALIK



Hosted by Tirlok Malik
Happy Life Yoga Founder and
Emmy Nominated Filmmaker

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Guest Speakers



Prof. Indrajit Saluja
Publisher - The Indian Panorama



Indu Jaiswal
Director of Nutrition Promenade RHC



Meera Gandhi
Philanthropist



Beena Kothari
President - AIA



Rev. Paul Sladkus
Founder - Good News Corporation



Neha Lohia
Conscious Filmmaker



Anil Narang
Vegan Ambassador



Tara Sajan
Assistant Director of Nursing



Anmarie Bhola
Engineer & Author



Carolina Pretto
Ayurveda Expert



Megi Kurdadze
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International Yoga Day: Ancient wisdom for a modern world

International Day of Yoga is observed worldwide every year on June 21 to highlight the importance of yoga in promoting physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Originating in ancient India, yoga has become a global wellness practice followed by millions. The idea for Yoga Day was proposed by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his address to the United Nations General Assembly in 2014. Describing yoga as a valuable gift of India's ancient tradition, Modi called for an international observance dedicated to the practice. The proposal received overwhelming support, with 177 countries co-sponsoring the resolution, which was adopted unanimously by the UN. The first International Day of Yoga was celebrated on June 21, 2015, with mass yoga sessions and events held across the world, including in New Delhi, New York, Paris, Beijing and Bangkok. Since then, the annual observance has grown into a global movement promoting health, mindfulness and balanced living.



The History of International Day of Yoga

International Day of Yoga, celebrated annually on June 21, is one of the most significant global observances dedicated to health, wellness and holistic living. What began as an Indian initiative at the United Nations has, within a decade, evolved into a worldwide movement that brings together millions of people across cultures, religions and nationalities through the practice of yoga.

Today, yoga sessions are held in public parks, schools, beaches, community centres, embassies and iconic landmarks around the world. From New Delhi and New York to Paris, Beijing, Sydney and Nairobi, International Day of Yoga has become a symbol of peace, mindfulness and harmony between humanity and nature.

Ancient Roots of Yoga

The history of International Day of Yoga is deeply connected to the ancient origins of yoga itself. Yoga is believed to have originated in India more than 5,000 years ago. References to yogic practices are found in the Vedas, Upanishads and other ancient Indian scriptures. Over centuries, yoga evolved into a complete philosophical and spiritual discipline focused on achieving balance between the body, mind and soul.

The word "Yoga" comes from the Sanskrit root Yuj, meaning "to unite" or "to join." Traditionally, yoga was not merely a form of exercise but a way of life involving meditation, breathing



techniques, ethical discipline and spiritual awareness.

Though yoga remained rooted in India for centuries, it gradually spread across the world through spiritual teachers, scholars and practitioners. By the 20th century, yoga had become increasingly popular in Europe, the United States and other parts of Asia as a method of physical fitness, stress relief and mental well-being.

India's Proposal at the United Nations
The idea of establishing an international day dedicated to yoga was proposed by Narendra Modi during his address to the 69th session of the United

Nations General Assembly on September 27, 2014.

In his speech, Modi described yoga as "an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition." He said yoga embodied the unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfilment, and harmony between humans and nature. He also stressed that yoga was not merely about exercise but a means to discover a sense of oneness with oneself and the world.

The proposal resonated strongly with the international community because yoga was already being practised globally by millions of people. Countries

recognized its importance in promoting healthier lifestyles and mental wellness in an increasingly stressful modern world.

Unprecedented Global Support

Soon after India introduced the draft resolution, it received overwhelming support at the United Nations. A remarkable 177 countries co-sponsored the resolution, making it one of the highest numbers of co-sponsors ever for a UN General Assembly resolution.

On December 11, 2014, the United Nations officially adopted Resolution 69/131, declaring June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. The resolution was passed unanimously without a vote, reflecting rare global consensus.

The widespread support was seen as a major diplomatic success for India and highlighted yoga's universal appeal that transcended political, cultural and religious boundaries.

Why June 21 Was Chosen

June 21 was selected for special symbolic reasons. It marks the Summer Solstice, the longest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.

In yogic traditions, the Summer Solstice holds spiritual importance. Ancient Indian belief systems consider this period a time of transformation, heightened energy and inner awakening. According to yogic philosophy, it was after the Summer Solstice that Lord Shiva, regarded as the Adiyogi or the first yogi, began imparting yogic knowledge to his disciples.

The date therefore carried both scientific and spiritual significance, making it an appropriate choice for International Yoga Day.

The First International Day of Yoga in 2015

The inaugural International Day of Yoga was celebrated on June 21, 2015, with extraordinary participation across the world.

In India, the main event was held at Rajpath in New Delhi, where Prime Minister Modi joined tens of thousands of participants for a mass yoga session. The event entered the Guinness World Records for the largest yoga lesson and for participation by people from the highest number of nationalities.

The celebrations extended far beyond

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India. Major cities around the world organized yoga demonstrations, workshops and cultural programmes.

In New York, yoga enthusiasts gathered in Times Square. Paris hosted yoga sessions near the Eiffel Tower, while events were also organized in Beijing, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, Tokyo and Sydney. Indian embassies and cultural organizations played a key role in coordinating international celebrations.

The massive response demonstrated yoga's growing global influence and acceptance.

Growth into a Global Wellness Movement

Since 2015, International Day of Yoga has expanded rapidly every year. Governments, educational institutions, healthcare organizations and fitness communities now participate actively in the celebrations.

Each year, a specific theme is chosen to focus attention on different aspects of wellness and healthy living. Themes in previous years have emphasized harmony, climate action, mental health, sustainable lifestyles and collective well-being.

The COVID-19 pandemic further increased awareness about yoga's benefits. During lockdowns, millions turned to yoga and meditation to maintain physical fitness and reduce anxiety and stress. Virtual yoga sessions and online wellness workshops became common worldwide.

Today, International Day of Yoga is observed in more than 190 countries, making it one of the most globally recognized annual observances associated with India's cultural heritage.

Yoga as India's Cultural Diplomacy

International Day of Yoga is also regarded as an important example of India's cultural diplomacy and soft power. Through yoga, India has shared an ancient tradition that addresses universal concerns such as stress, health, emotional balance and mindfulness.

The observance has strengthened India's cultural presence on the world stage while also encouraging cross-cultural understanding. Yoga has become a bridge connecting people from different societies through a shared pursuit of wellness and inner peace.

The Continuing Relevance of Yoga

In the modern era, where fast-paced lifestyles, digital overload and mental health challenges have become common, yoga continues to gain relevance. Scientific studies increasingly support its role in improving flexibility, cardiovascular health, concentration, emotional resilience and stress management.

International Day of Yoga serves not only as a celebration of physical exercise but also as a reminder of the importance of balance in everyday life. It encourages people to adopt healthier habits, reconnect with themselves and cultivate harmony with the world around them.

More than a decade after its adoption by the United Nations, International Day of Yoga stands as a remarkable example of how an ancient Indian practice



evolved into a universal movement for global wellness, peace and human unity.

What is Yoga?

Yoga is far more than a form of physical exercise or a modern wellness trend. It is an ancient Indian philosophy and way of life that seeks to create harmony between the body, mind and spirit. Practised for thousands of years, yoga combines physical postures, breathing techniques, meditation and ethical discipline to promote overall well-being and inner balance.

The word "Yoga" is derived from the Sanskrit root Yuj, which means "to unite" or "to join." In spiritual terms, yoga signifies the union of individual consciousness with universal consciousness. At its core, yoga is about achieving balance - between thought and action, body and mind, and humanity and nature.

The origins of yoga can be traced back more than 5,000 years to ancient India. References to yogic practices are found

in sacred texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. Over time, yoga evolved into a structured philosophical system aimed at improving both physical health and spiritual awareness.

One of the most influential texts on yoga is the Yoga Sutras compiled by Patanjali around the second century BCE. Patanjali defined yoga as the control of the mind's fluctuations and described the eightfold path of yoga, known as Ashtanga Yoga.

These eight limbs include:

- " Yama (ethical principles)
- " Niyama (self-discipline)
- " Asana (physical postures)
- " Pranayama (breathing techniques)
- " Pratyahara (withdrawal of senses)
- " Dharana (concentration)
- " Dhyana (meditation)
- " Samadhi (state of spiritual absorption)

Today, the physical postures or asanas

are the most widely recognised aspect of yoga. However, traditional yoga is much broader and includes mental discipline, mindfulness, meditation and spiritual growth.

Yoga exists in many forms and traditions. Hatha Yoga focuses on physical postures and breathing exercises, while Raja Yoga emphasizes meditation and mental control. Bhakti Yoga is centred on devotion, Karma Yoga on selfless action, and Jnana Yoga on wisdom and knowledge. Modern styles such as Vinyasa, Ashtanga and Power Yoga have also become popular around the world.

In recent decades, yoga has gained global recognition for its numerous health benefits. Scientific studies suggest that regular yoga practice can improve flexibility, posture and strength while reducing stress, anxiety and depression. It is also known to support heart health, improve breathing and enhance concentration and emotional well-being.

The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted yoga's importance as millions turned to meditation and breathing exercises to cope with stress and uncertainty. Today, yoga is practised in homes, schools, fitness centres, hospitals and workplaces across the globe.

Yet yoga is not merely about fitness or flexibility. At its deepest level, it is a journey toward self-awareness, inner peace and conscious living. It teaches mindfulness, compassion, discipline and balance in everyday life.

As the world becomes increasingly fast-paced and stressful, yoga continues to offer a timeless path toward physical wellness, mental clarity and spiritual harmony, making it one of India's most enduring gifts to humanity.

The Ancient Origins of Yoga

Yoga's origins date back thousands of years. Archaeological discoveries from the Indus Valley Civilization, around 3000 BCE, depict figures seated in meditative postures resembling yogic practices.

References to yoga also appear in the Vedas, the world's oldest sacred scriptures. The Upanishads further expanded yogic philosophy, exploring meditation, breath and consciousness.

The Bhagavad Gita, one of Hinduism's most revered texts, presents yoga as multiple paths toward spiritual realization, including Karma Yoga (path of action), Bhakti Yoga (path of devotion), and Jnana Yoga (path of knowledge).

Around the second century BCE, Patanjali systematized yogic philosophy in the Yoga Sutras, laying the foundation for classical yoga traditions.

Over centuries, yogic practices evolved through Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions. Medieval India witnessed the rise of Hatha Yoga, which emphasized physical postures, purification techniques and breath control.

Yoga remained largely within monasteries, ashrams and spiritual communities until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Indian spiritual teachers introduced it to the West.

The evolution of Yoga: From spiritual discipline to global wellness movement

At sunrise in New York's Times Square, hundreds of people stretch into synchronized poses amid flashing billboards and honking traffic. Thousands of miles away, on the banks of the Ganga in Rishikesh, saffron-clad monks sit cross-legged in silent meditation. Though worlds apart, both scenes are connected by a single ancient tradition - yoga.

What began thousands of years ago in the forests and spiritual centres of India as a sacred path toward enlightenment has today transformed into one of the world's most influential wellness movements. Yoga now exists everywhere - in luxury resorts, schools, hospitals, corporate offices, fitness studios and even digital apps. It has become a global language of health, mindfulness and emotional well-being.

Yet beneath the modern yoga mats, athletic poses and social media trends lies a profound spiritual philosophy rooted in India's ancient wisdom traditions.

The Ancient Beginnings

The origins of yoga date back more than 5,000 years. Archaeological evidence from the Indus Valley Civilization depicts figures seated in meditative postures, suggesting early yogic practices. References to yoga are also found in the Vedas and Upanishads, ancient Indian scriptures that explored meditation, breath control and the search for higher consciousness.

In its earliest form, yoga was not designed for fitness or physical flexibility. It was a spiritual discipline intended to help practitioners transcend worldly suffering and attain self-realisation.

Ancient sages developed yoga as a path toward harmony between the body, mind and soul. Meditation, ethical living, breath control and self-discipline formed the core of yogic practice.

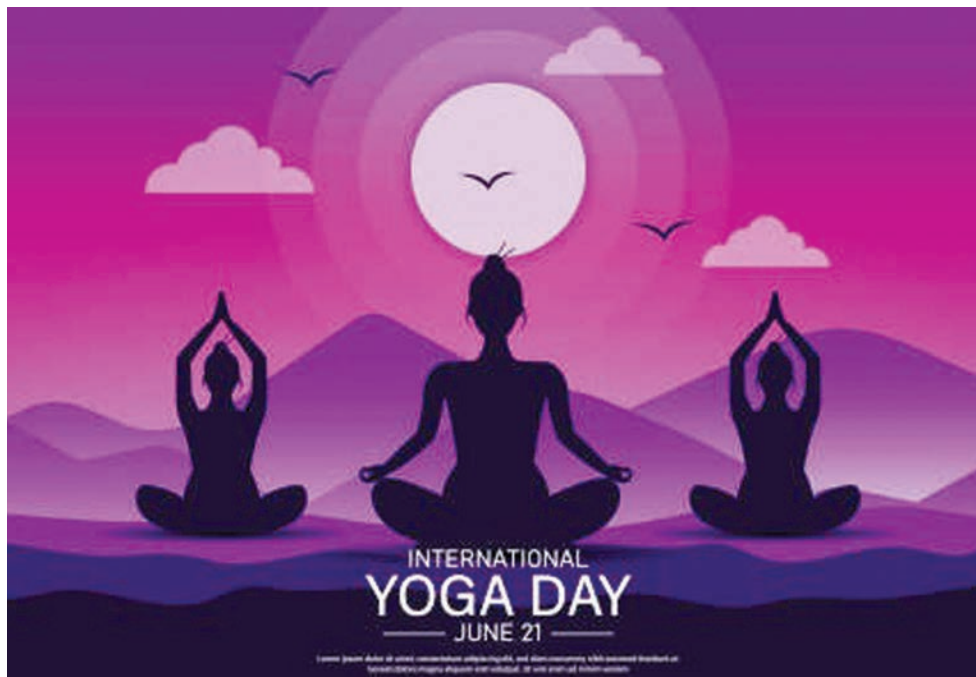
One of the most influential milestones in yoga's evolution came with the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali around the second century BCE. Patanjali systematized yoga into an eightfold path known as Ashtanga Yoga, which included ethics, meditation, concentration and physical postures.

Even then, physical exercises were only a small part of yoga's broader spiritual framework.

From Ashrams to the Wider World

For centuries, yoga remained largely confined to monasteries, temples, ashrams and spiritual communities across India. Gurus passed teachings orally from teacher to disciple, preserving yoga as a sacred science of consciousness.

The transformation of yoga into a global phenomenon began during the late 19th century.



One of the key figures in this journey was Swami Vivekananda, who introduced Indian philosophy and yoga to Western audiences during the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893. Vivekananda emphasized Raja Yoga, meditation and spiritual philosophy rather than physical postures. His speeches sparked fascination in the West about India's spiritual traditions and opened the doors for yoga's international spread.

In the early 20th century, several Indian teachers carried yoga to Europe and America. Among them was Paramahansa Yogananda, whose book *Autobiography of a Yogi* became one of the most influential spiritual books of the century.

The Rise of Modern Yoga

The biggest transformation in yoga occurred during the 20th century with the emergence of modern postural yoga.

Much of today's popular yoga styles can be traced back to Tirumalai Krishnamacharya, often called the "father of modern yoga." Teaching from

Mysore in southern India, Krishnamacharya blended traditional yogic philosophy with physical movement and breathing techniques.

His students later became some of the most influential yoga masters in the world.

These included:

- B. K. S. Iyengar, founder of Iyengar Yoga
- Pattabhi Jois, creator of Ashtanga Yoga
- Indra Devi, who popularized yoga among Hollywood celebrities
- T. K. V. Desikachar, who emphasized personalized yoga therapy

These teachers helped transform yoga into a structured practice accessible to ordinary people across the globe.

By the 1960s and 1970s, yoga had become closely associated with counterculture movements, alternative lifestyles and spiritual exploration in the West. Interest in meditation, Eastern philosophy and holistic healing surged among younger generations seeking alternatives to materialism and stress-driven lifestyles.

Yoga Meets Science

As yoga spread internationally, scientific research began examining its physical and psychological effects.

Studies increasingly showed that yoga could improve flexibility, posture, cardiovascular health and respiratory function. Researchers also found that meditation and breathing exercises helped reduce stress, anxiety and depression.

This scientific validation played a major role in yoga's acceptance within mainstream healthcare and wellness industries.

Hospitals began incorporating yoga into rehabilitation programmes. Schools introduced yoga sessions for students. Corporations adopted workplace yoga to reduce burnout and improve productivity.

Yoga was no longer viewed solely as a spiritual practice - it had become a tool for modern living.

The Global Wellness Boom

The 21st century witnessed yoga's complete transformation into a global wellness phenomenon.

Today, yoga is practiced by millions across nearly every country. Styles such as Vinyasa, Power Yoga, Bikram Yoga and Yin Yoga cater to diverse lifestyles and fitness goals.

The yoga industry now includes:

- Wellness tourism
- Luxury yoga retreats
- Teacher training programmes
- Online classes and apps
- Yoga apparel and accessories
- Corporate wellness programmes

Social media further accelerated yoga's popularity, turning yoga instructors into global influencers and creating massive online wellness communities. International Day of Yoga, celebrated every year on June 21, also contributed significantly to yoga's worldwide recognition. Proposed by Narendra Modi and adopted by the United Nations in 2014, the annual observance transformed yoga into a symbol of global wellness and cultural unity.

A Timeless Journey

Yoga's evolution from an ancient spiritual discipline to a worldwide wellness movement reflects humanity's enduring search for balance and meaning. Though its forms have changed over centuries, yoga's central message remains timeless: harmony within oneself leads to harmony with the world.

From Himalayan caves to urban skyscrapers, yoga continues to bridge cultures, generations and philosophies. It remains one of India's greatest contributions to humanity - a living tradition that continues to evolve while preserving its ancient soul.

Different schools and forms of Yoga

The roots of yoga lie in ancient Indian philosophy and spiritual inquiry. Early yogic traditions recognized that human beings possess different temperaments, personalities and spiritual inclinations. As a result, multiple yogic paths evolved to suit different seekers.

Ancient texts such as the Bhagavad Gita describe yoga not merely as physical exercise, but as a disciplined way of life leading toward self-awareness and liberation.

Over centuries, yoga diversified into several classical schools, many of which continue to influence modern practice today.

Hatha Yoga: Foundation of Modern Yoga

Perhaps the most widely recognized form globally, Hatha Yoga forms the basis of many modern yoga styles.

The word "Hatha" combines the Sanskrit terms Ha (sun) and Tha (moon), symbolizing the balance of opposing energies. Traditionally, Hatha Yoga focuses on physical postures (asanas), breathing exercises (pranayama) and purification techniques aimed at preparing the body and mind for meditation.

Unlike fast-paced modern workout routines, traditional Hatha Yoga is generally slower and more mindful. It emphasizes alignment, flexibility, balance and controlled breathing.

Today, Hatha Yoga is especially popular among beginners because of its gentle pace and accessibility.

Raja Yoga: The Royal Path of Meditation

Known as the "Royal Yoga," Raja Yoga emphasizes mental discipline and meditation. It is closely associated with the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, who outlined the eightfold path of yoga.

Raja Yoga focuses on mastering the mind through concentration, ethical living and deep meditation. Physical postures play a smaller role compared to mental and spiritual practices.

For practitioners seeking mindfulness, inner stillness and spiritual growth, Raja Yoga remains one of the most profound yogic traditions.

Karma Yoga: The Yoga of Selfless Action

Karma Yoga teaches that spiritual growth can be achieved through selfless service and action without attachment to results.

This path encourages individuals to perform duties with sincerity, compassion and detachment from personal gain. Everyday work becomes a spiritual practice when carried out with mindfulness and humility.

The philosophy of Karma Yoga gained wide recognition through the Bhagavad Gita, where Lord Krishna explains the importance of performing one's duty without ego or expectation.

Many social workers, volunteers and spiritual practitioners follow Karma Yoga as a way of integrating spirituality into daily life.



Bhakti Yoga: The Path of Devotion

Bhakti Yoga is the yoga of love, devotion and surrender to the divine.

This form emphasizes prayer, chanting, music, rituals and emotional connection with a higher power. Bhakti practitioners often express devotion through devotional songs, mantra chanting and acts of worship.

Unlike intellectually driven spiritual paths, Bhakti Yoga focuses on emotional transformation through faith and love.

In India, Bhakti traditions have deeply influenced spiritual culture for centuries through saints, poets and devotional movements.

Jnana Yoga: The Path of Wisdom

Jnana Yoga is considered the yoga of knowledge and intellectual inquiry.

This path involves deep philosophical reflection and self-examination aimed at understanding the true nature of reality and the self. Practitioners seek spiritual liberation through wisdom, study and contemplation.

Ancient philosophers and sages who pursued truth through introspection and scriptural study are often associated with Jnana Yoga.

It is regarded as one of the most intellectually demanding forms of yoga.

Ashtanga Yoga: Discipline Through Dynamic Practice

Ashtanga Yoga is a physically demanding and highly structured form of yoga popularized by Pattabhi Jois.

The practice involves a fixed sequence of postures performed in coordination with breath. Movements flow continuously from one posture to another, generating heat, strength and endurance.

Ashtanga Yoga laid the foundation for many modern athletic yoga styles and is often favoured by practitioners seeking physical challenge and discipline.

Iyengar Yoga: Precision and Alignment

Developed by B. K. S. Iyengar, Iyengar Yoga emphasizes precision, posture

alignment and careful technique.

Props such as belts, blocks, chairs and cushions are often used to help practitioners achieve correct alignment safely.

This method is especially beneficial for beginners, older adults and people recovering from injuries because of its therapeutic approach.

Iyengar Yoga also played a major role in introducing yoga to Western audiences during the 20th century.

Kundalini Yoga: Awakening Inner Energy

Kundalini Yoga combines physical postures, breathing techniques, chanting, meditation and repetitive movements to awaken dormant spiritual energy believed to reside at the base of the spine.

Often described as one of the more mystical forms of yoga, Kundalini practice aims to activate higher states of awareness and consciousness.

Sessions frequently include mantra chanting, breathwork and meditation along with dynamic exercises.

Vinyasa Yoga: Flow and Movement

One of the most popular modern yoga styles, Vinyasa Yoga links movement with breath in smooth flowing sequences. Unlike rigidly structured systems, Vinyasa classes often vary creatively from teacher to teacher. The continuous movement creates a dynamic, energetic experience that improves flexibility, stamina and coordination. Because of its fluid and fitness-oriented nature, Vinyasa Yoga is especially popular among younger practitioners and urban wellness communities.

Bikram Yoga: Yoga in the Heat

Bikram Yoga follows a fixed sequence of 26 postures practised in a heated room, typically around 40°C.

The heated environment is believed to improve flexibility, circulation and detoxification through sweating. The intense conditions make Bikram Yoga

physically challenging and demanding.

Though popular worldwide, Bikram Yoga has also faced criticism and controversy over the years regarding its commercialization and teaching practices.

Yin Yoga: Stillness and Deep Relaxation

In contrast to fast-paced yoga styles, Yin Yoga is slow, meditative and deeply calming.

Postures are held for several minutes to target deep connective tissues, joints and ligaments. The practice encourages patience, mindfulness and introspection.

Yin Yoga is often used to reduce stress, improve flexibility and balance more active lifestyles.

Power Yoga: Fitness Meets Yoga

Power Yoga emerged as a modern, fitness-oriented adaptation inspired by Ashtanga Yoga.

This energetic style focuses on strength, endurance and cardiovascular fitness. Classes are often intense and athletic, attracting practitioners looking for a workout-based yoga experience.

Power Yoga reflects how yoga has adapted to contemporary fitness culture while still incorporating breath and movement.

The Rise of Hybrid and Modern Yoga Styles

As yoga expanded globally, numerous hybrid styles emerged, blending traditional yogic practices with modern fitness trends.

Today, there are forms such as:

- Aerial Yoga
- Hot Yoga
- Prenatal Yoga
- Restorative Yoga
- Acro Yoga
- Chair Yoga
- Yoga Therapy

These variations make yoga accessible to people of different ages, abilities and health conditions.

One Tradition, Many Paths

Despite their differences, all schools of yoga share a common goal - achieving balance, awareness and harmony within oneself.

Some paths emphasize physical transformation, while others focus on meditation, devotion or wisdom. Some are intense and athletic; others are quiet and contemplative.

Together, they reflect yoga's extraordinary adaptability across cultures and generations.

In today's world, yoga continues to evolve while remaining rooted in its ancient philosophy. Whether practised for fitness, healing, mindfulness or spiritual growth, yoga offers something deeply personal yet universally relevant.

Perhaps that is why yoga has endured for thousands of years - because it recognizes that there is no single path toward well-being. Like life itself, yoga is a journey, and every individual must find the path that resonates with their own inner self.

Science-backed benefits of Yoga: How an ancient practice is transforming modern health & wellness

In a world battling stress, anxiety, sedentary lifestyles and chronic illnesses, yoga has emerged as far more than a spiritual tradition or fitness trend. Once practiced primarily in ancient Indian ashrams and meditation centres, yoga is now recommended by doctors, therapists, psychologists and wellness experts around the globe.

What makes yoga unique is its ability to combine physical movement, controlled breathing and mindfulness into a single holistic practice. While yogis have long believed in yoga's healing power, modern science is increasingly validating many of its benefits through medical research and clinical studies.

Today, yoga is being used not only to improve flexibility and fitness but also to manage stress, support mental health, enhance sleep and even aid recovery from chronic diseases. As scientific understanding grows, yoga is gaining recognition as one of the most effective mind-body wellness practices of the modern age.

More Than Just Stretching

To many people, yoga may appear to be a series of physical postures performed on a mat. However, yoga involves much more than flexibility exercises.

Traditional yoga combines:

- Physical postures (asanas)
- Breathing techniques (pranayama)
- Meditation
- Relaxation
- Mindfulness

Together, these elements influence both the body and the nervous system, creating measurable physical and psychological effects.

Researchers believe yoga works by reducing stress hormones, calming the nervous system and improving the body's ability to regulate itself.

Improved Flexibility and Strength

One of yoga's most visible physical benefits is improved flexibility.

Regular practice stretches muscles, tendons and joints, increasing mobility and reducing stiffness. Yoga also strengthens core muscles and improves posture, balance and coordination.

Unlike high-impact workouts, yoga offers low-impact movement suitable for people of different ages and fitness levels. Many physiotherapists recommend yoga to improve mobility and reduce muscular tension caused by long hours of sitting and poor posture.

Styles such as Hatha Yoga and Iyengar Yoga are especially known for improving alignment and body awareness.

Better Heart Health

Scientific studies suggest yoga can positively affect cardiovascular health.

Research has shown that regular yoga practice may help:

- Lower blood pressure



- Improve blood circulation
- Reduce resting heart rate
- Lower cholesterol levels
- Decrease inflammation

Breathing exercises and meditation activate the parasympathetic nervous system, often referred to as the body's "rest and relaxation" response. This helps reduce stress-related strain on the heart.

Doctors increasingly recommend yoga as a complementary lifestyle practice for individuals managing hypertension and heart disease risk factors.

Stress Reduction and Mental Calm

Perhaps one of yoga's most widely recognized benefits is stress relief.

Modern lifestyles often keep the body in a constant state of tension due to work pressure, digital overload and emotional stress. Yoga helps calm the nervous system through deep breathing and mindfulness practices.

Scientific studies show yoga can lower cortisol, the body's primary stress hormone. It also stimulates relaxation responses that help reduce anxiety and emotional fatigue.

Meditation and controlled breathing techniques used in yoga can improve emotional regulation, helping practitioners feel calmer and more focused.

In today's fast-paced world, yoga has become a powerful antidote to chronic stress.

Support for Anxiety and Depression

Mental health experts increasingly recognize yoga as a supportive therapy for anxiety and depression.

Yoga promotes relaxation while encouraging mindfulness and present-moment awareness. This helps reduce repetitive negative thinking patterns

associated with stress and anxiety disorders.

Some studies suggest yoga may increase levels of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), a brain chemical linked to mood regulation and reduced anxiety.

Practices involving meditation, slow breathing and gentle movement are particularly beneficial for emotional well-being.

Though yoga is not a substitute for medical treatment, psychologists often recommend it alongside therapy and lifestyle changes.

Improved Sleep Quality

Millions of people worldwide struggle with poor sleep and insomnia. Yoga may help improve sleep quality naturally.

Relaxation techniques and breathing exercises calm the mind and reduce physical tension, making it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep.

Even short evening yoga sessions have been shown to improve sleep patterns and reduce restlessness. Restorative Yoga and Yoga Nidra are especially effective for promoting deep relaxation.

As sleep disorders rise globally, yoga offers a non-pharmaceutical approach to improving rest and recovery.

Enhanced Breathing and Lung Function

Breathing lies at the heart of yoga practice.

Pranayama, or yogic breathing techniques, train practitioners to control and deepen their breath. Scientific studies suggest these techniques can improve lung capacity, respiratory efficiency and oxygen circulation.

Yoga breathing exercises are often recommended for individuals dealing with respiratory conditions such as asthma and mild breathing difficulties.

The COVID-19 pandemic also renewed interest in breathing practices that support lung health and stress management.

Pain Management and Rehabilitation

Yoga is increasingly being used in pain management and rehabilitation programmes.

Studies indicate yoga can help reduce chronic pain related to:

- Back pain
- Arthritis
- Neck pain
- Joint stiffness
- Fibromyalgia

Gentle movement, stretching and improved posture help reduce muscular tension and improve mobility.

Hospitals and rehabilitation centres now frequently include yoga in treatment programmes for patients recovering from injuries and surgeries.

Yoga therapy is also gaining popularity as a complementary approach to long-term pain management.

Improved Brain Function, concentration

Research suggests yoga may positively influence brain function and cognitive performance.

Meditation and mindfulness practices can improve:

- Concentration
- Memory
- Mental clarity
- Attention span

Brain imaging studies have shown that regular meditation may alter brain regions associated with learning, emotional regulation and stress response.

Students, professionals and older adults increasingly turn to yoga to improve focus and mental sharpness.

Benefits for Children and Students
Yoga is also becoming popular in schools and educational institutions.

Studies suggest yoga can help children:

- Improve concentration
- Manage stress
- Enhance emotional control
- Develop better posture and flexibility

School yoga programmes are often used to promote mindfulness and emotional well-being among students facing academic pressure and digital distractions.

Yoga and Healthy Ageing

As populations age globally, yoga is being recognized as a valuable practice for older adults.

Gentle yoga improves:

- Balance
- Joint flexibility
- Muscle strength
- Coordination

These benefits may reduce the risk of falls and improve independence among senior citizens.

Visionaries who carried Yoga across continents

Long before yoga became a global wellness phenomenon practiced in urban studios, luxury retreats and fitness centres, it was preserved and passed down through generations of spiritual teachers, philosophers and gurus in India. These yoga masters not only protected ancient yogic wisdom but also transformed and adapted it for changing times, helping yoga evolve from a sacred spiritual discipline into an international movement for health, mindfulness and self-awareness.

From ancient sages who codified yogic philosophy to modern teachers who introduced yoga to the West, these visionaries shaped the way millions around the world understand and practise yoga today.

Patanjali



Among the most influential figures in yogic history, Patanjali is widely regarded as the father of classical yoga. Believed to have lived around the second century BCE, Patanjali compiled the Yoga Sutras, one of the foundational texts of yoga philosophy.

The Yoga Sutras systematized yoga into an organized spiritual and psychological discipline. Patanjali defined yoga as the control of the fluctuations of the mind and introduced the eightfold path of yoga, known as Ashtanga Yoga.

Patanjali's teachings continue to form the philosophical foundation for many yoga traditions practiced worldwide today.

Swami Vivekananda



One of the most important figures in yoga's global journey was Swami Vivekananda.

A disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda played a

transformative role in introducing Indian spirituality and yoga to Western audiences.

His famous speech at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893 captured international attention and presented yoga as a universal spiritual philosophy rather than a religion-specific practice.

Vivekananda emphasized Raja Yoga - the path of meditation and mental discipline. Through his lectures and writings, he helped reshape global perceptions of Indian spirituality and inspired widespread interest in yoga and Vedanta philosophy.

His book Raja Yoga became highly influential among Western spiritual seekers.

Paramahansa Yogananda



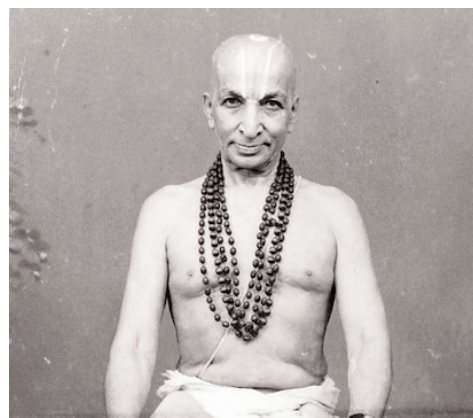
Paramahansa Yogananda was among the first Indian spiritual teachers to settle in the United States and teach yoga on a large scale.

He introduced Kriya Yoga and meditation practices to Western audiences during the early 20th century. His landmark book Autobiography of a Yogi, first published in 1946, became one of the most influential spiritual books of modern times.

The book inspired generations of readers, including scientists, artists and spiritual seekers, and played a major role in spreading awareness about yoga and meditation globally.

Yogananda emphasized that yoga was a scientific method for achieving inner peace and spiritual awakening.

Tirumalai Krishnamacharya



Often called the "father of modern yoga," Tirumalai Krishnamacharya transformed yoga teaching in the 20th century.

Teaching primarily from Mysore in

southern India, Krishnamacharya blended traditional yogic philosophy with physical postures, breathing techniques and therapeutic applications.

His teaching style was dynamic, adaptable and personalized according to the needs of each student. This approach laid the foundation for many modern yoga systems practiced worldwide today.

Krishnamacharya's greatest legacy may be the extraordinary students he trained, many of whom became global yoga icons in their own right.

B. K. S. Iyengar



One of Krishnamacharya's most celebrated disciples, B. K. S. Iyengar revolutionized modern yoga through his emphasis on precision, alignment and therapeutic practice.

Founder of Iyengar Yoga, he developed a highly structured method using props such as blocks, straps and chairs to help practitioners achieve proper posture safely.

Iyengar's landmark book Light on Yoga became one of the world's most influential yoga manuals and introduced millions to yoga practice.

His teaching made yoga accessible to people of all ages and physical abilities, including those recovering from injuries or health conditions.

Pattabhi Jois

K. Pattabhi Jois popularized Ashtanga Yoga, a physically demanding and dynamic system involving flowing sequences synchronized with breath.

His style emphasized discipline, endurance and continuous movement, influencing many modern athletic yoga forms, including Power Yoga and Vinyasa Yoga.

Ashtanga Yoga became especially popular among younger practitioners and international fitness communities during the late 20th century.

Jois attracted students from around the world to Mysore, helping transform yoga into a global movement.

Indra Devi

Born in Latvia, Indra Devi became one of the first female students of Krishnamacharya and later emerged as one of yoga's earliest international ambassadors.

She introduced yoga to celebrities and film stars in Hollywood during the 1940s and 1950s, helping popularize yoga among Western audiences.

Through books, television appearances and teaching centres, Indra Devi made yoga appear approachable, graceful and suitable for everyday life.

She played a key role in making yoga especially popular among women in the West.

T. K. V. Desikachar

The son of Krishnamacharya, T. K. V. Desikachar emphasized that yoga should be adapted to the individual rather than forcing individuals to adapt to rigid systems.

He promoted therapeutic yoga and individualized teaching methods that considered a practitioner's age, health and lifestyle.

Desikachar's teachings greatly influenced modern yoga therapy and holistic wellness practices.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Founder of the Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar became known for promoting breathing techniques, meditation and stress-relief programmes across the globe.

His Sudarshan Kriya breathing technique gained international recognition for its calming and emotional wellness benefits.

Through humanitarian projects, wellness programmes and peace initiatives, he expanded yoga's role beyond fitness into emotional healing and social harmony.

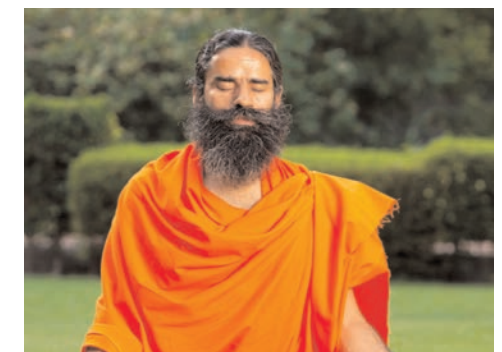
Sadhguru

Founder of the Isha Foundation, Sadhguru has become one of the most influential contemporary yoga teachers.

Known for combining spiritual wisdom with modern language and global outreach, he has introduced yogic practices to younger audiences through large-scale programmes, books and digital platforms.

His initiatives focus on inner transformation, meditation and environmental awareness while preserving traditional yogic teachings.

Baba Ramdev



Baba Ramdev played a major role in popularizing yoga among ordinary households in India through television programmes and mass yoga camps.

His focus on pranayama, natural health and accessible yoga techniques helped introduce millions of Indians to daily yoga practice. Ramdev's energetic teaching style and emphasis on preventive health made yoga part of mainstream public culture in India.

Sikh History This Week

JUNE 12 TO JUNE 18

JUNE 12

Aftermath of Operation Blue Star Continues to Haunt Punjab (1984)



By June 12, 1984, Punjab was still reeling from the devastating aftermath of Operation Blue Star, the Indian Army operation carried out earlier that month inside the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar.

The military action had begun on June 1 and intensified between June 3 and June 6 under the orders of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The operation aimed to flush out militants led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale who had fortified themselves inside the Akal Takht. The damage to the Akal Takht, civilian casualties and the entry of tanks and artillery into Sikhism's holiest shrine deeply shocked Sikhs across the world. Curfews, arrests and military deployments continued throughout Punjab during the days that followed. For many Sikhs, the period after June 12 marked the beginning of one of the darkest chapters in modern Sikh history.

Sikh Diaspora Mobilization Begins Intensifying

By mid-June 1984, Sikh communities in countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States had begun organizing large protests condemning Operation Blue Star.

Gurdwaras abroad became centres of political discussion, mourning and mobilization. The events of June 1984 permanently transformed Sikh diaspora politics and identity across the globe.

JUNE 13

Remembering the Martyrs of 1984

June 13 is often observed informally by Sikh groups as part of the continuing remembrance period for those who died during Operation Blue Star.

Thousands of pilgrims had been present in Amritsar during the martyrdom anniversary of Guru Arjan Dev Ji when the military operation unfolded. Many civilians were trapped inside the complex during the fighting.

The memory of these deaths remains deeply sensitive in Sikh collective consciousness.

The Role of the Akal Takht in Sikh Sovereignty

Discussions around the Akal Takht intensified after the events of June 1984. Founded by Guru Hargobind Sahib in 1606, the Akal Takht symbolizes Sikh temporal authority and resistance against oppression.

The damage inflicted upon the structure during Operation Blue Star carried enormous symbolic significance for Sikhs worldwide.

JUNE 14

Guru Arjan Dev Ji's Martyrdom Legacy Reverberates

The days surrounding June 14 often coincide with reflections on the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth Sikh Guru, whose shaheedi is generally commemorated in early June according to the



Nanakshahi calendar. Guru Arjan Dev Ji was martyred in Lahore in 1606 under the orders of Mughal emperor Jahangir after refusing to alter Sikh scripture or abandon Sikh principles. His martyrdom became a turning point in Sikh history. It transformed Sikhism from a purely spiritual movement into a community prepared to resist tyranny and injustice. The Guru's sacrifice laid the foundation for the later militarization of the Sikh Panth under Guru Hargobind Sahib.

Chabeel Traditions Across Punjab

During this period in June, Sikhs across Punjab and other regions organize chabeels - free sweetened water stalls - in memory of Guru Arjan Dev Ji.

The tradition symbolizes seva, compassion and relief during the harsh summer heat. Volunteers distribute water, milk, sharbat and food to people irrespective of religion or caste, reflecting Sikh ideals of equality and humanitarian service.

JUNE 15

Rise of Sikh Resistance After Guru Arjan Dev Ji

Following Guru Arjan Dev Ji's martyrdom in 1606, Guru Hargobind Sahib introduced the concept of Miri-Piri - the integration of spiritual and temporal authority. Around this historical period, Sikhism underwent a major transformation. Sikhs began training in warfare, horsemanship and arms to defend justice and religious freedom. The establishment of the Akal Takht and the wearing of two swords by Guru Hargobind Sahib symbolized this new direction.

Sikh Military Traditions and the Warrior Spirit



June commemorations often include discussions of Sikh martial heritage. From the armies of Guru Gobind Singh to the Khalsa warriors and the Sikh Misls, Sikh history is filled with accounts of bravery and resistance. The Sikh martial tradition emerged not from conquest alone but from the need to protect oppressed communities and defend religious freedom.

JUNE 16

Global Sikh Protests and Political Awakening After 1984

By June 16, 1984, outrage over Operation Blue Star had spread globally. Massive demonstrations took place outside Indian embassies and consulates in several countries. The events triggered a profound political awakening among diaspora Sikhs. Questions of

identity, justice, representation and historical memory became central themes in Sikh political discourse abroad.

The Reconstruction of the Akal Takht Debate



After the damage caused in June 1984, debates emerged regarding the reconstruction of the Akal Takht. The Indian government initially supported rebuilding efforts through official agencies, but many Sikhs insisted that reconstruction should occur only under the authority of the Sikh Panth.

The issue became symbolic of Sikh autonomy and religious authority.

JUNE 17

Tensions Continue in Punjab After Blue Star

On June 17, 1984, Punjab remained under heavy military presence. Communication restrictions, curfews and arrests continued across the state.

Many Sikh soldiers in the Indian Army had mutinied earlier that month in protest against the assault on the Golden Temple. The unrest reflected the emotional impact of the operation on Sikh sentiment within India and abroad.

Sikh Memory and Oral Histories of 1984

Families across Punjab preserve oral histories of June 1984, recounting experiences of fear, loss and survival during Operation Blue Star.

Eyewitness testimonies, photographs and personal accounts have become important components of Sikh historical memory and continue to influence contemporary discussions on identity and justice.

JUNE 18

Continuing Remembrance of the 1984 Tragedy

By June 18 each year, many Sikh institutions continue holding prayers, kirtans and remembrance ceremonies connected to the events of Operation Blue Star. The week remains emotionally charged for Sikhs worldwide, especially for families directly affected by the violence.

Legacy of Sikh Resistance in Indian History

The historical memory of Sikh resistance is often revisited during this week. From Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom to Banda Singh Bahadur's campaigns and Maharaja Ranjit Singh's empire, Sikh history reflects continuous struggles against political oppression. These traditions of sacrifice and resilience remain central to Sikh identity.

Reflection on Sikh Unity and Identity

The week from June 12 to June 18 also serves as a time of introspection within the Sikh community regarding unity, leadership and the preservation of Sikh values.

Gurdwaras across the world organize discussions on Sikh history, Gurbani, seva and the importance of preserving Sikh heritage for future generations.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji: The architect of Sikh spirituality and the first martyr of Sikhism

The history of Sikhism is illuminated by the lives of its Gurus, whose teachings transformed the spiritual and social landscape of India. Among them, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the fifth master of Sikhs, occupies a uniquely revered place. The fifth Guru of Sikhism was not only a spiritual master but also a poet, philosopher, institution builder, and martyr whose sacrifice became a turning point in Sikh history. His life embodied humility, devotion, equality, and unwavering faith in divine will.

According to Nanakshahi calendar, Guru Arjan Dev Ji's martyrdom falls on June 16 this year.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji gave Sikhism its spiritual center through the construction of Harmandir Sahib, compiled the Adi Granth—the sacred scripture of the Sikhs—and laid the foundations of a disciplined and organized Sikh community. His martyrdom in 1606 under the Mughal regime transformed the Sikh faith from a purely spiritual movement into a community prepared to defend righteousness and religious freedom.

Birth and Early Life

Guru Arjan Dev Ji was born on April 15, 1563, in Goindwal to Guru Ram Das and Mata Bhani, the daughter of Guru Amar Das. From childhood, he displayed extraordinary spiritual wisdom, compassion, and devotion to God. Raised in an atmosphere of prayer, humility, and service, the young Arjan absorbed the teachings of the earlier Gurus deeply into his heart.

Stories from Sikh tradition describe him as calm, thoughtful, and spiritually inclined even as a child. He was known for his gentle nature and respect for all people regardless of caste, creed, or status. His education included religious studies, music, poetry, and languages, all of which later helped him shape Sikh theology and literature.

Becoming the Fifth Guru

In 1581, Guru Arjan Dev Ji succeeded his father Guru Ram Das as the fifth Sikh Guru. His appointment was based on merit, spiritual wisdom, and devotion rather than inheritance alone. This decision caused resentment among some relatives, particularly his elder brother Prithi Chand, who opposed his succession. Despite hostility and conspiracies, Guru Arjan Dev Ji remained calm and compassionate.

As Guru, he focused on strengthening the Sikh community spiritually and socially. He expanded the institutions started by earlier Gurus and encouraged Sikhs to live lives rooted in honest work, charity, humility, and remembrance of God.

Development of Amritsar, Harmandir Sahib

One of Guru Arjan Dev Ji's greatest achievements was the development of Amritsar as the spiritual center of



Sikhism. The city had begun to take shape under Guru Ram Das, but Guru Arjan Dev Ji transformed it into a major center of faith and community life.

At the heart of Amritsar, he completed the construction of the sacred shrine known today as Sri Harmandir Sahib, popularly called the Golden Temple. The architecture and symbolism of the shrine reflected the inclusive philosophy of Sikhism.

Unlike many temples built on elevated platforms, Harmandir Sahib was constructed at a lower level, symbolizing humility. It was designed with four entrances, signifying openness to people from all directions, castes, religions, and backgrounds. This revolutionary idea challenged the rigid social divisions of medieval India.

The foundation stone of Harmandir Sahib was laid by the Sufi saint Mian Mir, reflecting the Guru's message of interfaith harmony and universal brotherhood.

Compilation of the Adi Granth

Guru Arjan Dev Ji's most enduring contribution was the compilation of the Adi Granth, the original version of the Sikh holy scripture that later became the Guru Granth Sahib.

Before Guru Arjan Dev Ji, the hymns of the Sikh Gurus were preserved in scattered collections. Concerned about distortions and false compositions being circulated in the names of the Gurus, he undertook the monumental task of compiling authentic Sikh teachings.

In 1604, the Adi Granth was completed. It included the hymns of the first five Sikh Gurus as well as devotional poetry from Hindu and Muslim saints such as Kabir, Ravidas, Namdev, Sheikh Farid, and others. By including saints from different backgrounds, Guru Arjan Dev Ji emphasized that spiritual truth transcends religious boundaries.

The scripture was installed at Harmandir Sahib, and Baba Buddha Ji

became its first granthi, or caretaker. The compilation of the Adi Granth gave Sikhism a unified spiritual foundation and preserved its teachings for future generations.

Literary and Spiritual Contributions

Guru Arjan Dev Ji was a prolific poet and spiritual thinker. He composed more than 2,000 hymns included in the Guru Granth Sahib. His writings are filled with themes of devotion, peace, surrender to God, humility, and inner strength.

Among his most celebrated compositions is the Sukhmani Sahib, often called the "Psalm of Peace." This sacred composition offers spiritual comfort and guidance for attaining mental peace, moral discipline, and divine connection. It remains one of the most widely recited Sikh prayers today.

His hymns teach that God is one, formless, compassionate, and accessible through sincere devotion. He rejected empty rituals, superstition, and caste discrimination. Instead, he emphasized meditation on God's name, selfless service, truthful living, and compassion toward humanity.

Teachings of Guru Arjan Dev Ji

The teachings of Guru Arjan Dev Ji continue to guide millions around the world. His philosophy combined spirituality with ethical living and social responsibility.

Equality of Humanity

Guru Arjan Dev Ji strongly opposed caste discrimination and social inequality. Through institutions such as langar—the community kitchen—he reinforced the principle that all people are equal before God.

Humility and Service

He taught that ego is the greatest obstacle to spiritual growth. According to him, selfless service to humanity is a path

toward divine realization.

Acceptance of God's Will

One of the defining aspects of his teachings was complete surrender to divine will, or hukam. Even during immense suffering, Guru Arjan Dev Ji remained calm and spiritually steadfast.

Interfaith Harmony

By including the writings of Hindu and Muslim saints in the Adi Granth, he promoted harmony among religions and recognized the universality of spiritual truth.

Honest Living

Guru Arjan Dev Ji encouraged people to earn through honest means, share with others, and remember God while performing daily responsibilities.

Growing Sikh Influence and Mughal Suspicion

During Guru Arjan Dev Ji's time, the Sikh community expanded rapidly in influence and numbers. This growth began to alarm sections of the Mughal administration and orthodox religious groups.

The political climate of the Mughal Empire became increasingly tense after Prince Khusrau rebelled against Emperor Jahangir. Historical accounts suggest that Khusrau sought blessings from Guru Arjan Dev Ji during his rebellion. Though the Guru's role was spiritual rather than political, Jahangir viewed him with suspicion.

In his memoirs, Jahangir wrote critically about the Guru's popularity and influence. Combined with complaints from hostile rivals and conservative elements, this led to the Guru being targeted by the Mughal authorities.

Martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji

In 1606, Guru Arjan Dev Ji was arrested under the orders of Emperor Jahangir. He was accused of supporting Khusrau and was pressured to alter Sikh scripture and convert to Islam. The Guru firmly refused.

He was subjected to brutal torture in Lahore. Sikh tradition recounts that he was made to sit on a burning iron plate while hot sand was poured over his body. Despite unbearable suffering, Guru Arjan Dev Ji remained immersed in meditation and acceptance of God's will.

During his torture, he is believed to have uttered the immortal words:

"Tera Kiya Meetha Lage"

"Sweet is Your Will, O Lord."

These words symbolize complete surrender to divine will even in the face of extreme pain.

On May 30, 1606, Guru Arjan Dev Ji attained martyrdom, becoming the first Sikh martyr in history. His sacrifice marked a watershed moment for Sikhism. It demonstrated that spiritual truth and religious freedom were worth defending even at the cost of one's life.

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Natural ways to remove sun tan and restore glowing skin

The scorching sun can leave your skin looking dull, uneven and tanned. Excessive exposure to harmful UV rays often causes hyperpigmentation, roughness and dryness, making the skin appear darker than usual. While sunscreens and protective clothing help prevent sun damage, many people turn to natural remedies to restore their original skin tone and glow. The good news is that several kitchen ingredients can help reduce suntan naturally while nourishing the skin. Here are some easy and effective home remedies that can help rejuvenate sun-damaged skin.

Lemon Juice and Honey

Lemon juice is widely known for its natural bleaching properties that help lighten suntan and brighten the skin. Honey, on the other hand, deeply moisturises and soothes irritated skin.

To prepare this remedy, mix fresh lemon juice with a tablespoon of honey. You may also add a little sugar for gentle exfoliation. Apply the mixture to the affected areas and massage softly to remove dead skin cells. Leave it on for about 20 to 30 minutes before washing it off with lukewarm water.

Gram Flour, Turmeric and Yoghurt

Gram flour or besan has been used in traditional skincare for generations due to its cleansing and skin-lightening properties. Turmeric helps brighten the skin while yoghurt contains lactic acid that softens and smoothens it.

Mix gram flour, yoghurt and a pinch of turmeric to make a smooth paste. Apply it evenly to the skin and allow it to dry for around 15 minutes. Gently scrub while rinsing it off to reveal fresher and brighter skin.

Papaya, Tomato, Watermelon, Potato and Cucumber

This powerful combination works wonders for sun-damaged skin. Papaya contains natural enzymes that exfoliate dead skin cells and act as a mild bleaching agent. Potato juice helps lighten pigmentation and dark spots, while tomato is rich in antioxidants that aid skin repair. Cucumber and watermelon provide hydration and a cooling effect.

Blend a few cubes of ripe papaya, watermelon, potato, tomato and cucumber to make a jelly-like paste. Refrigerate the mixture for 15 minutes before applying it to the skin. Massage gently until the skin absorbs the nutrients. This refreshing pack helps soothe sunburn and



reduce tanning naturally.

Lentils, Turmeric and Milk

Masoor dal or red lentils are excellent natural exfoliators that help remove dead skin cells and improve complexion. Milk nourishes the skin while turmeric enhances its glow.

Soak lentils in raw milk overnight. Grind them into a paste and add a pinch of turmeric. Apply the mixture to the skin and let it dry completely. Wash it off gently with water for softer and clearer skin.

Coffee, Coconut Oil and Sugar

Coffee is packed with antioxidants and caffeine that help improve blood circulation and reduce tanning. It also helps minimise acne and signs of ageing. Coconut oil deeply hydrates the skin, while sugar acts as a natural scrub. Prepare a thick paste using coffee powder, coconut oil and sugar. Scrub your skin gently for around 10 minutes and leave the mixture on for another 10 minutes before washing it off.

This remedy leaves the skin refreshed, smooth and glowing.

FOOD CORNER

Mutton sukka

Ingredients

Mutton - 500 gms, boneless, chopped, Water - 3 cups (750 ml), Onions - 2, small, finely sliced, Green Chilli - 1, slit lengthwise, Tomato - 1, sliced, Urad Dal - 1/2 tsp, Cinnamon - 1 one inch stick, Cloves - 4, Cardamoms - 5 to 6, Star Anise - 1, Curry Leaves - handful, chopped, Red Chilli Powder - 2 tblsp, Coriander Powder - 1/2 tblsp, Cumin Powder - 1/2 tsp, Garam Masala Powder - 1 tsp, Turmeric Powder - 1/2 tsp, Salt as per taste, Oil - 1 1/2 tblsp, Black Pepper Powder as per taste,

For the marinade

Garlic - 5 to 6 cloves, peeled. Small (Sambar) Onions - 100 gms, peeled, Ginger - 2 two inch piece, peeled, Green Chillies - 2 to 3, Saunf - 1 tsp, Water - 1/2 cup

Method

1. Grind together the marinade ingredients until smooth.
2. Add turmeric powder and mix well.
3. Marinate the mutton pieces in this for 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
4. Bring a pan of water to a boil.
5. Add the marinated mutton pieces and boil until half-cooked.
6. Add red chilli powder, coriander powder, cumin powder, garam masala powder and salt.
7. Cook till the mutton pieces are tender and water has almost evaporated.
8. Keep aside.
9. Heat oil in a different pan.
10. Fry the dal until golden.
11. Add cinnamon, cardamom, cloves and star anise.
12. Fry for a minute or two.
13. Add the onions and green chillies.
14. Fry until onions are golden brown.
15. Add the tomatoes and curry leaves.
16. Cook for another 2 minutes and add the mutton pieces.
17. Add pepper powder and increase flame to high.
18. Cook until oil starts to separate and the mixture becomes dry.
19. Transfer to a serving dish.
20. Serve hot with rice or roti.



Keep Your Hair Hydrated

Dryness is one of the main causes of frizz. Hair lacking moisture tends to absorb humidity from the air, causing strands to swell and become unruly. Use a mild, sulphate-free shampoo and always follow it with a hydrating conditioner. Deep conditioning once or twice a week

How to manage frizzy hair without heat styling?

can also help restore softness and shine.

Natural oils such as coconut oil, argan oil and almond oil work wonderfully to lock in moisture. Applying a few drops to damp hair can help tame flyaways and reduce frizz naturally.

Avoid Overwashing

Washing hair too frequently strips away its natural oils, leaving it dry and frizzy. Instead of daily washing, try washing your hair two to three times a week. On non-wash days, you can refresh your scalp with a light mist of water or leave-in conditioner.

Use a Microfibre Towel or Cotton T-Shirt

Rubbing wet hair vigorously with a regular towel creates friction that leads to

breakage and frizz. Instead, gently squeeze out excess water using a microfibre towel or a soft cotton T-shirt. This helps maintain the hair's natural texture while preventing roughness.

Apply Leave-In Conditioners

Leave-in conditioners help create a protective barrier around the hair shaft, keeping moisture locked in throughout the day. Hair serums infused with nourishing oils can also smoothen frizz and add shine without making the hair greasy.

Detangle Hair Gently

Wet hair is more prone to breakage. Use a wide-tooth comb to detangle hair slowly, starting from the ends and working

upward. Avoid brushing dry curly or wavy hair excessively as it can increase frizz.

Try Natural Hair Masks

Homemade hair masks can deeply nourish dry and frizzy hair. Ingredients such as banana, yoghurt, aloe vera and honey provide hydration and smoothness.

A simple banana and honey mask can help soften rough hair naturally. Aloe vera gel mixed with coconut oil also works well for calming frizz and adding shine.

Sleep on a Silk Pillowcase

Cotton pillowcases can create friction while you sleep, leading to tangled and frizzy hair in the morning. Silk or satin pillowcases are gentler on the hair and help reduce breakage and dryness.

Brain fog vs burnout: Signs, causes and when to seek help

Have you ever walked into a room and forgotten why you went there? Or stared at your computer screen for several minutes, unable to focus on a simple task? Many people experience these symptoms and often wonder whether they are dealing with brain fog or burnout.

Although the two conditions can feel similar, experts say they are not the same. Both can affect work performance, relationships and overall well-being, but they have different causes and symptoms.

Understanding the difference can help people take the right steps to improve their mental and physical health. According to mental health experts, brain fog mainly affects thinking and concentration, while burnout is a state of emotional, physical and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress. In today's fast-paced world, where people juggle work pressures, family responsibilities and constant digital distractions, both conditions are becoming increasingly common.

WHAT IS BRAIN FOG?

Brain fog is not a medical diagnosis, but rather a term used to describe problems with memory, concentration and mental clarity. People with brain fog often feel like their thinking is slower than usual.

Common symptoms of brain fog include:

Difficulty concentrating, Forgetfulness, Trouble finding the right words, Feeling mentally sluggish, Difficulty processing information, Reduced attention span.

Brain fog can be triggered by several factors, including poor sleep, stress, hormonal changes, dehydration, nutritional deficiencies, certain medications and illnesses. It is also commonly reported after viral infections.

WHAT IS BURNOUT?

Burnout is a condition that develops after prolonged periods of stress, especially stress related to work, caregiving or other demanding responsibilities. Unlike brain fog, burnout affects not only thinking but also emotional well-being and motivation.

Common signs of burnout include:

Constant exhaustion, Feeling emotionally drained, Lack of motivation, Increased irritability, Feeling detached from work or personal life, Reduced productivity, A sense of hopelessness or cynicism.

Experts explain that burnout often develops gradually. A person may initially feel stressed and overworked, but



over time the stress becomes overwhelming, leading to physical and emotional exhaustion.

HOW TO MANAGE BRAIN FOG

Getting seven to nine hours of sleep, Staying physically active, Drinking enough water, Eating a balanced diet, Managing stress through relaxation techniques, Taking regular breaks from screens, Consulting a healthcare professional if symptoms persist.

HOW TO RECOVER FROM BURNOUT

Recovery from burnout often requires addressing the source of stress. Experts suggest:

Setting healthy boundaries, Taking regular breaks from work, Prioritising self-care, Seeking support from family and friends, Practising mindfulness or relaxation exercises, Speaking to a mental health professional if needed.

WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?

If symptoms are severe, last for several weeks, or interfere with daily life, experts recommend seeking medical advice. Persistent brain fog may sometimes signal an underlying health issue, while burnout can increase the risk of anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns.

Brain fog and burnout may share some symptoms, but they are different experiences. Brain fog mainly affects memory, focus and mental clarity, while burnout is a deeper state of emotional and physical exhaustion caused by long-term stress. Recognising the signs early can help people take steps to recover and protect their overall well-being. *Source: India Today*



Feeling tired? These 12 vitamin B12-rich foods can boost your energy

Feeling tired all the time? Struggling with low energy, brain fog or weakness? Your body may not be getting enough vitamin B12. This essential nutrient helps make red blood cells, supports nerve health and plays a key role in energy production.

Since the body cannot produce vitamin B12 on its own, it must come from food or supplements.

The good news is that many everyday foods are naturally rich in vitamin B12.

Here are 12 vitamin B12-rich foods that can help you meet your daily requirements and support overall health.

Vitamin B12 is needed for:

Healthy nerve function, Red blood cell production, DNA synthesis, Brain health, Energy metabolism, Without enough B12, people may feel tired, weak or have trouble concentrating.

SIGNS OF VITAMIN B12 DEFICIENCY

Common symptoms may include:

Fatigue, Weakness, Dizziness, Pale skin, Tingling in hands and feet, Memory problems, Shortness of breath

If symptoms persist, it is important to consult a healthcare professional.

Certain groups may be more likely to develop vitamin B12 deficiency:

Older adults, Vegans and strict vegetarians, People with digestive disorders, Those taking certain medications that affect nutrient absorption.

Adding vitamin B12 foods such as fish, dairy products, eggs and fortified foods to your diet can help support energy levels, brain function and overall wellbeing.

If you follow a vegetarian or vegan diet, fortified foods or supplements may help you meet your daily vitamin B12 needs.

Belly fat is more dangerous than fat on arms and thighs

Not all body fat is the same. While fat stored on the arms, hips and thighs is often considered less harmful, excess fat around the abdomen - commonly known as belly fat - can pose serious health risks. Medical experts have long warned that abdominal obesity is closely linked to several chronic diseases, making it more dangerous than fat stored in other parts of the body.

Belly fat includes two types of fat: subcutaneous fat, which lies just beneath the skin, and visceral fat, which surrounds internal organs such as the liver, pancreas and intestines. It is visceral fat that is particularly harmful. Unlike fat on

the thighs or arms, visceral fat is metabolically active and releases inflammatory chemicals and hormones that can interfere with normal body functions.

People with excess abdominal fat may appear to have a protruding waistline or an "apple-shaped" body. Even individuals who are not extremely overweight can carry dangerous levels of visceral fat.

Excess belly fat raises blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels, all of which contribute to cardiovascular disease. Visceral fat can also increase inflammation in blood vessels, making heart attacks and strokes more likely. Abdominal fat affects how the body uses insulin.

This can lead to insulin resistance, where cells stop responding properly to insulin, causing blood sugar levels to rise. As a result, people with larger waistlines are at greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes.

Fat stored around abdominal organs can affect liver function and may contribute to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Excess visceral fat is also linked with digestive disorders and metabolic syndrome.

Belly fat produces hormones and inflammatory substances that can disrupt the body's metabolism. Chronic inflammation has been associated with several illnesses, including certain cancers and hormonal disorders.

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Anthropic launches Claude Fable 5, first Mythos class model that you can use

Anthropic will now let you access Claude Mythos-class AI models. The company announced on Tuesday that Claude Fable 5 is the first publicly available Mythos-class model, but it comes with certain hard limits.

Mythos refers to Anthropic's most powerful class of AI models. Anthropic has previously hinted that Mythos preview was so powerful that it could potentially hack any software in the world.

According to the AI startup, Fable 5 is its most capable generally available model so far, with strong performance in software engineering, knowledge work, vision, scientific research and long, complex tasks, but that its release comes with added safeguards in high-risk areas.

Mythos has made waves globally with many governments, including India, being worried about the potential disruption it could cause to cybersecurity. Reports also claim that the US may be using Mythos to plan cyberattacks.

What is Claude Fable 5?

Anthropic says that Claude Fable 5 shows "exceptional performance" across software engineering and knowledge work tasks, and that on some benchmarks it scored more than 10 per cent higher than Claude Opus 4.8, which the company announced late last month.

The AI startup stated, "Fable 5's capabilities exceed those of any model we've ever made generally available. The longer and more complex the task, the larger Fable 5's lead over our other models."

What about cybersecurity?

When Anthropic announced Claude Mythos in April, governments around the world were concerned over the potential risks associated with cybersecurity due to such AI models. To address this issue, Anthropic says that it has put hard limits on Fable 5 in areas like cybersecurity, biology, chemistry, and distillation. In such cases, the model blocks responses and falls back to Claude Opus 4.8.

Anthropic has previously accused Chinese AI companies of distilling Claude to train their own models. Distillation



happens when a smaller model is made to learn from the outputs of a larger model. It is likely that the safeguards against distillation in Fable 5 could help avoid this issue.

Dianne Penn, Anthropic's head of product management for research, told CNBC that the broad release was possible because of the new guardrails. "For us, it's really around what we call 'race to the top,' being able to provide this technology in a valuable fashion, and at the same time providing the right safety guardrails so that it can do asymmetrically more benefits than harm," she said.

Penn said Claude Fable 5 represents a "significant jump" in capability, which is why Anthropic had to put in additional protections. She said if a user asks a high-risk question, such as how to make ricin, the model will block the response and Claude Opus 4.8 will deliver a safe answer instead. "What we wanted to do was to be very intentional about building new types of classifiers and new types of safety guardrails in place for this launch," Penn said.

Anthropic said it tuned the safeguards conservatively, so the fallback may trigger more often than some users expect. At the same time, the company said the cases in which Fable has to defer to Opus 4.8 are rare, with early data showing that at least 95 per cent of Fable sessions run entirely on the model's own responses.



Artemis-III is Nasa's toughest mission before Moon landing

Nasa on Tuesday, June 9, named the four astronauts who will fly the Artemis-III mission.

The crew, as revealed, includes commander Randy Bresnik, pilot Luca Parmitano of the European Space Agency (ESA), and mission specialists Frank Rubio and Andre Douglas, all announced at the agency's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

With the Artemis-III crew announced, all eyes are on the space agency as it begins the preparations for the launch expected in 2027. While preparations continue, it's only normal to wonder what the mission is about, and how it will take humanity closer to reaching the Moon? Instead, the latest Artemis mission is planned as a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) rendezvous and docking mission that will test how the Orion spacecraft works with commercial lunar landers.

The LEO lies between 160 km and 2,000 km above Earth's surface, and is where most satellites or any other man-made objects exist in space.

As planned, the Artemis-III crew will test the docking of the Orion capsule with at least one, or possibly both, of the lunar landers.

These landers are where private entities are contributing. One lander has been built by Elon Musk's SpaceX, while the other by Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin.

The crew will also test the landers' propulsion, life support, and communication systems.

The actual crewed Moon landing that everyone is waiting for is scheduled for early 2028, when the Artemis-IV mission could see humans land on the lunar surface. After launching into low orbit, the crew will practice the tricky manoeuvres needed for future Moon landings by rendezvousing and docking with prototype lunar landers.

The crew, while staying safely inside Orion, will use the spacecraft's thrusters and docking system to carefully approach the waiting landers, align them precisely, and connect. They will also test how well the vehicles communicate and interact with each other through computers and sensors, check seals and connections, and practice transferring crew and equipment between spacecraft.

The four astronauts might use the opportunity to also test the new Axiom spacesuits. These step-by-step tests will last about two weeks and help prove the hardware, software, and procedures work reliably before astronauts attempt an actual lunar landing on the later Artemis-IV mission.

Breakthroughs in battery technology can soon make devices and EVs much better

Scientists and technology companies across the world are making rapid advances in battery technology that could soon transform electric vehicles, smartphones and renewable energy storage systems. Researchers say the next generation of batteries may charge faster, last longer, become safer and reduce dependence on expensive raw materials.

For years, lithium-ion batteries have powered everything from mobile phones to electric cars. However, concerns over charging time, battery degradation, overheating risks and limited driving range have pushed researchers to look for alternatives. Now, several promising breakthroughs are beginning to move from laboratories to commercial production.

One of the most talked-about developments is the rise of solid-state batteries. Unlike traditional lithium-ion batteries that use liquid electrolytes, solid-state batteries use solid materials, making them more stable and less prone



to overheating or catching fire. Experts believe these batteries could significantly increase the driving range of electric vehicles while reducing charging times.

Major automobile manufacturers and technology firms are investing billions of dollars into solid-state battery research. Some companies claim prototype vehicles equipped with these batteries could travel over 1,000 kilometres on a single charge and recharge in under 15 minutes.

Another breakthrough involves sodium-ion batteries, which are being

seen as a cheaper and more sustainable alternative to lithium-based systems. Sodium is far more abundant and easier to source than lithium, potentially lowering production costs and reducing supply chain pressures. While sodium-ion batteries currently store less energy, researchers are improving their efficiency at a rapid pace.

Meanwhile, advances in silicon-anode technology are helping improve battery capacity. Traditional lithium-ion batteries use graphite anodes, but replacing them partially or fully with silicon can dramatically increase energy storage. This could allow smartphones and laptops to run for much longer between charges.

Scientists are also working on ultra-fast charging technologies that may eliminate one of the biggest concerns among electric vehicle users - long charging times. New battery designs and advanced cooling systems are enabling faster energy transfer without damaging battery life.

Why oil is failing: Crude benchmarks slide below \$90 as traders reassess Hormuz, supply risks

JUNE 13, 2026

LONDON (TIP): Global crude oil benchmarks fell sharply Friday, June 12, with Brent, WTI, and Murban crude all dropping below key psychological levels as traders unwound war-risk premiums that had pushed prices higher earlier in the week.

According to market data, West Texas Intermediate (WTI) fell to \$84.99 per barrel, down 3.10%, while Brent crude declined to \$87.70 per barrel, down 2.97%.

Murban crude, a benchmark for Middle Eastern exports to Asia, slid 3.74% to \$83.99 per barrel.

The decline marks a significant reversal from recent fears that escalating tensions involving Iran, the United States, and the Strait of Hormuz could disrupt global oil supplies.

No immediate supply disruption

The largest driver of the recent oil rally was fear that Iran could interfere with shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of the world's oil supply passes.

However, despite heightened military tensions, oil tankers continue moving through the waterway, and there has been no confirmed large-scale interruption of exports from major



Gulf producers such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, Iraq, or Qatar.

Markets often react not to actual shortages but to expectations of shortages. As traders conclude that worst-case scenarios are not materializing, the geopolitical premium embedded in oil prices is being removed.

OPEC+ spare capacity remains large

Saudi Arabia and several Gulf producers maintain substantial spare production capacity.

Investors increasingly believe that even if a portion of Iranian exports were disrupted, other producers could offset much of the lost supply.

This perception reduces panic buying in futures markets.

Demand concerns return

As geopolitical fears fade, traders are again focusing on slower global economic growth.

Concerns remain about:

Slowing manufacturing activity in Europe.

Uneven recovery in China.

High interest rates in many economies.

Softening freight and industrial fuel demand.

A weaker demand outlook naturally weighs on crude prices.

Profit-taking after a sharp rally

Many hedge funds and commodity traders accumulated long positions during the recent Middle East crisis.

Once prices failed to break sustainably above \$90–95 per barrel, investors began locking in gains, accelerating the downward move.

Oil's drop below \$90 reflects a market increasingly convinced that the Middle East crisis, while serious, has not yet translated into a physical supply shock.

Traders are shifting their attention from geopolitical fears back to fundamentals: adequate supply, slowing demand growth, and the absence of disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz.

Retail Inflation 3.93% In May, Up From 3.48% In April

India's retail inflation rose to 3.93 per cent in May from 3.48 per cent in April, according to data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) on Friday with experts attributing the rise to broad-based pressures across food and non-food segments and warning of further increase in the coming months.

According to Dipti Deshpande, Principal Economist, Crisil Ltd, the impact of the West Asia conflict is starting to percolate household budgets. "Crisil expects CPI inflation to rise to an average 5.1 per cent this fiscal, from 2.0 per cent last fiscal, with risks from higher fuel prices, currency depreciation, second-round effects and potentially weak rainfall."

Noting over 40 basis-point jump in retail inflation in May 2026 was largely anticipated, Sujan Hajra, Chief Economist & Executive Director, Anand Rathi Group said "both food and fuel inflation are likely to remain on an upward trajectory in the months ahead." "Our assessment is that headline retail inflation could breach 6 per cent at some point over the next six months. Even so, the Reserve Bank of India may refrain from adopting a decisively hawkish stance, provided core inflation remains anchored around 4 per cent and inflationary pressures do not become broad-based."

Debopam Chaudhuri, Chief Economist at Piramal Group, noted that inflation is accelerating faster in urban areas compared to rural regions. "This could further erode purchasing power among urban households and weigh on discretionary consumption demand," she said. For real estate sector, the industry remains stable as per Vivek Rathi, National Director-Research, Knight Frank India. Noting that housing inflation has continued to be moderate, Rathi noted "the sector has not become a significant source of price pressures in the economy."

"Going forward, the interplay between global commodity prices, and domestic inflation expectations will be critical in shaping the macroeconomic environment and the interest rate outlook," said Rathi.



India's GDP to expand by 6.6% in FY27 compared to 7.7% in FY26: Fitch

JUNE 13, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): India's GDP is expected to expand by 6.6 per cent in the current fiscal year compared to 7.7 per cent in FY26, citing sluggish investment and consumer growth as well as trade disruptions from the West Asia crisis, as per BMI report, a Fitch group company.

The Indian rupee's decline from its average level of 87 in 2025 will boost export competitiveness and counteract the negative impact on GDP from the terms-of-trade shock induced by the Iran conflict, said the report, which predicted that the rupee would trade in the range of 95.1 against the US dollar this year.

"Looking ahead, we continue to expect 6.6 per cent GDP growth in FY2026/27. Our projection represents a visible slowdown from FY2025-26's 7.7 per cent pace but exceeds India's average 6.1 per cent per annum growth rate over the last decade," it stated.

Three variables have been identified by BMI as the reason for this fiscal year's



THE REPORT PREDICTED THAT THE RUPEE WOULD TRADE IN THE RANGE OF 95.1 AGAINST THE US DOLLAR THIS YEAR

sluggish growth rate. First, domestic spending is probably going to be less affected by last year's GST reforms. Second, amid disruption at the Strait of Hormuz, rising price inflation—which

BMI projects will reach 5.3 percent in FY27—will impede a surge in demand. Third, BMI expects a slowdown in investment growth throughout the fiscal year.

The report stated, "this slowdown is not due to our new forecast of accumulative 50 basis points (bps) rate hike by the RBI in FY2026/27, since the effect on growth will primarily be felt during FY2027/28."

Last week, it was reported that India's economy expanded 7.8 per cent in the January-March quarter, exceeding forecasts on strong domestic demand and government expenditure, before rising oil prices and supply-chain disruptions began clouding the outlook.

The GDP growth compared with 7 per cent expansion a year back and 8 per cent in the previous quarter. Full-year growth accelerated to 7.7 per cent from 7.1 per cent in FY25, supported by healthy consumption and robust investment activity.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JUNE 15, 2026 TO JUNE 21, 2026

BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

week. You will look very happy, whose positive effect will be seen on your health. There will be a tinge of love in your love life, and you will decide to take your relationship a step further. Overall, there will be a lot of happiness in your life this week.

CANCER



Ganesha says this week can open the box of happiness for Cancerians. The works that have been stalled for a long time can be completed this week. The marriage of someone in your house can be confirmed or any other auspicious work can be completed, due to which happiness will reside in your family. Students will get positive results in their studies. Your happiness will know no bounds at the end of the week if you get a chance to meet your special someone and spend time with them. Your means of income will increase. Employed people will get a chance to improve their image even more. Romance will increase between married couples.

LEO



Ganesha says this week will bring mixed results for Leo people. You may have to face some stress regarding work. Your work may get spoiled in the making, so this week you have to work with patience. It is better to keep calm and do your work than to spoil your mood. Students will have to work hard. This week will be very positive in terms of relationships. If you want to express your love to someone, then don't think, just convey your heart to your beloved. You will get love in return for love. You will get to have a good time with each other this week.

VIRGO



Ganesha says this week will bring some ups and downs for the people of Virgo. You will get benefits only if you make efforts in every field. Some problems can be seen in health. This changing season can invite unnecessary diseases for the elderly, so take special care of your health. The household life of married people will be good. There will be

strength in the relationship between both of you. Women can spend a lot on shopping. In your career, you have to be careful of your secret enemies.

LIBRA



Ganesha says this week will bring progress in the profession for Libra people. Dedication towards your work will make you worthy of appreciation. Impressed by your work, your boss can give you some big responsibility and luck will support you in fulfilling it. This week you will be seen making efforts to make your married life better. You should take time for yourself and your spouse and make decisions for your life together. Libra youth can plan to go on a long journey. Going to some beautiful place can start a new freshness in your life. The atmosphere of the house will remain positive. There will be no major problem regarding money matters. Health will remain good.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says for Scorpio people, the beginning of this week can bring some such problems that you would have never thought of before. During this, you may also have to go through mental troubles. You may also have to face many obstacles at the workplace. Can be very worried about my career, but this worry will be unnecessary. If you think with a cool head, then the solution to all your problems will also go along with it. There will be a decline in health but it will gradually improve. If you keep control of your expenses, then you will not face any major problems in the future.

SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says this week is going to be very good for Sagittarius people. You will get the love and support of your family members. A married couple will be seen supporting each other. You will inspire your spouse to do something new. You can also plan a short trip with your family this week. Time is good for a love life. There will be no special problem regarding my career. Everything will go smoothly and according to your wish.

Youth can be somewhat cautious about their fitness.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says this week will be full of fun for the people of Capricorn. You can go shopping, sightseeing or watch a movie with your friends. There is a possibility of a new beginning of love in friendship. There will be ups and downs in health. There will be good profit in matters of income. Will get career success. Best time to invest in property. Good thoughts will come to mind. Can help someone financially.

AQUARIUS



Ganesha says this week will bring success for the people of Aquarius. You will be successful in whatever work you try to do. You will be very careful about your job. You will be able to fulfil all your responsibilities well, after which you will feel self-satisfaction. A big deal in business can be finalized which will bring you huge monetary benefits. Students have to pay attention to their company and spend their valuable time building their careers and not on useless things.

PISCES



Ganesha says the beginning of this week is going to be very wonderful for Pisces people. If you are looking for a job of your choice, then this week you can get a job with a good package of your choice. You will get success in matters of wealth. There are chances of buying a big property. If you stay away from extravagance, then there will be no financial problems. Love-life will improve.



ARIES

Ganesha says this week is bringing auspiciousness and benefits for the people of Aries. At the beginning of the week, a big opportunity related to your career or business can come your way. You will get more success with less effort. It will feel as if some divine power is with you. Your seniors will be happy with your work in the office. Women can do some special shopping for their homes due to which their expenses will increase. Students will get good opportunities for studies. For those who are single, love can start in their life. You will be seen getting drenched in the rain of love.

TAURUS



Ganesha says this week is bringing mixed results for Taurus people. You can adopt any shortcut to earn money quickly, due to which you can get trapped in some legal tangle even if you don't want to, so it would be better to follow the path of hard work with honesty. You will get the fruits of your hard work sooner or later. Children of this zodiac have to pay special attention during sports, otherwise, there is a possibility of getting hurt. Take special care of your health. You have to focus on yourself. Employed people have to behave politely with their colleagues, otherwise, many people may stand against them. Along with profit, your expenses will also increase.

GEMINI



Ganesha says this week will be very lucky for Gemini people. You will get the desired results in business, career, and studies. You will get many golden opportunities to move forward. Some of your old wishes may be fulfilled this

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

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By June 15, 2026.

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JUNE 15 TO JUNE 21 BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

JUNE 15

Ganesha says that today is a day of love and peace for you. Today, there are many people whose company you may like. Social engagement is everything for you today. Today, your lover can show you a lot of love, support, and understanding. You can take full advantage of the pampering you are getting today, but you will have to repay it immediately.

JUNE 16

Ganesha says that today you will make some new friends. Today, your social life can be better, which will keep you energetic throughout the day. You are living a great life right now. Today is a lucky day for you. A lot of good things are going to happen for you in the future. You will be motivated to make your plans and set your goals for today. Your leadership abilities can make it easy for you to overcome any obstacle. Your partner and your employees may leave all the work and responsibilities on you, which may make you feel like your

strength, character, and patience are being tested.

JUNE 17

Ganesha says your partner can be of great help to you and may play an important role in the situation you are in today. Even though you may be too busy at work today to praise and appreciate your loved one, whenever you get a chance, do let them know how you feel. Such good deeds should not go unnoticed. In general, your health is going great. As the day progresses, you will start feeling tired, but this is only temporary, and you should not worry. Avoid drinking anything with caffeine and hydrate only with coconut or plain water.

JUNE 18

Ganesha says today you have to focus on being productive. You lose yourself in trying to impress everyone. Now you have to change your motivation for working so hard for popularity and

recognition; this insight may benefit you. Overall, your day can be pleasant and grateful. Things may start clearing up unexpectedly where you were stuck earlier. Your mental health is good, and you can maintain a positive attitude throughout the day.

JUNE 19

Ganesha says to increase your dancing and physical activity, water intake, and fruit and vegetable intake. Go for long walks and exercise too. The sweetest aspect of your day-to-day will be your love life. There will be many pleasant surprises, so be prepared. You are very close to meeting the person who will be your firm ally. Be receptive to the love being expressed towards you. There is a strong possibility of your relationship becoming the next big thing today.

JUNE 20

Ganesha says you may have to do a lot of work and make important decisions in your business today. After carefully



considering your options, you will quickly complete any task that comes before you today. Your zodiac sign for today, which is your survival toolkit for the day, gives you good stamina, patience, and stability, as well as a remarkable capacity for organization.

JUNE 21

Ganesha says that you can present your project to your client in such a way that everyone who sees it will be impressed by you and your work performance. Today, you can get a lot of business opportunities and earn money. Today can be one of the happiest days for you. You have been working hard for the last

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMAH ||



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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Iran Foreign Minister Abbas...

attack against Indian ships leaving the Strait of Hormuz, saying it was "totally unacceptable." Three vessels with an Indian crew came under attack off the Oman coast this week. One of them resulted in the death of three Indian seafarers on Wednesday, June 11.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Friday, June 12, that he and the U.S. President were in "full agreement" to keep Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, a day after Mr. Trump touted an imminent deal with Tehran.

Iran's state media said on Friday, June 12, 2026, that under a draft agreement with the United States, Tehran would not give up control over the strategic Strait of Hormuz. A possible U.S. accord will set a 60-day negotiation for a nuclear deal, the Iranian media said on Friday, June 12, 2026. Iran's Mehr news agency published what it said was a draft deal with the United States to provide a framework for an end to the war on all fronts, including in Lebanon.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday, June 12, that a draft deal with the United States included ending a naval blockade of Iranian ports and arrangements on managing the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

"The naval blockade must be completely lifted. That is the first point mentioned in the agreement," Mr. Araghchi said in an interview with state television.

"Iran has made a firm decision that the administration of Strait of Hormuz will no longer be the same as before," he noted, adding that discussions were ongoing with Oman on the matter.

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Friday, June 12, that Israel was looking to derail a potential deal with the United States currently being finalized.

"I must frankly say that this agreement has enemies, the foremost of which is the Zionist regime, who are looking for pretexts to derail it," said Mr. Araghchi in an interview on state television. (Source: AFP)

Musk becomes world's first...

"SpaceX wants to be able to take you to the moon, take you to Mars, and ultimately beyond," Musk said at a launch event in Starbase, Texas, surrounded by staff.

"I'm confident at this point that with the incredible team that we have here at SpaceX, we will do that for you," Mr. Musk added.

About 100 people assembled outside the Nasdaq exchange's home in New York, where SpaceX also marked the occasion with a neon sign in Times Square reading "Building the infrastructure to the future."

Mr. Musk "sets very futuristic goals that no one else is doing, and I think that has got a lot of people excited," said Sarin Sio, of financial company Dovetail, who had come to the Nasdaq headquarters.

The company priced more than 555 million shares at \$135 each in a filing with the U.S. markets regulator on Thursday (June 11), valuing SpaceX at just under \$1.8 trillion.

Friday's gain lifted its market value to around \$2 trillion, placing it among the 10 most valuable U.S. companies - ahead of Tesla, Facebook-owner Meta and Walmart.

Options for nearly 83 million additional shares could push the total raised above \$86 billion. Co-founded by Musk in 2002, the rocket startup has since expanded into a major satellite operator and has also folded in Musk's artificial intelligence company - xAI - which includes the social media platform X (formerly Twitter).

Trading under the ticker symbol "SPCX," the conglomerate is being

closely watched for how Wall Street absorbs the offering.

SpaceX is the first out of the gates among leading AI giants eyeing public markets, with OpenAI and Anthropic both recently filing initial documents with regulators.

The IPO comes just over a year after Mr. Musk left President Donald Trump's administration, following a months-long stint leading the highly contentious "DOGE" effort to slash government spending - while simultaneously juggling his CEO roles at Tesla and SpaceX.

Mr. Musk's backing of Trump and right-wing populists in Europe - and a long list of incendiary comments on X - has seen the entrepreneur go from a broadly admired prodigy to a deeply polarizing figure.

The record IPO is nonetheless a testament to Mr. Musk's continued support among investors, with Bloomberg reporting that the offering was more than four times oversubscribed. Demand among retail investors - for whom 20% of shares were reserved - was also reported to be high.

The IPO is expected to mint thousands of new millionaires and several billionaires, with former and current employees - and a long list of investors - from the company's near quarter-century history looking to cash in.

The company's financials are giving some on Wall Street pause, as the valuation largely depends on Mr. Musk delivering on promises worthy of science fiction, including putting data centers in space and humans on Mars using as-yet unproven technology.

A lot also hangs on a huge expansion of SpaceX's Starlink satellite internet service, as well as the success of xAI, the maker of the Grok chatbot and Mr. Musk's rival to OpenAI and Anthropic that has yet to gain traction.

While SpaceX is growing quickly - revenue hit \$18.7 billion in 2025 - it is also losing money, producing a net loss of \$4.9

billion, mainly on spending to build AI capacity.

In an extraordinary prediction, SpaceX's filing claims it can pull in more than \$28.5 trillion in revenue from its various markets. The milestone makes Musk by far the world's richest person, his fortune dwarfing that of any other billionaire.

Judge keeps order in place to...

only Congress could rename the venue memorializing former President John F. Kennedy in the nation's capital.

The Trump administration appealed the order to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, which also rejected the government's pause request later on Friday, June 12, 2026.

Attorneys for Democratic U.S. Representative Joyce Beatty of Ohio, who brought the lawsuit, did not immediately respond to a request for comment, nor did spokespersons for the Justice Department, the White House and the Kennedy Centre.

Cooper ruled on May 29 that only Congress could rename the arts Center. His order had required Mr. Trump's name to be removed from the building's facade, its website and other materials by 11:59 p.m. ET on Friday, June 12, 2026.

Lawyers for the administration had asked the appeals court to pause the order, arguing: "It does not make sense to alter the Centre's name and signage now, only to potentially revert the name again after what should be a successful appeal."

The Kennedy Centre opened in 1971 as a living memorial to the late president, who was slain in 1963. After Mr. Trump last year replaced several members of the board, the group voted in December to alter the center's name to include him.

Mr. Trump in February announced a two-year closure of the Centre for a major renovation effort. The Republican leader has made a broader push to reshape Washington's monumental core, including plans for a 250-foot (76-meter) arch and a 90,000-square-foot ballroom at the site of the demolished East Wing of the White House. (Source: REUTERS)

Hyderabad-based**Bharatanatyam...**

"It was a lovely surprise to see the messages of my friends, students and members of the fraternity from across the world," says the grandmother who loves playing with her six-month-old grandson Veera Prabhu.

A graduate in commerce, law and a postgraduate in public-personal management, Rajeswari holds a Ph. D combining the mathematics aspect (layam) in dance with management.

The 65-year-old dancer, who continues to perform solo, has represented India in prestigious international dance festivals, including one at the Sydney Opera House main concert hall. Endowed with a fine rhythmic sense and artistic stimulation, Rajeswari, a disciple of Indira Rajan and Pandanallur Srinivasa Pillai, was further mentored by mridangam maestro (late) Karaikkudi Mani in layam. She considers the award a validation. "The award is all the more special because I received congratulatory messages from veterans and peers from the field. The award is motivating and I thank Sangeet Natak Akademi for it."

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Somvati Amavasya: The sacred confluence of devotion, karma and divine blessings

In the spiritual traditions of Hinduism, Amavasya or the new moon day holds immense religious and mystical significance. It is considered a powerful time for introspection, prayer, ancestral worship and spiritual purification. Among all Amavasyas observed during the year, Somvati Amavasya occupies a particularly revered place. When the sacred new moon day falls on a Monday—known as Somvar—it is celebrated as Somvati Amavasya, a rare and highly auspicious occasion believed to multiply the spiritual benefits of fasting, charity and worship.

Deeply rooted in ancient scriptures and traditions, Somvati Amavasya is associated with devotion to Lord Shiva, worship of ancestors, and prayers for prosperity, marital harmony and inner peace. The day is observed with fasting, holy baths, sacred rituals and acts of charity by devotees across India.

The Meaning and Significance of Somvati Amavasya

The word “Somvati” is derived from “Som,” another name for the Moon as well as Monday, the day dedicated to Lord Shiva. “Amavasya” refers to the new moon phase, symbolising darkness, silence and spiritual withdrawal. The convergence of Monday and Amavasya is believed to create spiritually charged energies that help devotees cleanse karmic burdens and receive divine blessings.

In Hindu philosophy, the moon governs the mind and emotions. The absence of the moon during Amavasya signifies detachment from worldly distractions and an opportunity for deep spiritual reflection. Since Monday is associated with Lord Shiva—the destroyer of negativity and the lord of transformation—the day becomes highly auspicious for meditation, penance and worship.

Somvati Amavasya is also regarded as an important occasion for honouring ancestors through rituals known as Pitru Tarpan and Shraddha. According to belief, prayers and offerings made on this day help departed souls attain peace while blessing descendants with prosperity and protection.

Mythological Legends Associated With Somvati Amavasya

Several ancient legends underline the sanctity of Somvati Amavasya. One of the most popular stories is connected with the devotion and determination of a pious woman who saved her husband's life through the observance of this sacred fast.

According to legend, a learned astrologer once predicted that a young girl would become widowed shortly after marriage. Distressed by this prophecy, her family sought guidance from saints and sages. They were advised that only



Important information

Somvati Amavasya

Monday, 15 June 2026

Amavasya Start : 14 June 2026 at 12:20 pm

Amavasya Ends : 15 June 2026 at 08:24 am

the blessings of a spiritually powerful woman named Sona could alter destiny.

The girl served Sona with utmost sincerity and devotion. Pleased with her humility, Sona blessed her with a long and prosperous married life. When the prediction eventually came true and the husband collapsed lifeless, Sona transferred the spiritual merit earned from observing Somvati Amavasya fasts to revive him.

The story symbolises the transformative power of faith, selflessness and spiritual discipline. It is believed that women who observe Somvati Amavasya vrat with devotion are blessed with marital happiness, longevity of their husbands and family well-being.

Another belief associates the day with Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Devotees worship the divine couple seeking harmony, peace and protection from negative influences.

Rituals and Observances

Somvati Amavasya is observed with elaborate rituals beginning before sunrise. Devotees wake early, take a holy bath—often in sacred rivers—and wear clean or traditional clothes before beginning prayers.

Holy Bath and Pilgrimage

Bathing in sacred rivers such as the Triveni Sangam, the Har Ki Pauri or the Ganga River is considered especially meritorious on Somvati Amavasya. Devotees believe that taking a dip in holy waters cleanses sins and purifies the soul. Many pilgrims travel to temples dedicated to Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu

to offer prayers and seek blessings.

Fasting and Worship

Women, especially married women, observe a strict fast on Somvati Amavasya for the well-being and longevity of their husbands. Some devotees consume only fruits and milk, while others observe a complete fast until evening prayers.

Special worship is offered to Lord Shiva using sacred items such as water, milk, honey, bilva leaves, sandalwood paste and flowers. Chanting of Shiva mantras, recitation of the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra and reading of vrat katha form important parts of the observance.

Peepal Tree Worship

One of the most unique rituals associated with Somvati Amavasya is the worship of the Peepal tree, considered sacred in Hinduism. Devotees circumambulate the tree 108 times while tying sacred threads around it and praying for prosperity and protection.

The Peepal tree is believed to symbolise the presence of Lord Vishnu, Goddess Lakshmi and ancestors. Worshipping it on Somvati Amavasya is said to remove obstacles and grant spiritual merit.

Charity and Feeding the Needy

Acts of charity hold immense importance on this day. Donating food, clothes, grains and money to the poor is believed to bring blessings and reduce karmic debts. Feeding cows, birds and needy people is also considered highly auspicious.

Spiritual Importance of Ancestor Worship

Amavasya has long been associated with ancestral energies in Hindu tradition. Somvati Amavasya is considered especially powerful for offering prayers to forefathers. Rituals such as Tarpan and Pind Daan are performed to express gratitude toward ancestors and seek their blessings.

According to Hindu belief, ancestors continue to influence the fortunes and well-being of future generations. Performing rituals with sincerity helps maintain harmony between the living and the departed while ensuring spiritual peace for the souls of ancestors.

Symbolism of Somvati Amavasya

Beyond rituals and customs, Somvati Amavasya carries profound spiritual symbolism. The darkness of the moonless night represents the inner darkness of ignorance, ego and negativity. Through fasting, prayer and self-discipline, devotees seek to illuminate the soul with wisdom and divine grace.

The observance teaches the values of patience, humility, devotion and detachment from material distractions. It encourages people to pause from worldly pursuits and reconnect with spirituality and self-awareness.

The worship of Lord Shiva on this day also symbolises destruction of negativity and transformation of consciousness. Shiva represents stillness amidst chaos, teaching devotees to remain balanced and calm even during life's uncertainties.

Celebrations Across India

Somvati Amavasya is observed with great devotion in many parts of India including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttarakhand. Temples witness large gatherings of devotees offering prayers and participating in special rituals. Sacred towns such as Varanasi, Haridwar and Prayagraj become vibrant centres of spiritual activity. Devotees gather along riverbanks before dawn to take ritual baths and chant hymns.

In many households, women prepare traditional offerings and perform prayers collectively with family members, reinforcing the festival's emotional and cultural significance.

Lessons From Somvati Amavasya

In today's fast-paced world, Somvati Amavasya serves as a reminder of the importance of spiritual reflection and gratitude. The observance highlights the connection between actions, karma and inner peace. It teaches that true strength lies not merely in rituals but in sincerity, compassion and self-discipline.

The festival also underscores respect for ancestors, harmony within families and the timeless human quest for spiritual fulfilment.

History This Week

JUNE 12 - JUNE 18

JUNE 12

June 12, 1898 - The Philippines declared their independence from Spain. The islands were named after King Philip II. Once freed from Spain, the islands were then invaded and occupied by U.S. forces. They became an American colony and remained so until after World War II.

June 12, 1963 - Civil rights leader Medgar Evers was assassinated in Jackson, Mississippi, by a rifle bullet from an ambush. He had been active in seeking integration of schools and voter registration for African Americans in the South. Widespread public outrage following his death led President John F. Kennedy to propose a comprehensive Civil Rights law. Evers was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Birthdays - George Bush, the 41st U.S. President, was born in Milton, Massachusetts, June 12, 1924. During World War II, he became the youngest pilot in the U.S. Navy. Following the war, he co-founded a Texas oil equipment manufacturing company. He then entered politics, serving in a variety of roles including in the U.S. Congress, the United Nations, as U.S. liaison to China, C.I.A. director, and two terms as vice-president under Ronald Reagan. Elected to the presidency in 1988, President Bush is best remembered for forging a successful multinational military alliance following the invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, by Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army. However, following the defeat of Iraq, Bush was beset by domestic problems in the U.S. which resulted in a significant drop in popularity and his loss in the 1992 election to Bill Clinton.



Birthdays - Anne Frank (1929-1945) was born in Frankfurt, Germany. She is perhaps the best known victim of the Nazi Holocaust. Anne and her family moved from Germany to Amsterdam to flee Nazi persecution, then went into hiding in a small attic after Holland was invaded by Nazis. Anne, a girl on the verge of womanhood, was unable to go outside for any reason. In 1942, she began a diary to cope with the boredom, fear, annoyances, and loneliness of captivity. Her family's hiding place was eventually discovered and Anne and her family were deported to Nazi concentration camps. She contracted typhus and died at Bergen-Belsen in 1945. After the war, her father published her diary, which inspired the world, revealing a young woman who had managed to remain hopeful, despite it all.

JUNE 13

June 13, 1971 - The New York Times began publishing the Pentagon Papers, a collection of top secret documents exposing U.S. strategy in the Vietnam War.

June 13, 1966 - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled (5-4) in the case of *Miranda v. Arizona* that an accused person must be apprised of certain rights before police questioning including the right to remain silent, the right to know that anything said can be used against the individual in court, and the right to have a defense attorney present during interrogation. American police officers now routinely read prisoners their 'Miranda' (constitutional) rights before questioning.

Birthdays - Nobel Prize-winning Irish poet and dramatist William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) was born in Dublin, Ireland. Among his plays; *The Countess Cathleen* (1892) and *Cathleen ni Houlihan* (1902).



Birthdays - American Army General Winfield Scott (1786-1866) was born in Petersburg, Virginia. Nicknamed "Old Fuss and Feathers" because of his formality, he served in three wars; the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the American Civil War. He was also nominated for the presidency by the Whig party in 1852 but was defeated by Franklin Pierce.

JUNE 14

June 14, 1775 - The first U.S. Military service, the Continental Army consisting of six companies of riflemen, was established by the Second Continental Congress. The next day, George Washington was appointed by a unanimous vote to command the army.

June 14, 1777 - John Adams introduced a resolution before Congress mandating a United States flag, stating, "...that the flag of the thirteen United States shall be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white on a blue field, representing a new constellation." This anniversary is celebrated each year in the U.S. as Flag Day.

June 14, 1922 - Warren G. Harding became the first U.S. President to broadcast a message over the radio. The event was the dedication of the Francis Scott Key Memorial in Baltimore.

June 14, 1951 - Univac 1, the world's first commercial electronic computer was unveiled in Philadelphia. It was installed at the Census Bureau and utilized a magnetic tape unit as a buffer memory.

Birthdays - Photojournalist Margaret Bourke-White (1906-1971) was born in New York City. In 1936, she became one of four original staff photographers for *Life Magazine*. She was the first woman to become an accredited war correspondent during World War II. She covered the Italian campaign, the siege of Moscow and the American crossing of the Rhine into Germany. Her photographs of Nazi concentration camps stunned the world. She later photographed Mahatma Gandhi and covered the migration of millions of people after the Indian subcontinent was subdivided. She also

served as a war correspondent during the Korean War. Her best known book was a study of rural poverty in the American South, *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937).

Birthdays - American writer Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-1896) was born in Litchfield, Connecticut. She wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, an anti-slavery novel containing vivid descriptions of the sufferings and oppression of African Americans. The book provoked a storm of protest and inflamed people in the North against slavery in the South. The names of two characters from the novel have become part of the English language - the slave, Uncle Tom, and the villainous slave owner, Simon Legree. During the Civil War, as Harriet Beecher Stowe was introduced to President Abraham Lincoln, he reportedly said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that made this great war."

Birthdays - American editor and compiler John Bartlett (1820-1905) was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Although he had little formal education, he created *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, one of the most-used reference works of the English language, which today contains 22,000 entries.



Birthdays - German psychiatrist and pathologist Alois Alzheimer (1864-1915) was born in Markbreit am Mainz, Germany. In 1907, he published an article first describing 'Alzheimers,' a degenerative disease, usually beginning at age 40-60, affecting nerve cells of the brain and leading to severe memory impairment and progressive loss of mental faculties.

JUNE 15

June 15, 1215 - King John set his seal to Magna Carta, the first charter of British liberties, guaranteeing basic rights that have since become the foundation of modern democracies around the world.



Birthdays - Pianist and composer Edvard Grieg (1843-1907) was born in Bergen, Norway. He incorporated the rhythms and melodies of Norwegian folk music into his songs and instrumentals including *Piano Concerto in A Minor*, *Peer Gynt Suite*, *Norwegian Peasant Dance*, and *Ich liebe Dich*.

JUNE 16

June 16, 1963 - Valentina Tereshkova, 26, became the first woman in space as her Soviet spacecraft, *Vostok 6*, took off from the Tyuratam launch site. She

manually controlled the spacecraft completing 48 orbits in 71 hours before landing safely.

Birthdays - Film comedian Stan Laurel (1890-1965) was born in Ulverston, England. He teamed up with Oliver Hardy as Laurel & Hardy delighting audiences for more than 30 years.

Birthdays - American author and photographer John Griffin (1920-1980) was born in Dallas, Texas. He darkened his white skin using chemicals and ultraviolet light, then kept a journal on his experiences while posing as an African American traveling through the deep South. The journal was published as the book, *Black Like Me*.

JUNE 17

June 17, 1972 - Following a seemingly routine burglary, five men were arrested at the National Democratic Headquarters in the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. However, subsequent investigations revealed the burglars were actually agents hired by the Committee for the Re-election of President Richard Nixon. A long chain of events then followed in which the president and top aides became involved in an extensive cover-up of this and other White House sanctioned illegal activities, eventually leading to the resignation of President Nixon on August 9, 1974.

Birthdays - Russian composer Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) was born near St. Petersburg. Among his best known works, the ballets *The Firebird* (1910), *Petrushka* (1911) and *The Rite of Spring* (1913), and the choral work *Symphony of Psalms* (1930).

JUNE 18

June 18, 1815 - On the fields near Waterloo in central Belgium, 72,000 French troops, led by Napoleon, suffered a crushing military defeat from a combined Allied army of 113,000 British, Dutch, Belgian, and Prussian troops. Thus ended 23 years of warfare between France and the other powers of Europe. Napoleon was then sent into exile on the island of St. Helena off the coast of Africa. On May 5, 1821, the former vain-glorious Emperor died alone on the tiny island, abandoned by everyone.

June 18, 1983 - Dr. Sally Ride, a 32-year-old physicist and pilot, became the first American woman in space, beginning a six-day mission aboard the space shuttle *Challenger*, launched from Cape Canaveral, Florida.



Birthdays - British explorer George Mallory (1886-1924) was born in Mobblerley, Cheshire, England. When asked why he wanted to climb Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world, he simply answered, "Because it is there." He disappeared while climbing through the mists toward its summit on the morning of June 8, 1924. His body, perfectly preserved due to the cold conditions, was discovered by climbers in 1999, just 600 meters (2,030 feet) from the summit.

Deep in the western state of Gujarat lies a landscape where the roar of lions echoes through dry deciduous forests and ancient tribal traditions continue to thrive amid nature's raw beauty. Gir National Park, popularly known simply as Gir, is one of India's most extraordinary wildlife destinations. Famous as the last natural habitat of the endangered Asiatic lion, Gir is not just a sanctuary for wildlife enthusiasts but also a fascinating cultural region home to the unique Siddi community—people of African descent who have lived in India for centuries.

A journey to Gir is more than a safari experience. It is an exploration of wilderness, history, tribal culture and biodiversity woven together in one unforgettable destination.

The Last Refuge of the Asiatic Lion

Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary is globally renowned as the only place on Earth where Asiatic lions roam freely in the wild. Once spread across large parts of Asia and the Middle East, these majestic big cats faced near extinction due to hunting and habitat loss. By the late 19th century, only a handful of lions survived in the Gir forests. Thanks to conservation efforts initiated by the Nawabs of Junagadh and later strengthened by the Indian government, the lion population gradually recovered. Today, Gir stands as one of India's greatest wildlife conservation success stories.

Unlike their African cousins, Asiatic lions are slightly smaller, possess a distinctive fold of skin along their bellies and often move in smaller prides. Spotting a lion resting beneath acacia trees or walking regally through the grasslands is an experience that leaves visitors awestruck.

Apart from lions, Gir is home to leopards, striped hyenas, jackals, crocodiles, antelopes, nilgai, sambar deer and over 300 species of birds, making it a paradise for wildlife photographers and nature lovers.

A Landscape of Untamed Beauty

The landscape of Gir is dramatic and diverse. Dry teak forests, rugged hills, grasslands, rocky terrain and perennial rivers create a rich ecological environment. During sunrise, the forest awakens with birdsong and golden light filtering through the trees, while evenings bring cool breezes and the distant calls of wildlife.

The Kamleshwar Dam within the sanctuary is often referred to as the "lifeline of Gir" and attracts numerous marsh crocodiles and migratory birds. The changing colours of the forest across seasons—from dusty summer tones to lush monsoon greenery—add to Gir's magical charm.

For travellers seeking a deeper connection with nature, Gir offers a rare opportunity to experience wilderness in its purest form.

Safari Adventures in Gir

One of the biggest attractions in Gir is the thrilling jungle safari. Conducted in designated zones, these safaris allow visitors to venture deep into lion

Gir: Where Asiatic Lions roam and African heritage lives on



territory accompanied by trained guides and forest officials.

The excitement of tracking pugmarks, hearing alarm calls from deer or suddenly spotting a lion emerging from the bushes creates an adrenaline-filled experience unlike any other. Early morning safaris are especially popular as wildlife sightings are more frequent during cooler hours.

Jeep safaris also provide opportunities to witness Gir's lesser-known inhabitants including leopards lounging on rocky outcrops, peacocks dancing in the forest and crocodiles basking near water bodies.

Nature interpretation centres and eco-tourism initiatives in the region further help visitors understand the fragile ecosystem and conservation efforts that protect Gir's biodiversity.

The Siddi Community: Africa in the Heart of India

One of the most fascinating aspects of Gir is its connection to the Siddi tribe, often referred to as the "African tribe of India." The Siddis are believed to be descendants of Africans brought to India centuries ago by Arab traders, Portuguese colonisers and regional rulers.

Today, many Siddis live in villages around Gir and parts of Gujarat and Karnataka. Despite centuries of integration into Indian society, they continue to preserve elements of their African heritage through music, dance and cultural traditions.

Their vibrant Dhamal dance, performed with rhythmic drums and energetic movements, reflects unmistakable African influences blended with Indian spirituality. Watching a Siddi cultural performance offers travellers a rare glimpse into a unique Indo-African identity found



nowhere else in the country.

The Siddis have also become an integral part of the Gir ecosystem, with many communities involved in agriculture, labour and forest-related activities.

Maldharis: The Pastoral Guardians of Gir

Another important community associated with Gir is the Maldharis, traditional pastoralists who have coexisted with lions for generations. Living in settlements called "nesses" within the forest, the Maldharis rear cattle and buffaloes while maintaining a remarkable balance with wildlife.

Their stories of living alongside lions reveal a deep understanding of nature and mutual coexistence rarely seen elsewhere. Many travellers visiting Gir are fascinated by the simplicity and resilience of Maldhari life.

Best Time to Visit Gir

The ideal time to visit Gir is between

December and March when the weather remains pleasant and wildlife sightings are more comfortable. Summers from April to June can be extremely hot, but they also offer excellent opportunities to spot lions near water sources.

The park remains closed during the monsoon season, usually from mid-June to mid-October, to allow the ecosystem to rejuvenate.

Beyond the Jungle

Gir's surrounding region also offers several attractions worth exploring. The historic town of Junagadh is known for ancient forts, palaces and Buddhist caves. The sacred Somnath Temple, one of the twelve Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva, lies a few hours away and attracts pilgrims from across the country.

Coastal towns nearby offer glimpses of Gujarat's maritime beauty, while local villages provide opportunities to experience authentic Gujarati cuisine and hospitality.

FIFA World Cup 2026: Canada scripts history, earns its first ever World Cup point by holding Bosnia to 1-1 draw



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

JUNE 12, 2026

TORONTO (TIP): A sardine-packed BMO Stadium rose several times while clapping to laud the historic performance by the Canadian team that scripted history in lodging its first-ever FIFA World Cup point by holding its European opponents, Bosnia Herzegovina, to a 1-1 draw. It was an absorbing and pulsating game that saw the home team completely dominate the second half.

Trailing by a first half goal, Cyle Larin scored the equalizer in the 78th minute to help one of the co-hosts to earn its first-ever point at the FIFA World Cup.

After a colorful bash, the ritual of opening ceremony with flags of all 48 participating nations and singing of national anthems of both Bosnia and Canada was gone through. A show of fireworks added color to the ceremony.

Larin, who entered the game as a substitute just moments earlier, fought off two defenders near the top of the penalty area and beat Nikola Vasilj in the Bosnian goal with a kick that stormed into the low corner.

Earlier, Jovo Lukic scored his first international goal for Bosnia in the 21st minute. He flicked a header past goalkeeper Maxime Crepeau off a corner kick.

A colorful opening ceremony preceded the electrifying game that brought Canada and Bosnia face to face for the first time not only in FIFA World Cup but otherwise also.

A capacity crowd of 43,002 - many sporting red Canada jerseys - and some of the rest in blue jerseys supporting Bosnia, were in strong voice as they tried to lift both the sides to dish out a thriller.



If the first half mostly belonged to Bosnia, the second half saw the Canadians storming their opponent's citadel repeatedly.

The initial Canadian attacks were repeatedly stifled by the taut Bosnian defense. It was Larin who finally sent the spectators into a tizzy with his tying goal. For a while, it silenced the stands overflowing with red jerseys.

Canada had been both winless and pointless in both of previous appearances at the World Cup.

Elated at its success, the home team will now head to Vancouver for its remaining group-stage games against Qatar on Thursday and Switzerland on June 24.

With star left back Alphonso Davies out with a hamstring issue, Stephen Eustaquio wore the captain's armband for Canada.

Coach Jesse Marsch slotted Jonathan David and Tani Oluwaseyi up top in his starting 11. Defender Luc de Fougerolles was on the back line with Moïse Bombito available off the bench.

At the post-match conference, the

Canadian coach said that the team, young and fit, played to a strategy of wearing out its opponents in the first half and then taking over the command of the game in the second.

He said that his planned substitutions in the second rejuvenated the team as it launched its offensives with redoubled vigor, penetration, and purpose.

Playing on the home ground with an escalated supportive crowd worked well for the home team.

Conditions were idyllic at the new-look stadium with a temperature of 26 degrees C at the kickoff under mostly sunny skies. Temporary grandstands were added at two sides of the lakefront stadium to bring capacity up to the FIFA minimum.

Actor Will Arnett and singer Michael Bublê helped warm up the crowd before the game and Alanis Morissette sang O Canada.

With the partisan crowd buzzing, Canada earned the first corner kick in the opening minute but could not take advantage. In fact, Canadians earned more corner kicks in the first half - nine

against four by their opponents but failed to make use of any. Bosnians had more attempts (four) on Canadian goals than the home team (two).

The Bosnians, ranked 64th in the world, played their usual physical brand of soccer and were effective in cutting off Canadian crosses.

The visitors nearly had a break after some sloppy midfield play in the 11th minute. A hard tackle by Alistair Johnson prevented an opportunity but the defender was given a yellow card.

Canada's first chance came six minutes later when David was left open near the penalty spot but Bosnian custodian Vasilj made a diving save.

Bosnia took advantage of its first corner kick as Lukic - getting the start over Bosnian legend Edin Dzeko - caught Crepeau too close to the post. Two sections of Bosnian fans in the grandstand above the goal erupted while Lukic was swarmed by his elated teammates.

Canada, ranked 30th, controlled possession for the rest of the half but couldn't put a shot on target. Oluwaseyi had the best chance but his shot from inside the 18-yard box sailed over the bar.

Both teams pressed after the break with Canada's Richie Laryea nearly notching the equalizer. After a nifty passing play, he beat Vasilj but the ball deflected off Sead Kolasinac's outstretched leg and hit the crossbar. It was a providential escape for Bosnia.

Demirovic was sent in alone moments later but Crepeau made a diving challenge and the ball dribbled wide.

Marsch made a triple substitution in the 61st minute, hoping to give his team a spark. Jacob Shaffelburg, Promise David and Ali Ahmed came on for Liam Millar, David and Tajon Buchanan.

Canada defeated Uzbekistan 2-0 and tied Ireland 1-1 in international friendlies last week. Bosnia qualified for the tournament by upsetting Italy in a European qualifier last March.



Sarpreet Singh

Singh is King at FIFA World Cup 2026

BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

JUNE 12, 2026

TORONTO (TIP): They say no world sporting event is complete without a Singh. It is true. The elite FIFA sports event-the World Cup-with a record 48 nations competing in a 104-match football marathon, is without the world's fastest-growing economy, India.

Jointly hosted by the USA, Mexico, and Canada, it has already come to be known as the most expensive FIFA World Cup ever, with controversies raging over the ticket prices. The FIFA chief has tried to justify higher pricing.

The tournament has assumed yet

another distinction. It will witness the participation of a Sikh player; perhaps the first in history. In addition to a Sikh player, the FIFA World Cup 2026 is witnessing a massive participation of Sikhs, both men and women.

Go to any venue of the mega event in Canada or the USA, and you will be greeted by young Sikhs volunteering for various roles, including security, accreditation, transport, logistics, and even IT. Many of them are students in North America, some are on work permits, and the rest are second- and third-generation North Americans-Canadians or Americans.

Sikh volunteers apart, the focus will be on Sarpreet Singh, the first-ever Sikh

World Cupper.

Interestingly, he will not be representing the country his parents came from. Rather, he will be donning colors for the country he was born in, 1999.

He reminds those interested in following the Indian diaspora in sports that in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, India failed for the first time since 1928 to qualify for the Olympic Hockey Tournament; a group of Sikh players were represented in the tournament. They played for Canada. One of them, Bindi Kular, came from the famous hockey nursery of Sansarpur.

Incidentally, Sarpreet Singh's parents also came from the same sports belt of

Continued on Page 53

Jaspal Rana, renowned Indian shooting coach and Asian Games gold medallist, dies at 49

NEW DELHI (TIP), JUNE 12, 2026

Indian shooting legend and renowned coach Jaspal Rana passed away on Friday at the age of 49 after suffering a cardiac emergency earlier this week.

Rana, who was serving as the high-performance coach for India's pistol shooters, had reportedly felt discomfort while returning to India from the ISSF World Cup in Munich. After landing in New Delhi, he was admitted to Max Hospital in Saket, where he underwent treatment.

Doctors identified a cardiac blockage and inserted a stent. A second stent procedure was expected to be carried out in the coming days. While initial reports suggested that he was stable and recovering, news of his death emerged on Friday morning.

"He experienced chest pain and discomfort during the ISSF World Cup in Munich, which he initially mistook for acidity, and continued with his travel plans. However, the discomfort returned during the journey back to India, prompting immediate medical attention upon his arrival in Delhi," his brother Subash Rana told the media.

Rana's death has come as a major blow to Indian shooting. One of the country's most accomplished shooters and respected coaches, he played an important role in shaping several generations of pistol shooters and remained actively involved with the national programme until his final days.

In recent years, Rana was widely recognised for his work with Manu Bhaker. The two shared a successful partnership that culminated at the Paris Olympics in 2024, where Bhaker won bronze medals in the women's 10m air pistol and the mixed team 10m air pistol events, becoming the first Indian athlete to



win two medals at a single edition of the Olympics after Independence.

Apart from Bhaker, Rana worked closely with several leading pistol shooters, including Saurabh Chaudhary, Anish Bhanwala and Chinki Yadav. His tenure with the junior programme helped create a strong pool of talent that consistently delivered results for India at international competitions.

The National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) appointed Rana as the High-Performance Coach for the 25m pistol discipline in February 2025. Five years earlier, he had been conferred the Dronacharya Award for his contribution to coaching. Long before he became one of India's most respected coaches, Rana had established himself as one of the finest pistol shooters the country had produced.

Born on June 28, 1976, in Uttarakhand, Rana announced himself on the international stage in 1994. At the World

Shooting Championships in Milan, he won gold in the junior category with a world-record score. Later that year, he claimed gold in the 25m Centre Fire Pistol event at the Asian Games, beginning a career that would span more than a decade at the highest level.

Rana went on to become one of India's most successful shooters, winning medals across the Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and Asian Championships. He remains India's most successful Commonwealth Games shooter, with 15 medals, including nine gold medals.

His most memorable performance came at the 2006 Asian Games in Doha, where he won three gold medals and equalled the world record in the 25m Centre Fire Pistol event.

The success came early in his career as well. Rana received the Arjuna Award at the age of 18 and was honoured with the Padma Shri three years later.



Over four editions of the Commonwealth Games — 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006 — he remained among India's most reliable medal contenders and helped establish shooting as one of the country's strongest disciplines at multi-sport events.

After retiring from competitive shooting, Rana moved into coaching and joined the national setup in 2012. He took charge of the junior pistol programme and became a key figure in developing India's next generation of shooters.

His work with young athletes earned widespread recognition as India continued to produce medal contenders across international competitions. Shooters such as Saurabh Chaudhary, Anish Bhanwala and Chinki Yadav progressed through the system during his tenure.

Rana was known for his attention to detail and his emphasis on preparing athletes for competition pressure. Fellow shooters and coaches often credited him for creating training environments that closely mirrored the demands of international events.

His association with Manu Bhaker was among the most significant chapters of his coaching career. After periods of ups and downs in Bhaker's journey, Rana played an important role in her preparations leading up to the Paris Olympics, where she emerged as one of India's standout performers.

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Punjab as that of Bindi Kular.

Sarpreet Singh, whose first international appearances for New Zealand came at the under-17 level when he was named to the 20-man Kiwi squad for the 2015 OFC U-17 Championship.

Since then, he has never looked back and has made football his career.

He competed for New Zealand at the 2017 FIFA U-20 World Cup, where they unfortunately fell to the USA in the pre-quarterfinal round. His next appearance for New Zealand was in the 2019 FIFA U20 World Cup, where again the Kiwis could not cross the American hurdle, this time losing to Colombia in the round of 16 in a penalty shootout after extra time could not help resolve the 1-1 deadlock.

Singh earned his first senior national team call-up for a friendly match against Canada on March 24, 2018, in Murcia, as he came in as a substitute in the second half of a 1-0 loss. Sarpreet scored his first goal for New Zealand on June 2, 2018, against Kenya in the 2018 Intercontinental Cup. Interestingly, in the same tournament, he provided both assists as his team defeated India 2-1.

Now Singh has been named in New Zealand's squad for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, becoming the first player of Indian Punjabi heritage to appear at a FIFA World Cup since Vikash Dhorasoo represented France in 2006.

Drawn with Iran, Egypt, and Belgium in Group G, New Zealand plays its first game on June 15 against Iran.

(Prabhjot Singh is a Toronto-based senior journalist who writes on Sports, politics and community. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

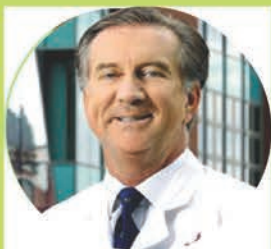




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Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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