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in Commemoration of  
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# Trump faces setback as 4 Republicans join Democrats to pass resolution halting Iran war



US President Donald Trump speaks during an event in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, DC. -File photo / Reuters

**Measure directs US President to withdraw troops from Iran unless Congress authorizes use of military force**

**JUNE 4, 2026  
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)**

The Republican-led US House of Representatives approved a resolution on Wednesday, June 3, to block President Donald Trump from continuing the war against Iran, reflecting growing concern among members of his party about the three-month-old conflict, reports Reuter.

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## India, Venezuela vow deeper energy partnership amid global crude supply worries



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi shakes hands with Venezuela's Acting President Delcy Rodriguez in New Delhi on Thursday, June 5.

**JUNE 5, 2026  
NEW DELHI (TIP)**

India and Venezuela on Thursday, June 4, agreed to deepen cooperation in energy, critical minerals, technology, agriculture and healthcare as Prime Minister Narendra Modi held wide-ranging talks with Venezuelan Acting President Delcy Rodríguez, with energy security emerging as the central theme of the visit. Describing Venezuela as a valued partner in Latin America, Modi said the two sides had extensive discussions on expanding cooperation across key sectors and

**CONTD ON PAGE 36**

## Yoga Guru HR Nagendra to lead New York Consulate General's Times Square International Day of Yoga Celebrations on June 21

**JUNE 4, 2026  
NEW YORK (TIP)**

Yoga Guru HR Nagendra, president of Bengaluru's SVYASA University, will headline the annual June 21 Consulate General of India, New York's Yoga event drawing thousands of participants, at the iconic Times Square.

The event, scheduled for June 21, is organised by the Consulate General of India in New York and is expected to draw thousands of participants from across the United States and beyond. HR Nagendra, a Padma Shri and President of Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (S-VYASA) University in Bengaluru, will be accompanied by the university's Vice Chancellor, NK Manjunath.

RANA President and Jaipur Foot USA Chairman Prem Bhandari in a conversation with The Indian Panorama Editor, disclosed the commitments of Shri Nagendra. Before the Times Square event, Nagendra will inaugurate a three-day Yoga and Wellness Retreat at the YO1 Longevity and Health



Yoga Guru HR Nagendra

**CONTD ON PAGE 3**

## Over 200,000 applicants paid USD 100,000 for H-1B visas in FY26: DHS tells Senate



**JUNE 3, 2026  
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)**

More than .2 million applicants opted to pay USD.1 million for their H-1B visas to work in the US in the fiscal year 2026, Markwayne Mullin, Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), said.

Testifying before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Tuesday, Mullin said the DHS had received about .286 million H-1B applications in the fiscal year 2026. "We had 286,000 applicants a year to date for the H-1B visas, out of those, over 200,000 of them paid USD 100,000 to be able to come in because it allows us to process them in a little bit faster of a manner," Mullin said in response to a question by US Senator Susan Collins on the shortage of doctors in rural parts of the country.

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Department of Homeland Security Secretary Mullin says applicants paying USD 100,000 get their papers processed in about 15 days and it takes about 7.5 months to process other applications.



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# America at 250: The Perils of Excessive Power

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



As America prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of its Independence, it is an appropriate moment not merely for celebration, but also for reflection. Nations, like individuals, must occasionally pause and examine themselves-not only to take pride in their achievements, but also to honestly confront their shortcomings.

One of the enduring strengths of the American Republic has been its system of checks and balances. The Founding Fathers, having rebelled against concentrated authority, deliberately created a government in which power would be divided among the Executive, the Legislature, and the Judiciary. Their wisdom lay in recognizing a simple truth: power, if left unchecked, has a tendency to expand.

Today, many Americans are asking whether that delicate balance is under strain.

Whatever one's political preferences, it is difficult to ignore the perception that the Presidency has grown extraordinarily powerful. The current occupant of the White House often appears capable of setting the national agenda almost single-handedly, with little effective resistance from institutions that were designed to serve as counterweights. The issue is not merely the strength of one President; strong leadership can be a virtue. The concern arises when strength begins to resemble dominance and when

constitutional restraints appear increasingly fragile.

A democracy depends not only upon leaders but also upon institutions willing to perform their constitutional duties. Congress was never intended to be a rubber stamp. The Senate was never designed to function as an echo chamber. Their purpose is not blind loyalty to a President of their own party but loyalty to the Constitution and to the people they represent.

Yet, too often, lawmakers appear reluctant to challenge executive excesses. Political calculations, party discipline, and the fear of offending powerful leaders frequently take precedence over independent judgment. Surrounding every powerful leader is the temptation to cultivate flatterers rather than truth-tellers, supporters rather than critics. History repeatedly demonstrates that unchecked authority thrives where dissent is discouraged and independent voices are marginalized.

The consequences extend beyond Washington. When citizens see elected representatives unwilling to question power, they begin to lose faith in the institutions meant to safeguard their rights. Cynicism replaces trust. Disillusionment replaces participation. The danger is not merely political; it is civic and moral.

The American experiment has survived for 250 years not because of great Presidents alone, but because no

President was intended to be greater than the Constitution. The nation's strength has always rested on the principle that power is shared, limited, and accountable.

As the nation commemorates two and a half centuries of independence, Americans would do well to remember that liberty is not self-sustaining. It requires vigilance. It requires institutions willing to defend their prerogatives. It requires legislators prepared to place constitutional duty above partisan convenience. Most of all, it requires citizens who understand that democracy is not protected by elections alone, but by the continuous balancing of power.

The celebration of America's 250th birthday should therefore be more than a commemoration of the past. It should be a reaffirmation of the principles that made the Republic possible in the first place. The question facing America today is not whether it has a strong President. The more important question is whether its institutions remain strong enough to preserve the constitutional balance upon which the nation's freedom ultimately depends.

The answer to that question will shape not only the next election cycle, but the next chapter of the American story.

The ultimate test of a democracy is not whether it can elect a strong leader. It is whether its institutions remain strong enough to ensure that no leader becomes stronger than the Constitution.

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**By June 15, 2026**

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# LOTUS WEB MAGAZINE TO CELEBRATE YOGA DAY AT A MEDITATIVE, MULTIFAITH EVENT

ALOTUSINTHEMUD.COM IS SET TO HOST AN ECLECTIC EVENT, WITH DR. NORI DATTATREYUDU AS CHIEF GUEST, ON JUNE 14 AT THE HANUMAN TEMPLE IN HEMPSTEAD, ON LONG ISLAND



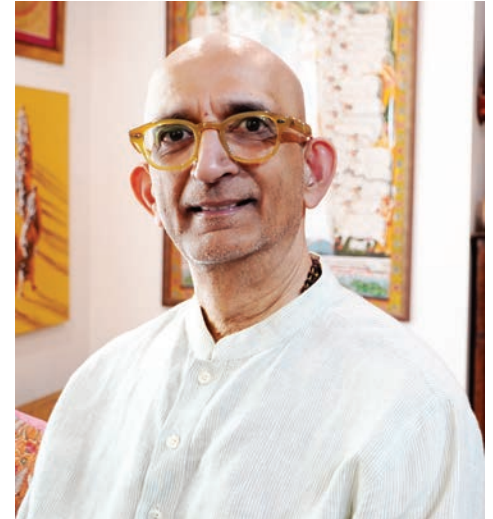
Padma Bhushan Dr. Dattatreya Nori, world-renowned oncologist and founder of 3 Shirdi Sai Baba temples in NY-NJ, will be the chief guest.



Lama Aria Drolma, an NYC model-turned-Buddhist nun, will conduct a Loving-Kindness meditation.



Yakub Mathew (panelist), is author of 'Seeking the Infinite - Maha Kumbh 2025' and Managing Director of Wells Fargo Advisors, New York.



A few artworks of Nayan Kisnadwala, CFO of Fidem Financial and President of Vedic Heritage Inc, will be auctioned for charity at the event



Parveen Chopra is Founding Editor of ALotusInTheMud.com, which is organizing the free event.



Sharon Epstein blends Jewish spirituality with diverse yoga traditions. (Photos courtesy A Lotus In The Mud)

**JUNE 4, 2016  
HEMPSTEAD, NY (TIP)**

A multifaith panel on the devotional path to God, and Buddhist meditation for world peace are just two elements of the eclectic celebration of International Day

of Yoga Day organized by ALotusInTheMud.com on June 14.

The evening event titled 'The Heart of Yoga', in association with the Consulate General of India, New York, brings together wellness, spirituality, culture,

and community in the Pt Jasraj Auditorium of Vedic Heritage Hanuman Mandir in Hempstead, NY.

Parveen Chopra, Founder and Editor of Lotus web magazine, explains that since other Yoga Day events focus on asanas, he is presenting an immersive devotional program mix.

He also revealed that Dr. Dattatreya Nori, world-renowned oncologist awarded Padma Bhushan 2026, and founder of three Shirdi Sai Baba temples in New York and New Jersey, will be the chief guest at the event. Dr Nori is Advisor to the Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in India for cancer services. He is former Chief of Brachytherapy Service, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, New York.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

Panel Discussion on Devotion for Spiritual Evolution: Moderated by Parveen Chopra, panelists are Lama Aria Drolma, Yakub Mathew (banker and author), Nayan Kisnadwala (finance executive, painter and Vedic Heritage Hanuman Temple President), and

Sharon Epstein (blends Judaism with yoga).

Loving-Kindness Meditation for World Peace: Led by Lama Aria Drolma, a model-tuned-ordained nun in a Tibetan Buddhism tradition, and acclaimed teacher and speaker.

Radha-Krishna Dance by Preya Patel and her Vivarta Arts students.

Chair Yoga and Ribbon Dance by Anne Moffatt.

Devotional Singing by Budh Prakash Jasuja.

Vegetarian meal will be served after the 4-6.30 pm program.

Yoga enthusiasts, spiritual seekers, and community members are warmly invited to join this free event. Link to register: <https://tinyurl.com/mjd4ptxe>

ALotusInTheMud.com is a not-for-profit magazine curating helpful content from mainly the Eastern traditions for readers to be happy, healthy and at peace. Contact: 516 710 0508; lotus4usa@gmail.com

(Based on a Press Release issued by Parveen Chopra)

## Yoga Guru HR Nagendra to lead New York Consulate General's Times Square International Day of Yoga Celebrations on June 21

**CONTD FROM PAGE 1**

Resort in Monticello, New York, from June 12 to 14. The retreat will include yoga sessions, meditation, and lectures on stress management, healthy ageing, and holistic wellness.

Cardiologist Samin K Sharma, Director of Interventional Cardiology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, & Raj Bansal, founder of one of the Accountable Care Organization (ACO) are among the notable speakers confirmed for the retreat.

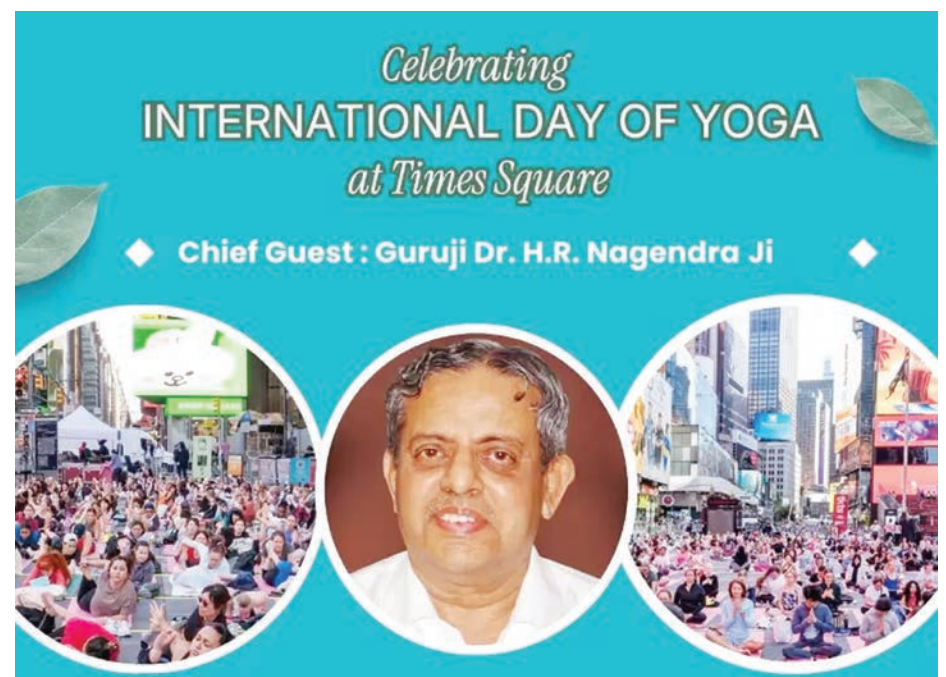
The visit has been organised and hosted at the invitation of the Rajasthan Association of North America (RANA), alongside BRUHUD NY seniors and Jaipur foot USA - reflecting the deep network of Indian diaspora organisations that have

worked for years to embed yoga into American public life.

Prem Bhandari, Chairman of Jaipur Foot USA and President of RANA New York, who is Central to this effort, has spent over a decade organising yoga programs at prominent venues including the United Nations and Capitol Hill.

Consul General of India in New York, Binaya Srikanta Pradhan expects a pleasant weather, and hopes the presence and participation of a larger number of Yoga enthusiasts. He disclosed that the registration was still open and advised those desirous of participating to hurry up before the registration closes.

The International Day of Yoga is observed annually on June 21.



Consulate General of India's Yoga event poster

# Indian-origin woman wins major settlement in 23-year divorce battle in UK

**JUNE 3, 2026**  
**LONDON (TIP)**

An Indian-origin woman, whose 23-year divorce battle has been dubbed one of the longest in UK legal history, has won a 6.6 million pounds settlement after a High Court judgment.

Varsha Gohil filed for divorce in May 2002 and, after accepting an initial modest settlement, became aware of assets her lawyer-husband, Bhadresh Gohil, had failed to declare.

Her legal pursuit, meanwhile, was interrupted by a money-laundering investigation, which led to Bhadresh being sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2010 in connection with a corruption case involving a client in Nigeria.

While the UK Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) pursued a Confiscation Order over funds of nearly 28 million pounds associated with the husband's criminal activity, the ex-wife's legitimate share in the untainted "marital pool" of the funds remained unresolved.

According to 'The Times', the UK Court of Appeal last month finally ended the lengthy courtroom drama by ruling out any further appeals, which meant a High Court judgment from last year could now take effect.



Varsha Gohil filed for divorce in May 2002 and, after 23 years, won a 6.6 million pounds settlement after a High Court judgment.

"The husband's conduct is at the highest end of the scale in terms of dishonesty and its consequences," Justice Williams said in the ruling dated May 28, 2025.

"The wife is now nearing retirement age and has come through the last 23 years with health problems, but financially, she is still afloat.

"Given my conclusions on the assets which the wife sought orders in respect of and the other assets which are subject to the Confiscation Order, the marital pool of

identifiable untainted realizable assets of around 6,663,172 pounds compared to the realizable assets of 27,967,337.48 pounds amounts to a modest 23.82 per cent," he said.

Regarding the length of the proceedings, the judge noted that the name Gohil will "linger long in the memories of lawyers and judges across a range of jurisdictions" due to the "tortuous route that the case has followed".

Varsha Gohil, now 61 and based in London, had suspected that her husband had not revealed the extent of all his assets despite a legal obligation to do so in divorce cases.

The CPS later argued that the assets were entirely the proceeds of crime and should, therefore, only be subject to criminal asset recovery and not go towards the divorce settlement. However, the High Court found that some assets were legitimate businesses during the couple's marriage, giving the wife a right to the share.

Judge Williams took serious note of Bhadresh Gohil's failure to disclose his true wealth, which had put his family through the "devastation that the litigation and his criminality have wrought".

(Source: PTI)

## Indian man charged in a crash that killed pregnant teen partner; victim's mother seeks deportation

**JUNE 3, 2026**  
**OHIO (TIP)**

The mother of a pregnant teenager who, along with her unborn child, was killed in a Range Rover Velar crash in Ohio, United States, has said she wants Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to deport the Indian man charged in the case.



Tarsem Singh  
Photo: ICEgov/X

Annette Holmes said she does not want 33-year-old Tarsem Singh to remain in the country.

According to a NDTV report citing Newsweek, the victim's family stated that Singh, an Indian national allegedly living in the US illegally, was the father of 17-year-old Ashlee Holmes' unborn child.

The report added that Ashlee's relatives said she had tried to leave the relationship several times but was not successful.

"Nobody should ever deserve to die while pregnant with their first kid," Ashlee's mother told Newsweek. "I'm OK with him being kicked out of the country permanently... I don't want him in the States no more," she added.

According to reports, Ashlee Holmes was a passenger in a Range Rover Velar that crashed on February 16 after Singh allegedly failed to stop for law enforcement and led deputies on a high-speed chase.

The vehicle was initially over speeding and later reportedly reached speeds of over 120 mph during the pursuit. It eventually failed to negotiate a curve, crossed the center line, and struck a Jeep before overturning multiple times.

Ashlee was ejected from the vehicle and died of her injuries. Her unborn child also did not survive, according to the Ohio State Highway Patrol crash report cited by Newsweek.

Tarsem Singh has been indicted on charges including involuntary manslaughter, reckless homicide and aggravated vehicular homicide. He is currently in custody on a \$1 million bond and is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

## Indian national killed in attack on Kuwait airport

**In a post on X, the Embassy of India in Kuwait expressed its 'deepest condolences at the tragic demise of an Indian national due to an attack on the airport in Kuwait today'**

**JUNE 3, 2026**  
**DUBAI (TIP)**

An Indian national was killed in an attack that targeted Kuwait International Airport, officials said on Wednesday, June 3.

In a post on X, the Embassy of India in Kuwait expressed its "deepest condolences at the tragic demise of an Indian national due to an attack on the airport in Kuwait today".

It said the mission is "closely coordinating" with the Kuwaiti authorities to render all possible support and assistance to the bereaved family as well as those injured in the incident.

Earlier, an Indian national was killed in Kuwait in Iranian strikes on a power and water desalination plant on March 30.

Kuwait suspended air traffic on Wednesday after the Iranian strikes hit Terminal One, causing casualties and damage to airport facilities, Directorate General of Civil Aviation spokesperson Abdullah Al-Rajhi was quoted as saying by the state-run KUNA news agency.

Air traffic was suspended and flights were diverted to nearby airports until further notice, he said.

Dr Abdullah Al-Sund, the official spokesperson for the Ministry of Health, said that seven hospitals have received 63 injured so far following the attack targeting the airport.

He added that seven cases have undergone urgent major surgical procedures, in addition to several minor surgeries.

Abdullah said that the injured included civilians, airport workers, and travelers.

(Source: PTI)



Flames and smoke rise from a fire in the aftermath of Iranian strikes, according to the foreign ministry, at Kuwait International Airport in Kuwait City, Kuwait, June 3, 2026, in this still image obtained from a social media video. Image: Social Media

## Germany scraps airport transit visa requirement for Indian travelers

**JUNE 3, 2026**  
**NEW DELHI (TIP)**

Germany, in a significant move aimed at easing travel for Indian citizens, on Tuesday announced abolishing the airport transit visa requirement for Indian nationals transiting through German airports en route to other countries.

The German embassy in New Delhi informed that the decision was published in Germany's Federal Law Gazette and will come into effect from June 3.

With the change, Indian passport holders travelling to a third country via Germany will no longer be required to obtain an airport transit visa solely for changing flights at German airports.

The German Embassy said the measure was a follow-up to German Chancellor Friedrich Merz's visit to India earlier this year and reflected Berlin's commitment to strengthening ties with New Delhi.

"This implements a result of Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz's trip to India in January of this year," the embassy said in a statement.

The move is expected to benefit thousands of Indian travelers who use major German aviation hubs such as Frankfurt and Munich for onward connections to destinations across Europe, North America and other regions.

The embassy said the decision underlined the German government's commitment to facilitating the movement of people, deepening bilateral relations, and strengthening economic links between the two countries.

The relaxation is likely to make travel through Germany more convenient and reduce paperwork and costs for Indian passengers undertaking international journeys involving transit stops in the country.

(Source: TNS)





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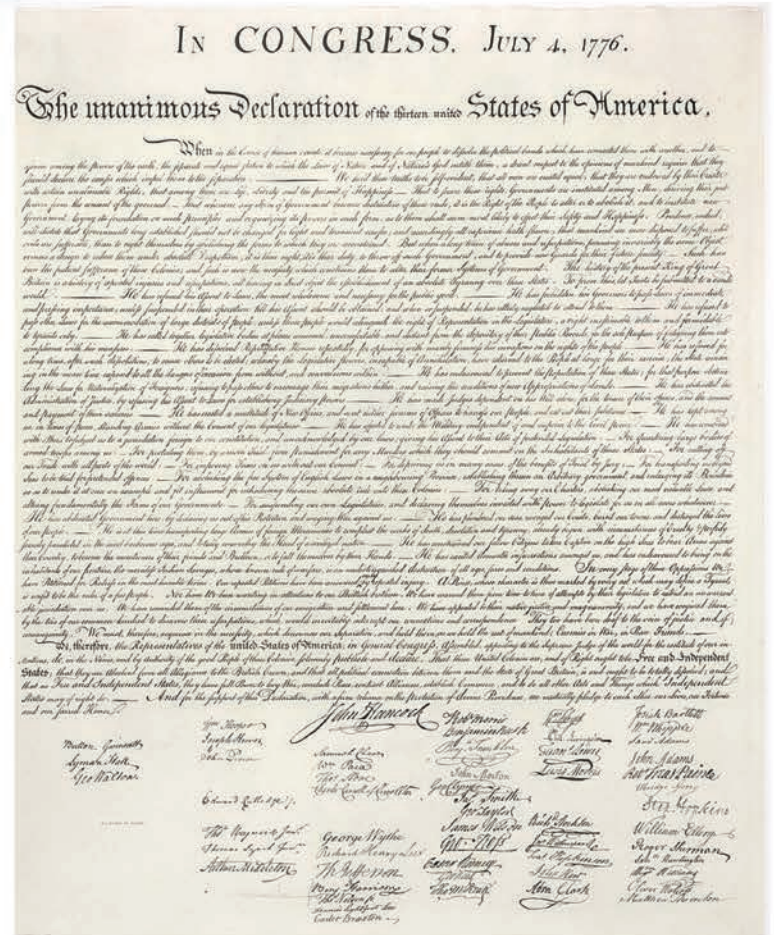
A Grand Commemorative Publication on America's Journey: 1776-2026

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:

- Scholarly articles and historical analyses
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Last date for submission: June 10, 2026

# Global Indian Diaspora Alliance (GLO-INDIA) Hosts Landmark "Icons of Impact Gala" in New Jersey, Honoring Leadership and Legacy



Honorees. Mr. Balendra S Kundu accepting award on behalf of Prof. Om Parkash Dhankher, Dr. Sunil Parikh, Dr. Sumul N. Raval, Dr. Sparshil Patel, Mr. Puneet Ahluwalia, Dr. Badri Narayanan Gopalakrishnan, Mr. Ajit Mannon, Mr. Srujal Parikh, and Mr. Raj Tiwari.

**MAY 30, 2026  
NEW JERSEY (TIP)**

The inaugural GLO-INDIA "Icons of Impact" Gala commenced with the traditional Lighting of the Ceremonial Lamp, a cherished Indian tradition symbolizing wisdom, unity, prosperity, and the triumph of knowledge. The lamp-lighting ceremony was led by Dr. Rajeev Mehta, Chairman of GLO-INDIA; H. S. Panaser, President of GLO-INDIA; Mr. Dinesh Mittal, Co-Chairman of GLO-INDIA; and Mrs. Rajlaxmi Kadam, Consul (Trade), Consulate General of India, New York, representing Ambassador Binaya S. Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York.

The evening was professionally emceed by Ms. Ajooni Kaur (Sanofi) and Ms. Alicia Kaur (Columbia University), whose grace, professionalism, and enthusiasm helped create a memorable and inspiring atmosphere.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, guests stood for the National Anthems of the United States of America and the Republic of India, beautifully performed by Ms. Alicia Kaur, a former X-Factor participant. Her stirring rendition of both national anthems was one of the evening's most memorable moments and received enthusiastic appreciation from the audience.

Welcoming remarks were delivered by Dr. Rajeev Mehta, Chairman of GLO-INDIA, H. S. Panaser, President of GLO-INDIA, and Mrs. Rajlaxmi Kadam, Consul (Trade), CGI New York, who spoke about the growing influence of the Indian diaspora and the importance of leadership, service, innovation, and global collaboration.

## GLO-INDIA "ICONS OF IMPACT" HONOREES

The Global Indian Diaspora Alliance (GLO-INDIA) proudly honored an exceptional group of leaders whose achievements have made a significant impact across business, healthcare, science, technology, public policy, agriculture, and community service.

- o Mr. Roop Singh - Chief Executive Officer, Version 1, Ireland; former CEO, Birla Group.
- o Dr. Navneet Puri - Distinguished Pharmaceutical Scientist and former Board Director, Pfizer.
- o Dr. Pardeep Gupta - Burroughs Wellcome Professor of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Pennsylvania.
- o Dr. Badri Narayanan Gopalakrishnan - Internationally recognized Economist and Strategy Leader.
- o Prof. Om Parkash Dhankher - Professor of Agricultural Biotechnology, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- o Mr. Puneet Ahluwalia - Founding Partner, New World Strategies; former Member of the Asian Advisory Committee to President Donald Trump (2016).



Lamp lighting. L to R: GLO-INDIA President H S Panaser, Mrs. Rajlaxmi Kadam, Consul (Trade), Consulate General of India, New York, Dr. Rajeev Mehta, Chairman of GLO-INDIA, and Mr. Dinesh Mittal, Co-Chairman of GLO-INDIA



Mrs. Rajlaxmi Kadam, Consul (Trade), Consulate General of India, New York giving her remarks

- o Dr. Sparshil Patel - Compassionate Healthcare Leader dedicated to advancing patient care and community wellness.
- o Dr. Sunil Parikh - Distinguished Healthcare Leader recognized for his contributions to medical excellence and community service.
- o Dr. Sumul N. Raval - World-renowned Neuro-Oncologist and leader in brain cancer treatment and research.
- o Mr. Srujal Parikh - Past President and Board Trustee, Federation of Indian Associations (FIA), and prominent community leader.
- o Mr. Ajit Mannon - Chief Global Commercial Data, Digital and AI Officer, Johnson & Johnson.

**These distinguished honorees exemplify the spirit of leadership, innovation, service, and excellence that the GLO-INDIA "Icons of Impact" Awards seek to celebrate. Their accomplishments continue to inspire future generations and strengthen the global influence of the Indian diaspora.**

## ICONS OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP

GLO-INDIA was also privileged to recognize distinguished elected officials as Icons of Public Service and Legislative Leadership for their unwavering commitment to public service, community development, diversity, and civic engagement.

Special messages and congratulations were received from the Honorable Governor of New Jersey, Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill, and the Honorable Kathy Hochul, Governor of New York, recognizing the achievements of the honorees and applauding GLO-INDIA's efforts to strengthen and empower the global Indian diaspora.

## PROCLAMATIONS AND CITATIONS WERE PRESENTED BY:

- o Senator Linda Greenstein
- o Senator Vin Gopal
- o Senator Patrick Diegnan
- o Assemblyman Sterley Stanley
- o Assemblyman Balvir Singh
- o Mayor Samip Joshi
- o Mayor Neena Singh
- o Mayor Hemant Marathe

The organization was also honored by the presence of Commissioner Shanti Narra,

While representatives from TiE and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) were unable to attend due to prior commitments, GLO-INDIA sincerely appreciates their continued support and goodwill.

A special note of gratitude is extended to Dr. Manjeet K. Panaser, President of the Women's Council, whose leadership and support helped contribute to the success of the event. Special appreciation is also extended to Ms. Ajooni Kaur and Ms. Alicia Kaur for their outstanding contributions as emcees and performers.

GLO-INDIA further extends its heartfelt thanks to Mr. Raj Tiwari for his tireless dedication, hard work, and commitment in helping make the inaugural Icons of Impact Gala a tremendous success.

The organization also expresses its sincere appreciation to the Indian-American media community for their unwavering support and extensive coverage of the event. Special thanks are extended to Prof. Indrajit Saluja, Mr. Sunil Hali, Mr. Harvinder Singh, and Mr. Sunil whose participation and media coverage helped showcase the achievements of the honorees and the mission of GLO-INDIA. Their support reflects the strong spirit of unity, collaboration, and commitment that continues to strengthen the global Indian diaspora.

Contact: [President@glo-india.com](mailto:President@glo-india.com) Website: [Glo-india.com](http://Glo-india.com)

# BAPS Charities hosts the 24th Annual Walkathon in Flushing



Walkathon participants



BAPS Walkathon organizers, honorees, guests



Chief Guest, Leonardo Achan, CEO LiveonNY, cutting the ribbon



Dr. Hari Shukla with participating children



Dr. Hari Shukla speaking on the benefits of walking

**JUNE 1, 2026  
FLUSHING, NY (TIP)**

BAPS Charities hosted the 24th Annual Walkathon on May 31, 2026, at Kissena Park in Flushing, NY with over 650 participants supporting LiveOnNY organ procurement organization. They also celebrated 250 years of American Independence. Dr Vipul Patel and Shyam Patel of BAPS were main organizers.

The event started with American national anthem followed by speeches from guests and honorees. CEO of LiveOnNY Leonard Achan was the chief guest. Several guests and honorees attended the event. They included Flushing Hospital VP Catherine Ferreri and Director of Nursing Maria Smilios and Dr. Gagan Gulati, Desi correction Society Mariam Singh, Dr Hari Shukla, NYPD Community Affairs officer Ares Hung and Pratick Patel, Councilwoman Sandra Ung.

Dr. Shukla mentioned that 35% to 40% of adult population and 20% of children are obese. Ideally everyone has to walk 10,000 steps a day to stay healthy. Walking helps physically by reducing obesity related diseases; mentally, it helps by feeling good as exercise releases endorphins, Walking helps community by bringing people together and thereby increases community's unity and strength.

(Based on a Press Release issued by Dr. Hari Shukla.)

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# Race, religion, immigration & a killing in Britain

Police officers got distracted by allegations of racism while failing to recognize who had actually been attacked

BY SHYAM  
BHATIA



Britain likes to think of itself as a practical country. This is, after all, the nation that gave the world parliamentary democracy, the civil service and a reputation—sometimes deserved, sometimes not—for administrative common sense.

Yet many Britons now wonder whether that common sense is being overwhelmed by something else: an increasing preoccupation with identity, offence and the fear of causing controversy. Questions involving race, religion, immigration and minority communities now shape public debate in ways that would have seemed unfamiliar a generation ago.

The question has been thrown into sharp relief by the tragic case of Henry Nowak, an 18-year-old student who died after being stabbed in Southampton. The circumstances of the case would soon draw police, media and public opinion into a fraught debate involving race, religion and identity.

debated for years. But the public reaction reveals something important.

Many Britons no longer trust their institutions to exercise ordinary judgement when questions of identity are involved.

For many critics, these anxieties first surfaced during debates over Islamist extremism, integration, community relations and accusations of Islamophobia. Similar controversies emerged during the grooming-gang scandals that later engulfed several English towns, including Rotherham, Rochdale and Telford.

Over many years, hundreds of vulnerable white girls were sexually exploited by organized groups of mostly Pakistani men. Subsequent inquiries found serious failures by police, local authorities and social services.

Critics argued that some officials were reluctant to confront aspects of the abuse for fear of inflaming community tensions or attracting accusations of racism

Many Britons see a pattern.

A parent complains about a school. Police arrive. A social media argument escalates. Police become involved. An allegation of offence is made. Officials intervene.

Each case has its own facts. Each deserves to be considered individually. But together they have created a wider impression that the boundaries of policing are expanding into areas that previous generations would have regarded as matters for families, schools, employers or civil society.

The controversy surrounding Graham Linehan, co-creator of the popular television comedy *Father Ted*, has reinforced that perception.

Linehan was arrested at Heathrow Airport in connection with social media posts concerning transgender issues. The image of five police officers demanding DNA details from a comedy writer because of online comments immediately provoked questions about priorities.

The case quickly became another national argument about free speech, policing priorities and the limits of acceptable opinion. The details differ dramatically—a murder investigation, a school dispute and social media posts—but together they point to the same underlying concern.

The public sees a contradiction. Police say they cannot investigate every burglary, theft or act of anti-social behavior because resources are stretched.

Yet they somehow find the manpower to record non-crime hate incidents, visit citizens over controversial tweets and intervene in disputes that previous generations would have settled without police involvement.

The complaint is not that British police are too active. It is that they often appear active in the wrong places. That perception may not always be fair. Police officers face difficult decisions. Genuine racism exists. Genuine discrimination exists. Genuine threats exist online.

No serious person believes such matters should simply be ignored.

## THE CHALLENGE LIES ELSEWHERE.

How does a society combat prejudice without becoming paralyzed by accusations of prejudice?

How does it protect vulnerable groups while retaining confidence in its own judgement?

How does it distinguish between hurt feelings and actual harm?

India, too, wrestles with issues of identity, religion, community and speech. Yet many Indians are struck by the spectacle of Britain appearing increasingly uncertain about how to balance competing claims of victimhood.

That is why the Henry Nowak case has resonated so deeply.

The public argument is not really about Sikhism. Nor is it ultimately about Islam, immigration, race or any other single identity question. Rather, it reflects a growing concern that identity itself is becoming the lens through which institutions interpret events before they have established the facts.

It is not even primarily about racism. It is about judgement.

A society can survive disagreement. It can survive controversy. It can survive offensive speech.

What it struggles to survive is the loss of confidence that its institutions can distinguish between a victim and an offender, between an argument and a crime, between a complaint and a genuine threat.

The first duty of a police officer is not to endorse a narrative. It is to establish the facts.

Many Britons watching the Nowak footage fear that this simple principle is becoming harder to uphold. If that fear continues to spread, the damage will extend far beyond a single tragic case. It will reach the very foundation on which public trust depends.

(Shyam Bhatia is London based senior journalist. His X handle is @ShyamBh83243946)



Crime: Vickrum Digwa (inset) has been sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of Henry Nowak. -Photo / PTI

For Indian readers, several aspects of the case are immediately recognizable. The attacker, Vickrum Digwa, was a Sikh. There were allegations of racist abuse. There were claims involving a turban. Questions of identity, religion and discrimination quickly became entangled with the facts of a violent crime.

Yet what has shocked Britain is not simply the killing itself. It is what happened afterwards.

Bodycam footage released after the trial appears to show a dying young man repeatedly insisting that he had been stabbed. One exchange has become emblematic of the entire controversy.

"I've been stabbed," Nowak told arresting officers.

"I don't think you have, mate," the police replied.

The first statement was true.

The second was disastrously wrong.

At another point, Nowak can be heard saying: "I can't breathe."

The footage has generated outrage because many viewers reached a troubling conclusion. They believe police officers became distracted by allegations of racism while failing to recognize who had actually been attacked.

Whether that judgement is entirely fair will be

or Islamophobia. Others dispute that interpretation and point to a range of institutional failures. The scandals left a lasting impression on public opinion and became a touchstone in wider debates about identity, community relations and official judgement.

The issue extends beyond race or religion. It reflects a broader anxiety that public authorities have become increasingly responsive to allegations of offence while appearing less effective in dealing with actual harm.

Yet a series of incidents has helped create precisely that perception.

Consider the case of Maxie Allen and Rosalind Levine in Hertfordshire. The couple became involved in a dispute with their daughter's primary school. They exchanged emails and participated in WhatsApp discussions concerning school management and the appointment of a head teacher.

Six police officers arrived at their home. Levine was arrested in front of one of the couple's children, who was three years old. No prosecution followed. Hertfordshire Police later admitted the arrests were unlawful and paid compensation. Even the county's Police and Crime Commissioner acknowledged that the dispute "shouldn't have become a police matter".

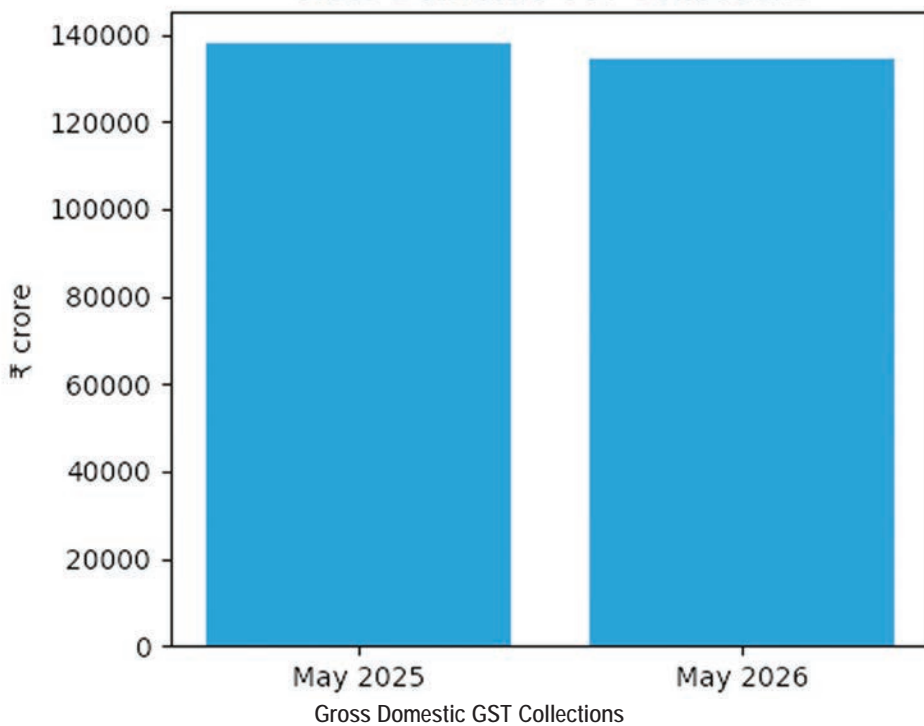
# GST Dip, Gold Sales, and Growing Questions About India's Economy

BY DAVE  
MAKKAR



"History teaches that economic slowdowns rarely emerge overnight. They often begin with subtle signals: weakening consumption, slower business activity, declining tax collections, reduced investment enthusiasm, and increasing caution among consumers and enterprises. Individually, these indicators may appear manageable. Collectively, they can point toward emerging economic headwinds."

Gross Domestic GST Collections



Recent economic data released by Indian government agencies has triggered fresh debate about the true state of the Indian economy. While official narratives continue to emphasize India's position as one of the world's fastest-growing major economies, certain underlying indicators suggest that policymakers, economists, and citizens alike may need to pay closer attention to emerging signs of economic stress.

Among the developments attracting attention is the reported sale of more than 7.6 tons of gold by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) during May 2026. According to available reports, the value of these transactions exceeded \$12 billion. While central banks routinely manage their reserves through purchases and sales of various assets, the scale and timing of such transactions inevitably invite questions regarding their purpose and implications.

Equally noteworthy is the latest Goods and Services Tax (GST) data. Gross domestic GST collections, excluding Integrated GST (IGST) on imports, declined by 2.6 percent in May 2026 compared with the corresponding month in 2025. Domestic collections fell from ₹1,38,102 crore in May 2025 to ₹1,34,530 crore in May 2026.

## A CLOSER EXAMINATION OF THE FIGURES REVEALS A MIXED PICTURE.

Central GST (CGST) collections increased by 5.5 percent, rising from Rs 35,434 crore to Rs 37,397 crore. State GST (SGST) collections also registered a modest increase of 2.8 percent, growing from Rs 43,902 crore to Rs 45,143 crore.

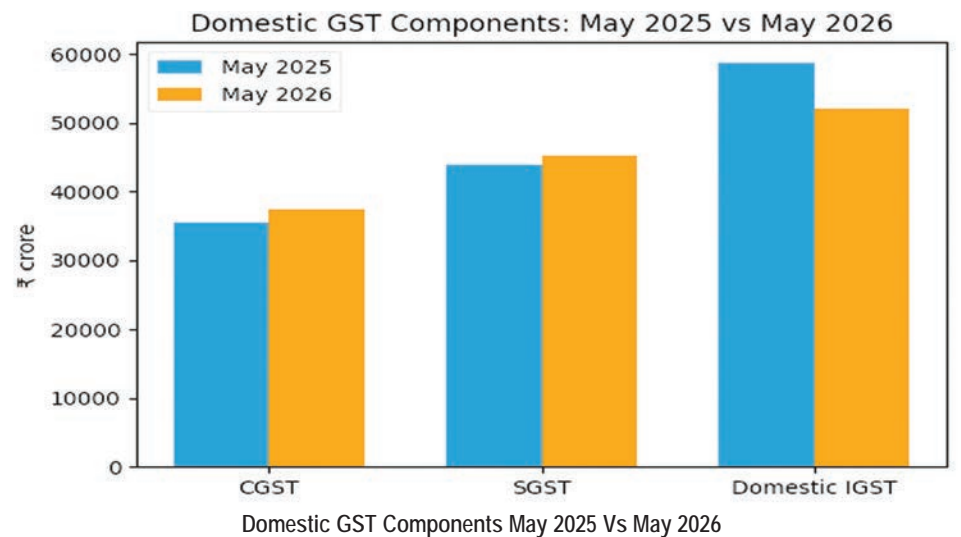
The most striking figure, however, is the performance of domestic IGST collections. These fell sharply by 11.4 percent, declining from Rs 58,767 crore in May 2025 to Rs 51,990 crore in May 2026.

## WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

Domestic IGST is generated largely through inter-state trade and business transactions. A significant decline in this component may indicate slowing commercial activity, weaker supply-chain movement, reduced consumer demand, or cautious business sentiment. While one month's data does not establish a trend, the magnitude of the decline warrants attention.

Economists often caution against drawing sweeping conclusions from a single set of monthly figures. Tax collections can be influenced by timing issues, compliance adjustments, refunds, base effects, and administrative changes. Nevertheless, when multiple indicators begin moving in the same direction, they deserve careful examination.

The broader concern is whether India's headline growth figures are masking weakness in sectors that directly affect ordinary citizens. For many households, the lived economic experience is shaped not by aggregate GDP statistics but by employment opportunities, wage growth, purchasing power, business profitability, and consumer confidence.



Across various sectors, there have already been reports of uneven consumption patterns. Premium consumption among affluent households has remained relatively strong, while demand in several mass-market categories has shown signs of moderation. Such divergence often suggests that economic growth is becoming increasingly concentrated rather than broad-based.

Small and medium enterprises, which constitute the backbone of India's employment structure, continue to face multiple challenges, including rising compliance costs, competitive pressures, access to affordable credit, and fluctuating consumer demand. If inter-state trade activity is indeed slowing, these businesses are often among the first to feel the impact.

The reported RBI gold sale adds another dimension to the discussion. Central banks buy and sell gold for numerous legitimate reasons, including portfolio rebalancing, reserve diversification, liquidity management, and risk mitigation. Therefore, the sale itself should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of economic distress.

However, transparency is critical in maintaining public confidence. Whenever significant reserve-management decisions occur, clear communication helps prevent speculation and reassures markets. In the absence of adequate explanation, observers naturally seek connections between reserve actions and other economic developments occurring simultaneously.

The timing of substantial gold sales alongside softer domestic GST collections has therefore raised questions among analysts. Are policymakers responding to temporary liquidity requirements? Are they managing external financial pressures? Or are these unrelated developments occurring independently?

## AT PRESENT, DEFINITIVE ANSWERS REMAIN UNAVAILABLE.

What is clear is that India faces a challenging global economic environment. Growth across many advanced economies remains subdued. Geopolitical tensions continue to disrupt trade flows. Energy prices remain vulnerable to international developments. Financial markets worldwide are adjusting to changing interest-rate expectations and shifting investment patterns.

Against this backdrop, India has demonstrated considerable resilience. Infrastructure investment remains strong, digital transformation continues at an impressive pace, and the country retains significant long-term growth potential driven by demographics, entrepreneurship, and technological innovation.

## YET RESILIENCE SHOULD NOT BREED COMPLACENCY.

History teaches that economic slowdowns rarely emerge overnight. They often begin with subtle signals: weakening consumption, slower business activity, declining tax collections, reduced investment enthusiasm, and increasing caution among consumers and enterprises. Individually, these indicators may appear manageable. Collectively, they can point toward emerging economic headwinds.

The decline in domestic GST collections, particularly the sharp fall in domestic IGST, should therefore be viewed neither as a cause for panic nor as a statistic to be dismissed. Rather, it should serve as an invitation for deeper scrutiny.

Policymakers would be well advised to monitor demand conditions closely, support productive investment, strengthen job creation, and ensure that growth benefits reach a broader section of society. Sustained economic expansion ultimately depends on robust consumption, healthy business activity, and widespread public confidence.

India remains one of the world's most promising economies. The country possesses immense human capital, entrepreneurial energy, and institutional strengths. However, maintaining momentum requires vigilance, transparency, and a willingness to confront emerging challenges honestly.

The question before policymakers and citizens alike is not whether India possesses the capacity for continued growth—it undoubtedly does. The real question is whether the latest economic signals represent temporary fluctuations or the early warning signs of a broader slowdown.

The coming months will provide the answer. Until then, prudence demands careful observation rather than complacent celebration.

(Dave Makkar is a New Jersey, US -based social activist and writes on economy and community. He can be reached at [davemakkar@yahoo.com](mailto:davemakkar@yahoo.com))

# The 'harvest' China wants is one India cannot afford

BY ASHOK K  
KANTHA



## DIPLOMATIC OPTICS MUST NOT DICTATE INDIA'S BOUNDARY NEGOTIATIONS WITH CHINA

When Luo Zhaohui, then China's Ambassador to India, revived the idea of an "early harvest" in India-China boundary negotiations in 2017, India responded with skepticism. The proposal - to settle the Sikkim boundary in isolation from the three other sectors - was an asymmetric concession dressed up in the language of progress. India has resisted it. There is now a gnawing doubt as to whether it can hold that position. The trigger for this piece is a former border negotiator's concern that India might "stumble" into a damaging course of action under Chinese pressure and driven by the temptation to project contrived progress. Diplomacy that trades long-term strategic interests for short-term optics is self-defeating.

on the ground - comes last, not first. China's proposal to begin demarcation in a single "ripe" sector inverts this sequence and, in effect, asks India to abandon the package architecture in exchange for the appearance of progress. India should decline.

Why does the package settlement matter so much? Because the four sectors of the India-China boundary are strategically interlinked, requiring give and take across sectors. It also guards against China extracting concessions sector by sector. An early harvest in Sikkim, where India holds comparative geographical advantage, would let Beijing bank a settlement on its preferred terms while leaving the other three sectors unresolved.

### THE SIKKIM STAKES

Beijing to step up pressure on a vulnerable Bhutan to settle its boundary with China. India and China have agreed that trijunction points must be finalized in trilateral consultation with all countries concerned. Even if the trijunction point is left out, China could force Bhutan to settle the rest of the disputed boundary on its own terms and present India with a fait accompli in Doklam.

Since the Eastern Ladakh transgressions of 2020, China has pursued multiple pressure tracks simultaneously: military consolidation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), steady resurrection of the "Zangnan" (South Tibet) narrative to describe Arunachal Pradesh, renaming of places in Arunachal Pradesh, and expansion of "border defense villages" close to India-China LAC.

The resumption of Special Representative talks is welcome, but dialogue must be conducted with strategic clarity, not under diplomatic pressure or for the optics of progress. Three principles should guide India's approach.

First, hold the 2005 Agreement's framework firm. The Expert Group agreed upon in August 2025 must not become a vehicle for an early harvest in Sikkim. Agreeing to "explore" is not a commitment to accept. India should reject a standalone Sikkim delimitation or demarcation exercise.

Second, make peace and tranquility on the LAC the non-negotiable condition of progress. China has periodically attempted to delink border management from the broader relationship; India has resisted this, and should continue to do so. Unilateral alterations to the LAC cannot be normalized. Indeed, the so-called "buffer zones" in Eastern Ladakh must not be allowed to persist.

Third, press for genuine political engagement on a comprehensive settlement. Decades of talks have shown that the respective narratives cannot be reconciled through legal arguments. The 2005 Agreement recognized this: it called for a political settlement that would "safeguard the vital interests of both countries" and set out principles such as the two sides "safeguard(ing) due interests of their settled populations in the border areas". Any breakthrough requires political will on both sides. India should press for meaningful boundary negotiations, not paper over the lack of progress with working groups. The test of China's seriousness will be whether it is prepared to engage on the framework for a comprehensive settlement - and whether it is prepared to hold the LAC stable while that engagement proceeds. Absent those conditions, the Special Representative process risks becoming what it has sometimes been before: a forum for managing appearances while China improves its position on the ground.

### STAY THE COURSE

In boundary talks, China has a track-record of cherry-picking and resiling from formal commitments, as it did in the case of an explicit agreement to arrive at a common understanding of the LAC after exchanging maps showing the entire alignment. India must prevent the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question from meeting a similar fate. If peace and tranquility on the LAC is the foundation for rebuilding India-China relations, the 2005 Agreement is the road map for resolving the boundary question. India has nothing to gain from an early harvest limited to Sikkim and must maintain its negotiating space through a comprehensive negotiation. India cannot afford a shortcut to a destination that suits China.

(Ashok K. Kantha is a former Ambassador to China, Subhas Chandra Bose Chair Professor of International Relations, Chanakya University, and Distinguished Fellow with the Vivekananda International Foundation)



India should press for meaningful boundary negotiations

### NEW DELHI MUST BE CAUTIOUS

The readout issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on the 24th round of the Special Representatives' Dialogue on the Boundary Question between India and China (on August 19, 2025) between National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi recorded India's agreement to "set up an Expert Group ... to explore an early harvest in boundary delimitation in the India-China border areas". China's own readout was more pointed: it used the term "demarcation" rather than "delimitation" and spoke of "launching boundary demarcation negotiations in sectors where conditions are ripe."

The MEA press release on the 35th Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs, held in Beijing on May 27, 2026, mentions that the two sides "discussed issues pertaining to delimitation, border management, mechanism building and cross-border cooperation" and "agreed to work together to make substantive preparation" for the next SRs' meeting. The reference to 'delimitation' is significant as it suggests follow-up discussions on the understanding "to explore Early Harvest in boundary delimitation".

The cornerstone of Special Representative negotiations is the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles, signed on April 11, 2005. Article III explicitly envisages "a package settlement" covering all sectors of the India-China boundary. It establishes a three-step process: first political parameters, then a framework for a final settlement, then delineation and demarcation. Demarcation - placing physical markers

The Sikkim Sector boundary is not, as sometimes claimed, a simple matter. Clashes at Nathu La and Cho La in 1967, with heavy casualties, showed how sharp these differences are. Article I of the 1890 Great Britain-China Convention identifies "Mount Gipmochi on the Bhutan frontier" as the starting point of the Sikkim-Tibet boundary, but it is preceded by an assertion that the boundary "shall be the crest of the mountain range separating the waters flowing into the Sikkim Teesta and its affluents from the waters flowing into the Tibetan Mochu". China reads the article as placing the trijunction at Gipmochi. India and Bhutan hold that the trijunction lies at Batang La, some 6.5 kilometers to the north, on the watershed - which is the operative geographical principle in Article I.

Zompelri (or Jampheri) Ridge adjoining Geymochen commands a direct view of the Siliguri Corridor, the narrow strip connecting mainland India to its northeastern States. Any settlement implicitly endorsing the Gipmochi trijunction would hand China a legal instrument to press its claim to the very edge of the Himalayas, exposing the Corridor. The Chinese objective is to deepen and widen its Chumbi Valley and increase pressure on India's most acute territorial vulnerability.

The Doklam dimension reinforces this concern. Since 2017, China has systematically consolidated its position in western Bhutan - building roads and military facilities, constructing villages including Pangda on the Amo Chu river, and developing routes to the Jampheri Ridge that bypass the 2017 Doklam standoff site. A Sikkim settlement would immediately be leveraged by



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# BRIDGING TRADITION AND TRANSFORMATION: SOUTH ASIAN REAL ESTATE LEADERS

- " Chart the Future at Landmark Chicago Event
- " Where Heritage Meets Horizon: ASARP's Inspiring Night of Real Estate Leadership
- " Ethics, Innovation & Identity ASARP's Landmark Legal & Ethical Summit

**JUNE 1, 2026  
CHICAGO, IL (TIP)**

On a vibrant evening that blended cultural warmth with forward-thinking dialogue, the Association of South Asian Real Estate Professionals (ASARP) brought together nearly 200 real estate professionals, brokers, investors, and industry leaders at the O'Hare Lake Office Park in Des Plaines, Illinois, on Friday, May 29, 2026. The signature program, "Legal, Ethical & Professional Landscape in Real Estate," offered more than just updates it delivered a powerful vision for how South Asian professionals can thrive amid rapid industry disruption.

The event, which featured a complimentary dinner and robust networking, opened with heartfelt remarks from ASARP leadership. Pradeep B. Shukla, a respected senior voice in the community, set an inspiring tone by celebrating resilience, change, and human connection. He shared touching personal milestones including his 45th wedding anniversary and drew parallels between historical resistance to innovation (railways, iron ships, airplanes) and today's real estate evolution. His message was clear: adaptation is not optional; it is the path to leadership.

The centerpiece of the evening was an illuminating presentation by Rebecca Jensen, President and CEO of Midwest Real Estate Data LLC (MRED). With over 25 years of experience shaping real estate technology, Jensen delivered a masterclass on the evolving role of



Multiple Listing Services (MLS). She passionately defended the Private Listing Network, explaining how it addresses real human needs-sellers facing divorce, medical challenges, construction delays, or privacy concerns. Far from being controversial, Jensen positioned the network as a compassionate tool that gives sellers grace while keeping licensed professionals fully informed.

Jensen also addressed the high-profile legal dispute with Zillow, framing it as a principled

stand for fairness. "Every seller deserves equal treatment regardless of their brokerage," she emphasized, drawing strong applause. She highlighted MRED's international listing capabilities, opening exciting doors for ASARP members with global clientele, particularly those with ties to India and South Asia.

John Gormley, CEO of Mainstreet REALTORS®, followed with insights on organizational adaptation. He announced exciting new member benefits, including innovative health insurance solutions for independent contractors and

preparations for an "Open MLS" environment. Gormley praised the collaborative spirit of Northeast Illinois real estate leadership and encouraged members to engage in shaping the future through committee participation.

The final speaker, Laurie Murphy, Director of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) Division of Real Estate, brought regulatory clarity and reassurance. Murphy shared major updates, including the transition to a modern licensing system, upcoming renewal deadlines, and important proposed rule changes regarding the timing of written brokerage agreements. She stressed the foundational importance of Section 15-15 of the Real Estate License Act acting in the client's best interest above all.

Murphy also addressed current industry tensions with wisdom, reminding professionals that while business models may evolve, core duties of loyalty, disclosure, and reasonable care remain constant. She encouraged ethical practitioners to file complaints against bad actors, reinforcing that regulation exists to protect the public.

Throughout the evening, themes of ethics, innovation, cultural representation, and community support resonated deeply. ASARP, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, continues to distinguish itself not only as a professional resource but as a cultural bridge, offering mentorship, political advocacy, and charitable outreach for South Asian professionals and the communities they serve.

The event concluded with gratitude to all speakers, a fun raffle, group photos, and renewed energy among attendees. Many left inspired to embrace change while staying rooted in integrity the very essence of what ASARP represents.

The ASARP event beautifully demonstrated how a community that once navigated new shores in America is now helping shape the future of one of the nation's most important industries. In an era of technological disruption and legal complexity, South Asian real estate professionals are not merely participating they are leading with wisdom, compassion, and innovation. Their commitment to ethics while embracing change is a powerful example for all. Suresh Bodiwala Chairman of Asian Media USA proudly celebrates this remarkable community and its contribution to building a stronger, more inclusive American dream.

Photographs and Press release / Asian Media USA

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**By June 15, 2026**

# HISTORIC FIRST: USA's First-Ever International Day of Yoga Event with Dedicated Special Needs Assistance for All Age Groups Announced in New Jersey

**JUNE 4, 2016**  
**FAIRFIELD, NJ (TIP)**

In a groundbreaking milestone for health equity and community inclusion, Faith Day Habilitation (Faith Health Group), in collaboration with the Consulate General of India, New York, has announced the first-ever International Day of Yoga (IDY) event in the United States to feature dedicated special needs assistance tailored for all age groups.

Scheduled for June 18, 2026, at 10:00 AM sharp, this historic gathering will take place at the Faith Day Habilitation facility located at 7, Spielman Road, Building-B, Fairfield, NJ.

Breaking traditional barriers to wellness, the event is built upon a core vision of creating a stronger, healthier, and more compassionate community where innovative healthcare empowers every single individual to live independently and with dignity. By providing specialized, person-centered support on the mat, organizers aim to ensure that individuals of all abilities and generations can safely experience the physical, mental, and spiritual benefits of yoga.

The landmark occasion will welcome distinguished global and local leaders, featuring esteemed Chief Guests:

Faith Day Habilitation (Faith Health Group)  
in collaboration with the Consulate General of India,  
New York proudly presents

## International Yoga Day

The First-Ever IDY Event in the USA  
Featuring Dedicated Special Needs Assistance for All Age Groups

on June 18, 2026 | 10:00 am sharp

The First-Ever IDY Event in the USA  
Featuring Dedicated Special Needs Assistance for All Age Groups

**CHIEF GUEST**

Binaya Srikanta Pradhan  
(Consul General of India, New York)

Acharya Dr. Lokesh Muni  
(Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti)

**Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India, New York**

**Acharya Dr. Lokesh Muni, Founder of Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti**

"Our mission is guided by faith, integrity, and respect," said an event spokesperson. "We are proud to provide exceptional care that honors dignity and supports families through every stage of life. This event marks a massive step forward in making holistic wellness truly accessible to everyone."

#### Attendance Details:

Due to the specialized nature of the assistance provided and spatial accommodation, admission to this historic event is strictly by invitation only. Attendees are requested to adhere to a dress code of white attire and are required to bring their own yoga mats.

**For media credentials, interview requests, or invitation inquiries, please contact the designated event coordinators below.**

#### Media & Event Contact:

Event Co-Ordinator: Nitin Vyas  
Phone: 732-470-5598

**Location: Faith Day Habilitation, 7, Spielman Road, Building-B, Fairfield, NJ-07004**

(Based on a Press Release issued by Nitin Vyas)

## A4 Appoints Kunal Modi and Stephen Zaima to Board of Directors

**MAY 30, 2026**  
**NEW YORK (TIP)**

Asian American Arts Alliance (A4) announced today that Kunal Modi and Stephen Zaima have joined the organization's Board of Directors.

"As A4 continues to grow, we are honored to welcome new board members who bring a diversity of expertise and experiences to help us broaden our perspective," said Lisa Gold, A4's executive director. "I am delighted to welcome Kunal and Stephen to the A4 team."

Modi says, "Getting to know A4 and its work supporting Asian American artists and cultural producers, I've seen how much it matters, and how needed it is. I'm honored to join the board and looking forward to contributing to that effort."

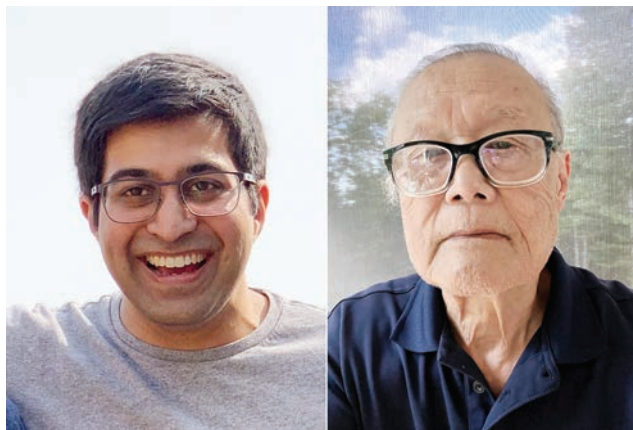
Zaima says, "As an Asian American artist and former educator, I believe that A4's programs and initiatives to empower Asian American artists and cultural institutions are more compelling than ever, and it is a privilege to have the opportunity to contribute to this essential mission."

#### ABOUT KUNAL MODI

Kunal Modi is a technology leader and entrepreneur with 15 years of experience building consumer products and scaling teams. He currently works at Coinbase on tools that help businesses reach and understand their audiences across the Base ecosystem. He joined Coinbase through its acquisition of his startup Spindl, where he served as CTO. Earlier in his career, he worked on Airbnb Experiences and Facebook Live Video, building products that helped people connect, participate, and share culture at global scale. He grew up in the Bay Area and recently moved to New York City, where he is eager to deepen his connection to the city's arts and cultural community. Outside of work, he is interested in comedy, storytelling, and film.

#### ABOUT STEPHEN ZAIMA

Stephen Zaima is an artist and Professor Emeritus at Syracuse University who lives and works in the Hudson Valley. At Syracuse University, Zaima taught studio art and art criticism both on campus and in off-campus programs in New York City, Los Angeles, London, Florence, and Berlin. His online survey classes covered art in America, China, and Europe. Toward the end of



Left to right: Kunal Modi and Stephen Zaima.

his time at the university, he also served as an associate dean for global programs in the College of Visual and Performing Arts. He received his MFA from the University of California, Davis.

His most recent artwork belongs to a series called VISION & TEXTUALITY, which employs an irregular formatting reflecting what he views as a fragmented, but never hopeless, view of the world. Another recent

series of work is called SPELLING IT OUT and focuses in part on the Japanese American internment camps. His 2022 monograph is titled FEAR NOT. Living and traveling throughout the United States and abroad, including Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa, has been an enriching experience for Zaima and continues to inform much of his work. Zaima also enjoys fly fishing and cycling, finding the Catskills an inviting environment for both of those pursuits.

Information about A4's

full Board of Directors is available on A4's website.

#### ABOUT THE ASIAN AMERICAN ARTS ALLIANCE

The Asian American Arts Alliance is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring greater representation, equity, and opportunities for Asian American artists and cultural organizations through resource sharing, promotion, and community building. Since 1983, A4 has sought to unify, promote, and represent the artistic and cultural producers of one of New York City's fastest-growing populations.

A4 serves as a thoughtful convener of the Asian American cultural workforce around issues of race, identity, and artmaking and provides a critical voice for this community. It is the only service organization in the country dedicated to the professional development of Asian American artists in all disciplines.

For more information about A4, visit the organization's website.

#### FOR PRESS ENQUIRIES

Danielle Wu, Communications and Exhibitions Director  
dwu@aaartsalliance.org

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# Ambassador's Engagements in Cluj-Napoca Highlight Growing India-Romania Cooperation in Innovation, Governance, and Cultural Diplomacy

MAY 26, 2026  
BUCHAREST (TIP)

The Ambassador of India to Romania undertook a series of engagements in Cluj-Napoca aimed at strengthening India-Romania cooperation across innovation, education, regional development, and people-to-people relations, highlighting the growing strategic importance of Cluj-Napoca as a center for technology, culture, and international collaboration.

A key engagement during the visit was an official meeting organized at Cluj-Napoca City Hall, where the Ambassador met with Mr. Dan Tarcea, Deputy Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, and Mr. Octavian Fodor, Director of Tetarom Industrial Parks. Discussions focused on expanding regional cooperation and identifying new opportunities to strengthen India-Romania economic, educational, and institutional ties.

The meeting highlighted Cluj-Napoca's emergence as one of Romania's leading innovation and technology hubs, with a



The Ambassador participated in the Annual Parade in Cluj alongside the Indian community in the city



Ambassador joined the Mayor as the Guest of Honor for the Annual Parade



Ambassador's meeting with Mr. Dan Tarcea, Deputy Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, and Mr. Octavian Fodor, Director of Tetarom Industrial Parks.

rapidly developing ecosystem in information technology, research, engineering, and higher education. The Ambassador noted the increasing interest of Indian companies in the region and emphasized the strong potential for collaboration in areas such as digital innovation, smart infrastructure, industrial development, and startup ecosystems. Discussions also explored the role of industrial parks and innovation clusters in attracting investment, generating employment, and strengthening connectivity between academia and industry.

The Ambassador further underlined the growing contribution of Indian professionals, students, and businesses to the economic and social fabric of Romania. Both sides acknowledged that stronger local-level partnerships between cities, universities, and business communities can play an important role in deepening bilateral relations and creating sustainable long-term cooperation.

As part of the academic dimension of

the visit, the Ambassador also met with Prof. C?lin Hin?ea, Dean of the Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences at Babe?-Bolyai University. Discussions focused on strengthening institutional collaboration in public administration, governance studies, academic exchange, and policy research. Both sides emphasized the importance of international academic partnerships in preparing future leaders capable of addressing global challenges through innovation, dialogue, and democratic governance.

The visit also carried a strong cultural and community dimension. The Ambassador participated in the parade organized as part of the city's celebrations alongside members of the vibrant Indian community in Cluj-Napoca. The event showcased the rich cultural diversity and inclusive spirit of the city, while highlighting the growing contribution of the Indian diaspora to local society and economic development.

A highlight of the visit was the Ambassador's participation as the Guest

of Honour alongside the Mayor during the annual Cluj-Napoca Parade, one of the city's most prominent community celebrations. Marching together with local officials, members of the diplomatic community, and representatives of the vibrant Indian diaspora, the Ambassador joined thousands of residents and visitors in celebrating the city's spirit of inclusiveness, cultural diversity, and civic pride. The occasion provided a visible demonstration of the growing friendship between India and Romania and the positive contribution of the Indian community to the social, cultural, and economic life of the region. Addressing participants and members of the diaspora, the Ambassador emphasized that people-to-people connections remain the strongest foundation of bilateral relations and that cultural engagement at the local level plays a vital role in fostering mutual understanding, friendship, and long-term cooperation between the two nations.

Addressing members of the

community and local participants, the Ambassador emphasized that cultural engagement and people-to-people interaction remain among the strongest pillars of India-Romania relations. He noted that such public celebrations help foster mutual understanding, strengthen intercultural dialogue, and build enduring friendships between communities.

The engagements in Cluj-Napoca reflected the evolving and multidimensional nature of India-Romania relations, where cooperation increasingly extends beyond traditional diplomacy into areas of innovation, education, local governance, and cultural connectivity. The visit reaffirmed India's commitment to strengthening partnerships with Romanian institutions and communities while promoting greater collaboration between the peoples of the two countries.

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

# GJEPC Visits Romania to Strengthen India-Romania Cooperation in the Gems & Jewellery Sector

MAY 29, 2026  
BUCHAREST (TIP)

The Embassy of India in Bucharest hosted a high-level business delegation from the Gem & Jewelry Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) on 21-22 May 2026 as part of a multi-country outreach programme covering Poland, Romania, and Serbia. The visit aimed to strengthen bilateral trade relations, promote India's globally renowned gems and jewelry sector, and explore new avenues for commercial cooperation between Indian and Romanian stakeholders.

As part of the programme, the GJEPC trade delegation conducted an intensive market study visit to B'neasa Shopping City Mall in Bucharest on 21 May 2026 with support from the Embassy of India in Romania. The visit provided valuable insights into Romanian consumer preferences, retail trends, luxury positioning, and market opportunities in the gems and jewelry segment.

The programme at the Embassy commenced with opening remarks by H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, who welcomed the delegation and representatives from the Romanian business community. In his address, the Ambassador highlighted the strong and steadily expanding economic partnership between India and Romania and underscored the considerable untapped potential for bilateral cooperation in the gems and jewelry sector.

Referring to Romania's position as an emerging market within the European Union, the Ambassador noted that Romania's imports of gems and jewelry currently stand at approximately US\$579 million, while India's share in the market remains around 1.3%, indicating substantial scope for expanding India's presence and enhancing bilateral trade. He encouraged businesses from both countries to explore partnerships in manufacturing, sourcing, design, retail, technology, and investment.

An important factor expected further to accelerate India-EU trade in the gems and jewelry sector is the recently concluded India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The reduction of tariffs on gems and jewelry products to zero under the agreement is expected to significantly enhance the competitiveness of Indian exports across European markets, including Romania. The FTA would facilitate smoother market access, reduce trade costs, encourage greater business-to-business engagement, and create new opportunities for partnerships between Indian manufacturers and European retailers, distributors, and luxury brands. Industry representatives noted that the agreement has the potential to substantially increase bilateral trade volumes and strengthen India's position as a preferred sourcing destination for high-quality gems and jewelry products in Europe.

The delegation was led by Mr. Ashutosh Shrivastava along with senior representatives of the Indian gems and jewelry industry. Addressing the



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



A discussion between the attendees and distinguished experts provided in-depth insights of the gems and jewellery sector



Ambassador also briefed on the potential of the jewellery market from India



Visit at the Casiani Jewellery Shop in Bucharest

gathering, the delegation leaders presented an overview of India's globally competitive gems and jewelry sector, highlighting the country's leadership in diamond cutting and polishing, colored gemstones, gold jewelry manufacturing, technological innovation, and skilled craftsmanship. The delegation also showcased India's capabilities in producing high-quality jewelry catering to diverse international markets.

The business delegation comprised representatives from more than ten leading Indian companies, reflecting the growing interest of Indian exporters in strengthening their footprint across Central and Eastern Europe. The participating companies represented a broad spectrum of the industry, including diamonds, gemstones, gold and silver jewelry, luxury products, and jewelry manufacturing technologies.

The delegation also highlighted India's rich legacy of traditional craftsmanship in the gems and jewelry sector, which has been nurtured and preserved by generations of skilled artisans across the country. India's jewelry industry combines centuries-old artisanal expertise with modern technology and design innovation, enabling the production of finely crafted pieces that cater to both traditional and

contemporary global tastes. European markets, particularly Romania, stand to benefit from access to India's diverse range of high-quality handcrafted and designer jewelry, competitive manufacturing capabilities, and sustainable sourcing practices. Enhanced cooperation in the sector could also promote greater cultural exchange, design collaboration, skill development, and knowledge-sharing between Indian and Romanian jewelry professionals and institutions.

The event brought together Romanian importers, distributors, retailers, designers, trade associations, and business leaders for discussions on market trends, consumer preferences, certification standards, logistics, and opportunities for increasing bilateral trade in gems and jewelry products.

Dedicated B2B networking and matchmaking sessions enabled direct interactions between Indian and Romanian companies. These meetings provided a valuable platform for exploring commercial partnerships, sourcing arrangements, distribution channels, and long-term business collaborations aimed at increasing trade flows between the two countries.

Following the Embassy programme, the delegation visited Casiani Jewellery

House, where members gained further insights into Romanian consumer tastes and preferences in gems and jewelry. The delegation also visited Assamblage School of Jewellery, where they were warmly received by Mr. David Sandu, founder of the institution, and had the opportunity to learn about Romania's jewelry design ecosystem and artisanal craftsmanship.

The Romania visit formed an important component of GJEPC's broader strategy to deepen engagement with European markets and promote India as a trusted global hub for gems and jewelry. The discussions generated considerable interest among Romanian stakeholders and laid the groundwork for future commercial partnerships and enhanced business exchanges.

The Embassy of India in Bucharest reaffirmed its commitment to facilitating stronger India-Romania economic relations and supporting initiatives that promote trade, investment, and business cooperation across key sectors, including gems and jewelry.

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

# 'Canada has turned into an Indian colony': Toronto festival video sparks online debate

JUNE 4, 2026  
TORONTO (TIP)

A video showing hundreds of people participating in a vibrant Indian cultural festival in Toronto has gone viral on social media, sparking intense discussions about immigration, diversity and multiculturalism in Canada.

[https://x.com/mark\\_slapinski/status/2061973607174021465?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E2061973607174021465%7Ctwgr%5E0931899c86ef05c81dba64eeaed6a2088039cb76%7Ctwcon%5Es1\\_&ref\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tribuneindia.com%2Fnews%2Ftrending%2Fcanada-has-turned-into-an-indian-colony-toronto-festival-video-sparks-online-debate%2F](https://x.com/mark_slapinski/status/2061973607174021465?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E2061973607174021465%7Ctwgr%5E0931899c86ef05c81dba64eeaed6a2088039cb76%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.tribuneindia.com%2Fnews%2Ftrending%2Fcanada-has-turned-into-an-indian-colony-toronto-festival-video-sparks-online-debate%2F)

The clip was widely shared alongside the caption: "Canada has turned into an Indian colony!!!! Canadians are now a minority in Toronto and the flood of immigrants is larger than ever before. We cannot let this happen to us. Wake up!!!!!"

The event, reportedly held in Toronto, highlighted different aspects of Indian culture, with visitors enjoying regional cuisine, folk performances, cultural showcases and family-oriented activities celebrating India's rich heritage.

**MIXED REACTIONS:**

A user wrote, "Horrible dancing and they continue to do this everywhere."



'How miserable you have to be to hate people for having fun,' a user on X reacted. @mark\_slapinski/X

Another reacted, "Completely unwanted. I too lived in the US for a decade but I felt that time was exploratory - melting pot, variety of food, freedom to go to clubs & casinos etc. etc."

Let America and Canada be what it is. Keep your traditional stuff in a private ground or at home."

A third commented, "How miserable you have to be to hate people for having

fun." A fourth said, "Isn't Canada built on immigrants? Just like the USA, Australia, and New Zealand? Who are the original people of Canada?"

(Source: TNS)

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## Putin backs PM Modi's independent foreign policy, calls pressure 'futile'

JUNE 5, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Russian President Vladimir Putin has strongly backed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's independent foreign policy, saying attempts to pressure India over its ties with Moscow were "futile" and ultimately detrimental to international relations.

Responding to a question on whether India's growing engagement with the United States was creating friction in India-Russia relations, Putin dismissed suggestions of any strain in the strategic partnership and reaffirmed Moscow's confidence in New Delhi as a reliable partner.

"It is another thing that the United States is trying to pressure India on certain issues, particularly on certain issues of cooperation with Russia. But I think everyone has long since realised that pressuring Prime Minister Modi, who leads a country with a population of 1.5 billion, is futile," Putin said during an interaction with heads of leading global news agencies at the Constantine Palace in St Petersburg. "Moreover, it harms international relations and bilateral relations, no matter from which side this pressure comes," he added.

The remarks come ahead of Putin's visit to India for the BRICS Summit in September and amid continued Western scrutiny of India's economic and energy ties with Russia.

Describing India-Russia ties as a "special and privileged strategic partnership", Putin said the relationship had been built over decades and remained resilient despite shifting geopolitical realities.

# BJP, Cong name candidates for June 18 RS polls, political equations intensify across states

JUNE 5, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress on Thursday announced their candidates for the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections scheduled for June 18, triggering intense political activity across several states and setting the stage for crucial contests that could reshape the balance of power in the Upper House of Parliament.

The biennial Rajya Sabha elections will be held for 24 seats across 10 states, along with a by-election in Odisha. The polls assume considerable political significance as both the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the opposition INDIA bloc seek to consolidate their strength in the Upper House amid preparations for key legislative battles and future electoral contests.

The BJP released a list of candidates from Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, while the Congress announced nominees from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and other states where it enjoys the support of regional allies.

Among the BJP's prominent nominees is party national general secretary Tarun Chugh, who has been fielded from Madhya Pradesh. The party also nominated former Rajasthan BJP president Satish Poonia and Gurjar leader Alka Gurjar from Rajasthan, signalling an attempt to balance caste equations and strengthen outreach among influential social groups ahead of future assembly



and local body elections in the state.

Political observers noted that the selection of Alka Gurjar reflects the BJP's continued efforts to consolidate support among the Gurjar community, which remains politically significant in Rajasthan and neighbouring states. Satish Poonia's candidature, meanwhile, is being viewed as recognition of his organisational role within the party despite the BJP's leadership changes in Rajasthan over the past few years.

From Gujarat, the BJP nominated Rajubhai Shukla, Mukeshbhai Rathwa, Mansingh Parmar and Jitendra Meghji bhai Kanzariya, reflecting the party's focus on social representation and regional balance in one of its strongest political bastions. Rajneesh Agrawal was named from Madhya Pradesh, while A Sharda Devi from Manipur and Tai Tagak from Arunachal Pradesh were selected to represent the party from the Northeast.

In Odisha, the BJP nominated Debashish Samantaray for the Rajya Sabha by-election. Samantaray had recently joined the BJP after resigning

from the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and vacating his Upper House seat, making his candidature politically significant amid shifting alliances in the state.

The BJP's candidate list also sparked political speculation due to the absence of Union ministers Ravneet Singh Bittu and George Kurian, both of whose Rajya Sabha terms are nearing completion. Their omission has fuelled discussion in political circles about a possible reshuffle or restructuring within the Union Council of Ministers.

The Congress, meanwhile, announced seven candidates, with party president Mallikarjun Kharge emerging as the most high-profile nominee. Kharge was fielded from Karnataka alongside senior party spokesperson Pawan Khhera, while policy expert and strategist Praveen Chakravarty was nominated from Tamil Nadu with the backing of the ruling DMK alliance.

Congress leaders described the candidate selection as a combination of organisational experience, communication strength and policy expertise. Pawan Khhera's nomination, in particular, is being seen as recognition of his aggressive role as one of the party's principal national spokespersons.

Kharge's candidature from Karnataka also carries symbolic importance as the Congress seeks to maintain political momentum in the southern state, where it currently heads the government and views itself as electorally competitive against the BJP.

## 'Adviser' Mamata at centre of cracks in rebel Trinamool camp

JUNE 5, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Not even 48 hours have passed since 60 rebel MLAs seized control of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) legislature party by defying party chief Mamata Banerjee, but cracks have started to appear in the Ritabrata Banerjee-led camp. At the centre of the dissent is the role of Mamata herself. A section within the rebel camp is unhappy with Ritabrata, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, relegating Mamata to the position of "chief adviser". They want her to remain as the supreme leader.

On June 3, after being recognised by the Assembly Speaker as the LoP, Ritabrata told reporters that he had no intention of splitting the Trinamool. In fact, in their letter to the Speaker, the rebel group mentioned that Mamata was the party chief. But Ritabrata's suggestion that Mamata function as an "adviser" is what seems to have led to the unease.

"We would request Mamata Banerjee to be our chief advisor to this opposition front," Ritabrata told reporters.

The tensions within the rebel camp came out in the open after a meeting held by Ritabrata on Thursday. There are several MLAs in the rebel camp



Mamata Banerjee and LoP Ritabrata Banerjee.

who still swear allegiance to Mamata, who built the party after breaking away from Congress in 1998.

In fact, Mamata was never the problem. Much of the anger of the rebel MLAs was directed at her nephew and the party's de facto No.2, Abhishek Banerjee, and his leadership style.

The 'Signgate', where several TMC MLAs alleged that their signatures were forged in a letter endorsing Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay as the LoP, only deepened their resentment against Abhishek.

Thus, even though 60 MLAs revolted against the leadership, several still do not want to forego their

political and emotional association with Mamata.

"We were told that the party would continue under Mamata's leadership. She is not merely an adviser. We want the party to function under her leadership," PTI quoted rebel MLA Gulshan Mullick as saying.

Mullick even went to the extent of suggesting that some MLAs might even quit the Ritabrata-led bloc if Mamata was not accepted as the "supreme leader".

"If Mamata is not accepted as the supreme leader, then we will have to think whether we should remain in this bloc or not," he further said.

Sitai MLA Sangeeta Roy Basunia also echoed Mullick, rejecting the suggestion of relegating Mamata to an advisory role.

"Mamata Banerjee is our supreme leader and will remain so. She cannot be an adviser. She is our leader," Basunia told PTI.

In fact, the rebel MLAs, in their letter to the Speaker on Wednesday, mentioned that they recognised Mamata as the chairperson of the Trinamool.

The development highlights the core contradiction of the rebellion. The revolt, which was directed at the TMC's leadership, has now moved to a wider debate over Mamata's future role in the party.

## K Annamalai quits BJP after Tamil Nadu elections, to launch own party

JUNE 5, 2026

**CHENNAI (TIP):** Tamil Nadu leader K Annamalai announced his plans to launch his own political party on Friday, hours after Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Nitin Nabin accepted his resignation following days of suspense.

It is believed that Annamalai was upset over being replaced as the party's Tamil Nadu unit chief after 2024 Lok Sabha elections. He is expected to address a presser at 12 noon today to have a "heart-to-heart conversation".

In a video message after the acceptance of his resignation, Annamalai said his political movement "will definitely contest in next assembly polls".

Annamalai said the decision to quit BJP was not taken in a haste and that he has discussing with the party leadership about his resignation, which he told the leaders about in December.

"They told me to leave after the elections get over in Tamil Nadu. I stayed there till May as per their suggestion," Annamalai said. Appealing to those who are interested to join him, he said, "Come let's bring together a big change in politics". Kuppusamy Annamalai, also known as 'Singham', is a former IPS officer who shot to fame in Tamil Nadu after joining the BJP and being made to lead the party's unit in the southern state.

# South Delhi hotel fire: Death toll rises to 21, owner held over safety violations

JUNE 5, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The owner of the South Delhi hotel where a massive fire killed 21 people earlier this week has been arrested as investigators intensified their probe into alleged fire safety violations, illegal construction and negligence linked to the tragedy.

The devastating blaze broke out on June 3 at the five-storey Flourish Stay B&B building in the Hauz Rani area of Malviya Nagar, triggering panic among guests and staff trapped inside the smoke-filled structure. The building housed a restaurant on the ground floor and hotel rooms on the upper floors.

Delhi Police confirmed that hotel owner Lavkesh Bajaj has been arrested and booked under charges including culpable homicide not amounting to murder. Investigators are examining whether the establishment violated mandatory fire safety norms and building regulations.

Officials said the Delhi Fire Services received a distress call around 8:48 am on Tuesday, following which several fire tenders were rushed to the spot. Firefighters battled intense flames and thick smoke for hours before bringing the situation under control.

At least 21 people were killed in the incident, including several foreign



nationals who had reportedly come to Delhi for medical treatment and were staying near hospitals in South Delhi. More than 40 others were rescued from the building, many suffering from burn injuries and smoke inhalation.

Police officials said foreign nationals from Bangladesh, Nigeria, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia and Afghanistan were among the victims. Several bodies were charred beyond recognition, complicating identification efforts.

Eyewitnesses described chaotic scenes as guests tried to escape through windows

and terraces while smoke rapidly spread through the narrow corridors. Local residents reportedly placed mattresses outside the building to help those jumping from upper floors to escape the flames.

Preliminary investigations suggest the fire may have originated in the restaurant area on the lower floor, although forensic teams are still examining the exact cause. Authorities suspect an electrical short circuit may have triggered the blaze, which spread rapidly due to poor ventilation and the presence of combustible material inside the building.

## 'Broken education system' crushing students' dreams: Rahul

JUNE 5, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Thursday attacked the Centre over the NEET controversy, saying repeated paper leak episodes and examination cancellations have pushed students and families into uncertainty, while an entire generation is paying the price for what he described as a failing education system.

Using the case of a student named Akanksha to question the government's handling of competitive examinations, Rahul said the student's death reflected the pressure and uncertainty created around one of the country's biggest entrance tests. He also questioned why Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan continued in office despite repeated controversies around examination management.

In a post on X, he recounted the struggles of Akanksha's family, saying her father, a farmer, had taken a loan of around Rs 3 lakh through a Kisan Credit Card and worked as a cook in Nagpur to support her coaching and medical ambitions.

He said the family had made sacrifices to help her pursue a medical career, but the alleged paper leak and



Rahul Gandhi

subsequent cancellation of the examination created uncertainty that proved devastating.

Calling the incident a consequence of systemic failures rather than an isolated tragedy, Rahul alleged that no meaningful reforms had followed repeated controversies.

He claimed that despite investigations, committees and administrative reshuffles, students continued to bear the burden of institutional failures. The Congress leader also accused the government of damaging the country's education framework over the past decade, arguing that students were being forced to compete in an environment marked by insecurity and mistrust.

Meanwhile, developments continued in the alleged NEET-UG paper leak case, with a Delhi court allowing one of the accused, Yash Yadav, to access study material while in judicial custody ahead of the NEET-UG re-examination scheduled for June 21.

During proceedings at the Rouse Avenue Court, counsel appearing for Yash Yadav submitted that he intended to appear for the re-examination and required books for preparation.

The court, however, sought clarity on whether the National Testing Agency had formally permitted him to sit for the examination and whether an admit card had been issued.

The court also extended the judicial custody of accused Mangilal Biwal, Vikas Biwal, Dinesh Biwal, Yash Yadav and Dhananjay Lokhande till June 15 in connection with the paper leak case.

### CBSE under scanner over OSM evaluation system and three language policy rollout

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) is facing growing scrutiny over the implementation of two major initiatives: the On Screen Marking (OSM) system for board exam evaluation and the rollout of the three-language policy, with questions being raised about planning, preparedness, and decision-making within the board.

The OSM system, introduced for the evaluation of Class 12 answer sheets, has come under the spotlight following reports that the final contract awarded for the project was significantly more expensive than earlier estimates.

"Reports have raised questions over an increase of nearly Rs. 10 crore in the final contract value compared with earlier estimates, despite what critics describe as a broadly similar scope of work." The procurement process itself has drawn attention.

The CBSE reportedly issued three separate tenders before finalising a vendor.

While the first tender failed to attract any bids, the second did not result in a technically qualified bidder. The board then revised several technical requirements in a fresh tender issued in August 2025.

Following this process, Hyderabad-based Coempt Edu Teck was selected over Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) after financial bids were evaluated. Questions have also emerged over the manner in which the system was introduced nationwide.

"According to reports, the CBSE's governing body had recommended pilot projects across regional offices before a nationwide rollout." The concerns were not limited to administrative recommendations.

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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  
email: [lotus4usa@gmail.com](mailto:lotus4usa@gmail.com)



**Free Event**  
Register here

Supported by: Mukund Padmanabhan, India Association of Long Island & Abhishek Mishra  
Media support: The South Asian Times, The Indian Panorama, The Indian Eye, and Hum Hindustani

**SPACE COURTESY : THE INDIAN PANORAMA**

# India in history this Week

## JUNE 5 TO JUNE 11

### 05 JUNE

1659 Aurangzeb, the ruler of the Mughal Empire, officially ascended the throne of Delhi in 1659.

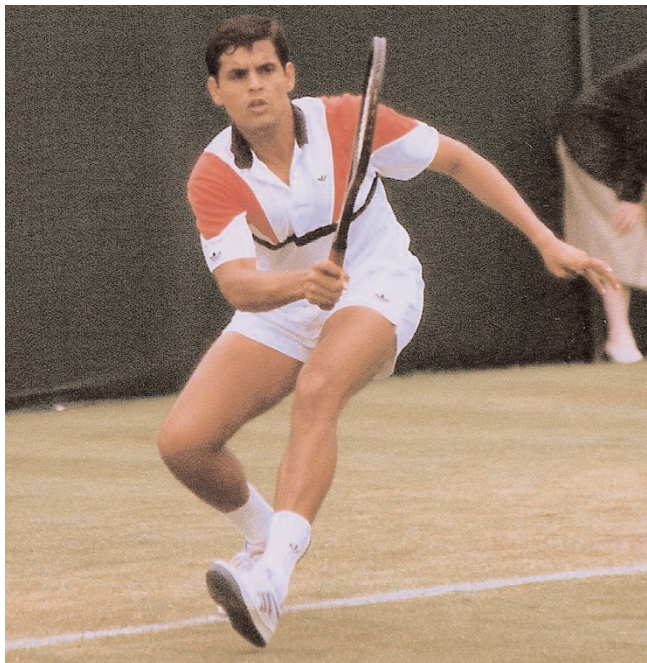
1882 In Bombay (now Mumbai), about one lakh people died in 1882 due to storms and floods.

2001 In 2001 the work of investigating the royal family in Nepal was blocked by the resignation of Madhavan, a member of the royal assassination inquiry commission.

2002 In 2002 Pakistan rejected the proposal of a joint patrol along the Indian border.

2017 Successful launch of the heaviest rocket "GSLV Mark-3D-1" in 2017.

1972 Yogi Adityanath, the 21st Chief Minister of the state of Uttar Pradesh, was born in 1972.



1961 India's famous tennis coach and former tennis player Ramesh Krishnan was born.

1879 The originator of the 'Trade Union Movement' in India. M. Joshi was born.

### 06 JUNE



1929 Actor, politician and social activist Sunil Dutt was born in Jhelum West Punjab.

1674 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was crowned.



1981 A train fell in Bihar's Bagmati river, killing 800 of the 1000 people on board.

1997 In Bangkok, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Thailand formed an economic cooperation group called 'Bistek'.

### 07 JUNE

1893 Mahatma Gandhi used civil disobedience for the first time in South Africa.

1914 Film director, writer and journalist Khwaja Ahmed Abbas was born on June 7 in Panipat.

1974 Indian tennis superstar Mahesh Bhupathi was born on 7 June in Chennai.



1975 The first match of the first World Cup was played between India and England at Lord's Stadium. India lost in this match.

1631 Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's wife Mumtaz Begum died at the age of 39 in Burhanpur.

1989 India's second satellite Bhaskar I was launched with a Soviet rocket.

2006 India decides to give one billion rupees to Nepal for economic reconstruction.

2008 The Uttar Pradesh government declared 4% VAT on LPG to be completely abolished.

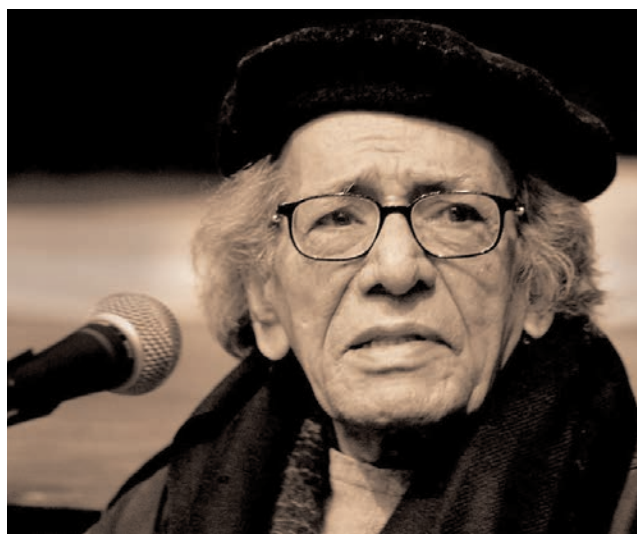
### 08 JUNE

1948 India's first airline, Air India, started air service between India and Britain.

1658 Aurangzeb captured the fort of Agra and Shah Jahan was imprisoned.

1936 The Indian State Broadcasting Service, the official radio service of India, was renamed All India Radio.

2004 After 122 years, the amazing sight of Venus transit was seen again in many countries of the world including India.



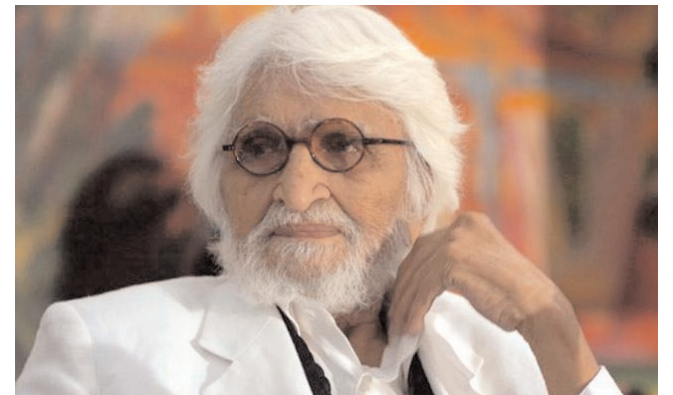
2009 Famous screenwriter, theatrical director, poet and actor Habib Tanveer passed away.

### 09 JUNE

1964 Lal Bahadur Shastri became the second Prime Minister of India.

2001 The pair of Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi won the French Open doubles title.

1900 Freedom fighter Birsa Munda died in Ranchi jail under suspicious circumstances.



2011 India's famous painter MF Hussain died in London.

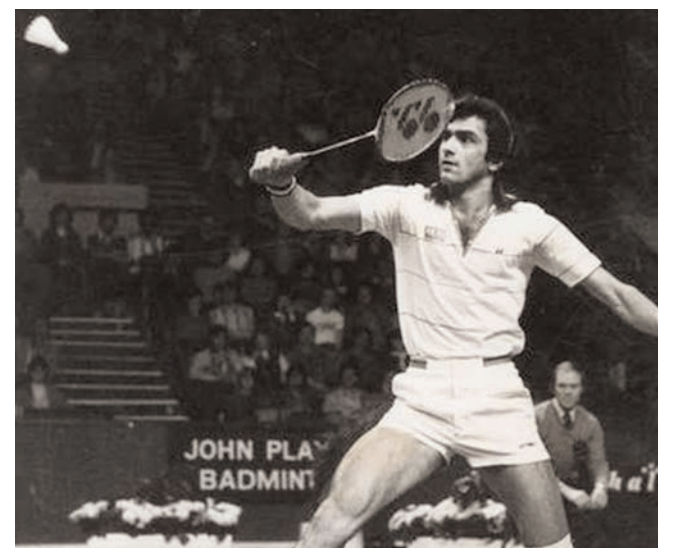
### 10 JUNE

1986 India won the Test match at Lord's for the first time by defeating England by 5 wickets.

1888 The famous agitator Balraj Bhalla was born.

1900 General Jayantinath Chaudhary of the Indian Army was born.

1946 Gandhiji refused to be excited for his victory. This is because it was not a triumph of truth over liars.



1955 Internationally renowned badminton player Prakash Padukone was born.

1987 Famous Hindi film actor Jeevan passed away.

2008 The 54th National Film Awards were announced, 'Lage Raho Munnabhai' being voted the best popular film.

1958 Litterateur and public servant Anup Sethi was born on 10 June 1958

### 11 JUNE

1897 Ramprasad Bismil, the freedom fighter of India, was born.

1866 Allahabad High Court was established. It was earlier known as Agra High Court.

1964 Ashes of Jawaharlal Nehru, the ashes of his ashes were scattered all over the country.

1930 A cyclonic storm blew a train off the railway near Himtnagar, Gujarat, in which one person was killed and many more were injured.

1932 Renowned businessman Meenu Modi was born.

# COMEDY WORLD'S CELEBRATED ZARNA GARG PERFORMS IN NEW JERSEY'S NORTH TO SHORE FESTIVAL

BY MABEL PAIS

**ZARNA GARG**, comedy world's award-winning performer brings her energetic stand-up presentation – where comedy, culture, and community converge – to the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) for the 2026 North to Shore Festival. This takes place on Saturday, June 20 at 7 pm.

Comedy fans and the general public are invited to experience an evening of laughter, insight, and unforgettable energy from one of today's most acclaimed voices in stand-up.

Zarna Garg's rise in the comedy world has been nothing short of spectacular. Named one of *Variety's* "10 Comics to Watch," Garg has captivated audiences with her hit comedy specials, a bestselling book titled "The American Woman: A One-In-A-Billion Memoir", and a fresh perspective on modern American life. Her work draws from her own immigrant journey, motherhood, and the nuances of everyday experiences, making her relatable to audiences from all walks of life.

**"Zarna thinks like a lawyer, writes like a mother, and kills like a stand-up."**

— **TINA FEY**, performer / former cast member at "Saturday Night Live" (SNL)

Known for her vibrant stage presence and witty storytelling, Garg's live shows pulse with energy and humor. She boldly addresses topics such as the immigrant experience, parenting, and the challenges of navigating contemporary America, all while weaving in sharp observations and heartfelt anecdotes. Her comedic style is smart, accessible, and unapologetically honest, inviting laughter and reflection in equal measure.

Garg's work has earned widespread praise, with critics and fans alike celebrating her comedic talent and unique perspective. Her specials have been lauded for their originality, and her book has topped bestseller lists, cementing her status as a versatile entertainer. *Variety's* recognition of Garg as a "Comic to Watch" underscores her impact and rising influence in the comedy world.

Zarna Garg's reach extends far beyond the stage. Her viral videos have garnered millions of views online, and she has made major appearances on television and digital platforms, connecting with a broad audience eager for her take on life's complexities. Whether you're a longtime comedy fan or new to her work, Garg's performances promise a night of laughter and connection.

## TICKETS

For more information and tickets for Zarna Garg's exclusive NJPAC performance at the North to Shore Festival, visit [NJPAC.org](http://NJPAC.org) or the North to Shore Festival website ([northtoshore.com](http://northtoshore.com)).

## NORTH TO SHORE FESTIVAL 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 Monae 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



Zarna Garg.

Credit: <https://zarnagarg.com>

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.

## 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." Learn more at <https://northtoshore.com>.

## 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 our 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 <https://njpac.org>.

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

# EMMY NOM BEN FOLDS PERFORMS WITH NJ SYMPHONY, EDWIN OUTWATER CONDUCTS



Ben Folds.  
Credit: <https://benfolds.com>



Edwin Outwater  
Credit: <https://www.edwinoutwater.com>

## BY MABEL PAIS

Ben Folds, Emmy-nominated singer-songwriter-composer, joins the New Jersey Symphony for two unique and unforgettable performances of music from across his career at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), Newark on June 13 at 7:30 pm and June 14 at 2 pm at the State Theatre New Jersey (STNJ), New Brunswick (details below).

### EVENT DETAILS

#### BEN FOLDS WITH NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

**Ben Folds** piano & vocals  
**Edwin Outwater** conductor  
**New Jersey Symphony**  
**Newark** - Saturday, June 13, 7:30 pm  
**New Brunswick** à Sunday, June 14, 2 pm

**Saturday, June 13, at 6:30 pm at NJPAC in Newark**

**Instrument Discovery Zone**  
New Jersey Symphony musicians will showcase an Instrument Discovery Zone in NJPAC's lobby for patrons to explore trying out and making music with various instruments before the performance!

**Sunday, June 14, at 4 pm in the Donor Lounge at State Theatre New Jersey (STNJ) in New Brunswick**

**Next Gen After Party for Members**  
The Next Gen program is a membership program for young music enthusiasts between the ages of 21 and 40 to network with other passionate music lovers from across the state. For the latest details and more information, visit [njsymphony.org/nextgen](https://njsymphony.org/nextgen).

Next Gen members are invited to attend a fun After Party in the Donor Lounge after the performance at the State Theatre New Jersey in New Brunswick. This is an invitation featuring complimentary light bites and a cash bar, growing your network and fostering a community of passionate music lovers from across the state.

For questions, contact Development Manager Hannah Aberin at [events@njsymphony.org](mailto:events@njsymphony.org).

Next Gen After Party, to contribute, visit <https://donate2.app/ldrH7K>

**Event page** -  
<https://njsymphony.org/events/detail/en-folds-with-the-new-jersey-symphony>

### TICKETS

Tickets are available at



Next Gen patrons.  
Credit: <https://njsymphony.org>

[njsymphony.org](https://njsymphony.org).

### ARTIST BIOS

#### BEN FOLDS

Ben Folds is an Emmy-nominated singer-songwriter who has created an enormous body of genre-bending music that includes pop albums with Ben Folds Five, multiple solo albums, a holiday album, and numerous collaborative records.

He currently tours as a pop artist, while also performing for over two decades with some of the world's greatest symphony orchestras.

Folds, who served for eight years as the first ever Artistic Advisor to the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, stepped down from his post when Donald Trump announced his takeover of the Center. Just days before the US presidential election, Folds recorded two sold out performances with the NSO which he released as a live album in 2025 that debuted at the top of the Billboard classical and classical crossover charts. A New York Times Best Selling author, Ben also creates new music for film, TV, and theatre, including original songs for an ongoing series of animated Peanuts specials on Apple TV.

In 2022, he launched a music education

charitable initiative in his native state of North Carolina entitled "Keys for Kids," which provides funds and keyboards to existing nonprofits that offer free or affordable piano lessons to school-age children from historically marginalized communities. For the past 15 years he has been an outspoken advocate for arts funding, music education, and music therapy in the US as a member of Americans for the Arts and the Arts Action Fund. Learn more at <https://benfolds.com>.

#### EDWIN OUTWATER

Edwin Outwater is redefining the concert experience as a groundbreaking conductor, curator, and producer, known for his dynamic approach and genre-blending collaborations. Working with a wide range of artists from Metallica to Wynton Marsalis, Renée Fleming, and Yo-Yo Ma, Outwater's creative vision and ability to seamlessly navigate between musical worlds has made him one of the most sought-after conductors, with the legendary Michael Tilson Thomas aptly describing him as "one of the most innovative conductors on the scene today."

Outwater currently serves as Music Director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he leads

their ensembles and oversees the institution's bold artistic initiatives. He is also Principal Guest Conductor and Curator of the BBC Concert Orchestra, delivering an exciting range of concerts over three seasons with yearly appearances at the BBC Proms; and is Music Director Laureate of the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, recognizing his decade-long tenure.

His work often blends classical music with pop culture, producing original shows with drag icon Peaches Christ, with his collaborations also extending to the symphonic shows of stars such as Diana Ross, Beck, Trey Anastasio, Leslie Odom Jr., Cynthia Erivo, and Lang Lang. Learn more at <https://edwinoutwater.com>.

#### NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY

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

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

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

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

#### CONNECT WITH NJ SYMPHONY

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

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



## Kangana's Bharat Bhagya Viddhaata trailer packs terror and survival in 26/11 story

The makers of Bharat Bhagya Viddhaata released the film's trailer on Tuesday. Starring Kangana Ranaut and Girija Oak, the upcoming drama pays tribute to the nurses and medical staff of Mumbai's Cama and Alless Hospital, who risked their lives to protect hundreds of patients during the 26/11 terror attacks.

Directed and written by Manoj Tapadia, the film is set against the backdrop of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks and features Kangana Ranaut in a lead role.

The two-minute-and-24-second trailer opens with gunshots, police sirens and news coverage of the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. It then shifts focus to the everyday lives of nurses working at the hospital before tragedy strikes, changing everything around them.

As the attack unfolds, Kangana's character is seen putting her own safety at risk to save patients trapped inside the hospital. The trailer highlights the courage, resilience and selflessness displayed by healthcare workers in the face of extreme danger.

Apart from Kangana and Girija Oak, the cast includes Smita Tambe, Amrutha Namdev, Esha Dey, Priya Berde, Asha Shelar, Suhita Thatte, Rasika Agashe, Aditya Mishra and Zahid Khan in key roles.

# Ranveer Singh serves legal notice to FWICE over non-cooperation directive issued against him

The saga of the so-called 'ban' on Ranveer Singh from the Federation of Western Indian Cine Employees (FWICE) has reached court, with the actor serving a legal notice to the organisation. The development comes days after FWICE had issued a non-cooperation directive against the actor over his unceremonious exit from Farhan Akhtar's Don 3, effectively calling for a ban against him in Bollywood.

Hindustan Times has learnt that Ranveer sent a legal notice to the film workers' body after it issued a non-cooperation directive against him last week. So far, it is unclear what Ranveer has sought in the notice, but FWICE will be required to respond to it in court.

Last week, FWICE, headquartered in Mumbai, had called for all its members not to work on any project starring Ranveer Singh. The decision, the body said, was taken after Farhan Akhtar, the director and producer of Don 3, urged the body to act, alleging Ranveer had walked out of his film days before the shoot was to commence.

In its notice issued on May 25, FWICE had said, "Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani informed FWICE that they have already incurred approximately Rs 45 crores towards the pre-production of the film. He expressed grave concern that the sudden withdrawal of such a leading actor from the project at an advanced stage could expose the



producer to severe financial losses and adversely affect the overall execution of the film."

Later that day, FWICE President Ashoke Pandit told reporters at a press conference that the organisation sent Ranveer multiple notices but received no response. Consequently, they acted and asked their members not to work on any project featuring the actor. "None of our workers or members, across all crafts, will work on any of his projects. We have requested that all producers take a stand, join us in solidarity, speak out against this conduct, and make a firm decision," he said. Later that week, Pandit said that the non-cooperation

directive was not a 'ban' as had been claimed earlier.

From a legal standpoint, the FWICE does not have the authority to ban any member of the film fraternity. In 2017, the Competition Commission of India (CCI), ruling on a case filed by producer Vipul Amrutlal Shah, held that FWICE's mandate that a producer could engage only with its members violated the Competition Act, 2002 (Act), which prohibits anti-competitive agreements. It also said that FWICE cannot impose any penalty to enforce that clause. Consequently, CCI issued a cease-and-desist order against the organisation.

Source: HT

## Cocktail 2 : Shahid, Kriti, Rashmika's confusion over pyaar-dosti

The makers of Cocktail 2 released the trailer of the film on Tuesday at an event in Mumbai. The video gives a glimpse into the modern love triangle directed by Homi Adajania and starring Shahid Kapoor, Kriti Sanon and Rashmika Mandanna. As the trailer suggests, the film offers romance, friendship and heartbreak against the backdrop of scenic Italian locales.

The three-minute-long video also brings back a touch of nostalgia from the original Cocktail (2012), which starred Deepika Padukone, Diana Penty and Saif Ali Khan in the lead.

Shahid, who plays a young man seemingly caught between dating a friend and befriending a date, sets the tone for the film early in the trailer. In a Hindi voiceover, he says, "Whenever a relationship is new, it's exciting because it's new. New friends are fun because their stories are fun for us."

The story then moves to Italy, where the three protagonists are seen spending time together. While Shahid and



Rashmika appear to share a romantic bond, Kriti's character seems to be his close friend who gradually develops feelings for him, setting the stage for emotional complications.

As the story unfolds, tensions rise between the two women as both are

shown competing for Shahid's affection. What starts as friendship slowly turns into a complicated love triangle, pushing relationships to the edge.

In the final stretch of the trailer, the conflict escalates further with Kriti and Rashmika's characters confronting each

other over their future with Shahid, leaving his character torn between the two. Adding to the nostalgia factor is the inclusion of the popular track Tum Hi Ho Bandhu, a fan-favourite from the 2012 film.

Cocktail 2 serves as a spiritual successor to the 2012 romantic drama Cocktail, which starred Saif Ali Khan, Deepika Padukone and Diana Penty.

Cocktail followed the lives of Gautam (Saif Ali Khan), a carefree flirt, Meera (Diana Penty), a woman rebuilding her life after being abandoned by her husband, and Veronica (Deepika Padukone), a free-spirited party girl.

The three become unlikely friends and end up living together, but their bond is tested when Gautam falls for Meera despite being in a relationship with Veronica, leading to heartbreak and emotional turmoil.

The sequel is backed by producers Dinesh Vijan, Luv Ranjan, Pramita R Vijan and Ankur Garg, with music composed by Pritam.



## Sydney Sweeney to Star in 'Hollow,' Lindsey Anderson Beer's Reimagining of 'Legend of Sleepy Hollow'

**S**ydneey Sweeney appears to be head over heels for a new literary project.

The actress is attached to star in *Hollow*, a movie adaptation of Lindsey Anderson Beer's debut novel that has sold to Putnam and is set to be published in fall 2027. Anderson Beer, who made her feature directorial debut with 2023's *Pet Sematary: Bloodlines*, will write and helm the film.

*Hollow* is a reimagining of Washington Irving's 1820 short story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, which centers on schoolteacher Ichabod Crane competing with Brom Bones to earn the affection of Katrina Van Tassel, while also dealing with the ominous Headless Horsemen. In the film that is aiming to blend gothic and erotic thriller elements, Sweeney would play Katrina Van Tassel as the central figure in a dangerous and supernatural love triangle.

LuckyChap is set to produce, alongside Beer for Brew Lab and Sweeney for the newly formed Honey Trap.

Putman, an imprint of Penguin Random House, preemptively acquired *Hollow* before the title could head to auction. The film package is likely to hit the market for interested studios next week.

Sweeney starred alongside Amanda Seyfried in last year's Lionsgate thriller *The Housemaid*, with director Paul Feig's adaptation of Freida McFadden's 2022 novel surpassing \$400 million at the global box office. A sequel that is based on follow-up book *The Housemaid's Secret* is set for release in 2027.

Anderson Beer's credits include penning the Netflix's 2018 feature *Sierra Burgess Is a Loser*, which starred Shannon Purser in an updated take on Edmond Rostand's 1897 play, *Cyrano de Bergerac*.

# Jennifer Lopez shuts down dating rumors with co-star Brett Goldstein

**L**ast year in March, Jennifer Lopez and Brett Goldstein's outing to a Broadway show sparked rumours of a possible romance, coinciding with their upcoming film *Office Romance*. Now that the two stars are promoting their upcoming romantic comedy, they have cleared the air once and for all.

During a show, co-host Savannah Guthrie asked Jennifer and Brett about the dating rumors. Lopez shut it down immediately and said, "There's never a time when I'm seen with somebody or working with somebody where they don't try to put me with the person." Brett replied, "I think if you stand near her, that's what happens... That's why I've been standing so close this whole time!"

Even as the host pressed on them to respond to the rumours, "That was not an answer? It was an answer! Because all these people that they put me, I think I was with Kevin Costner this year. I was with ... there was a lot of people. It happens all the time. Doesn't make it true."

"Not dating," Lopez said with Goldstein adding, "Correct."

The singer and actor parted ways with Ben Affleck two years after tying the knot, and since then, they have been tight-lipped about their separation. Their divorce was finalised in February last year. During her recent performance in Las Vegas, she opened up about her dealbreakers when it comes to love. She was seen reflecting on her song "If You



Had My Love" on stage, as she shared what this 1999 hit track means to her. She said, "When I first sang it, I was very young. And I sang it with a lot of hope. But I've also sang it over the years, I've sang it while I was sad. And I've sang it when I was happy. But now, today, you know how I sing it? I sing it in power."

She went on to add, "Because the truth is, if you wanted to have my love, you would have to earn it. You would have to treat me right. You would have to respect me. You'd have to accept me for all that I am. You'd have to love me if you wanted my love."

In the early 2000s, Jennifer and Ben

met, fell in love, got engaged and starred together in the infamous *Gigli* and *Jersey Girl* in 2004. But the engagement was short-lived as they split up that same year, blaming in part the pressure of the public eye. But to the joy of many fans and perhaps the doubt of others, they got back together two decades later and got married. The two married again in July 2022. But she filed for divorce in August 2024. The filing said they had separated more than a year earlier.

Affleck divorced Jennifer Garner, with whom he has three children, in 2018. Lopez has been married four times and has twins with singer Marc Anthony.

## The End of Oak Street: Anne Hathaway trapped in prehistoric world gone wild

**T**he trailer of Anne Hathaway and Ewan McGregor's upcoming sci-fi survival film *The End of Oak Street* has been unveiled. It offers viewers a look at a strange and thrilling story where a normal family's life suddenly turns upside down after a mysterious event.

The trailer begins with a huge bright light engulfing an entire town, leaving everyone shocked and confused.

Set to Billy Joel's song 'My Life,' it shows a suburban family - played by Anne Hathaway as Denise Platt and Ewan McGregor as Greg Platt - along with their two children, Audry and Brian (Maisy Stella and Christian Convery), trying to understand what is happening. They wonder if it is a helicopter, a UFO, or even an alien attack.

Soon, the story takes a surprising turn when the family realises that their street has been moved to a completely different place filled with live dinosaurs. What starts as confusion quickly becomes a fight for survival.

The Platt family - Denise, Greg, Audrey and Brian - understands that their only chance to stay alive is to stay together. As danger grows around them, they try to support each other, find answers, and survive in this strange new world. It is a survival drama where trust and family bonding become very important as they deal with unknown threats. The film also stars Maisy Stella and Christian Convery. It is produced by JJ Abrams along with Hannah Minghella, Jon Cohen, Tommy Harper, Matt Jackson, and David Robert Mitchell, who has also directed and written the film.

*The End of Oak Street* will release in theatres and IMAX in India in August 2026.



## 'Grossly unfair': Meta slams Australia's bid to make platforms pay for news

JUNE 5, 2026

MELBOURNE (TIP): Social media giant Meta has hit out at Australia's latest plans to force digital platforms to support media outlets financially, labelling the proposals "poorly designed" and "grossly unfair."

Meta, the parent company of Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram, said on June 4 that the government's News Bargaining Incentive (NBI) would shield news publishers from needing to undertake the innovation necessary for a sustainable media landscape.

"The NBI does the opposite: it insulates publishers from the competitive pressure to evolve by guaranteeing revenue regardless of whether they build sustainable business models," the California-based tech giant said in a submission to the government.

"This entrenches dependency at the very moment when adaptation matters most."

Meta also said the "economically incoherent" proposals would not lead to a sustainable news sector and "plainly" violate Australia's commitments under its free trade agreement with the United States.

"A strong, independent media cannot be built on punitive taxes, levied on foreign companies, with no connection to the value exchanged," Meta said.

Under the centre-left Labor Party government's plans, social media and search platforms would face a 2.25 percent levy on Australian revenues if they do not make deals to pay Australian outlets for their news content.

Platforms that reach a set minimum number of commercial agreements would be able to reduce the levy to a rate that in effect would be 1.5 percent.

Revenues from the levy would be distributed among media outlets based on the number of journalists they employ.

The proposals specifically target Meta, Google and TikTok owner ByteDance but would not apply to AI developers that also influence search traffic, such as ChatGPT creator OpenAI.

The initiative is intended to replace the previous government's News Bargaining Code, which Meta and other tech companies were able to bypass by pulling news content from their platforms.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese unveiled the plans in April, pledging to "back Australian journalists and Australian news".

"Local news matters to local communities, and these stories can't be told without Australian journalists," Albanese said at the time.

# Rubio calls Russia's Ukraine war a 'strategic disaster', says conflict has weakened Moscow

JUNE 5, 2026

WASHINGTON (TIP): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has described Russia's war in Ukraine as a "strategic disaster" for Moscow, arguing that the conflict has severely weakened Russia's military strength, damaged its economy, deepened its international isolation and strengthened Western unity in ways the Kremlin had failed to anticipate.

Speaking during a foreign policy discussion in Washington, Rubio said the invasion, which Russia launched in February 2022 expecting a rapid victory, had instead evolved into a prolonged and costly conflict with far-reaching geopolitical consequences.

"What was supposed to demonstrate Russian power has instead exposed major weaknesses," Rubio said. "The war has become a strategic disaster for Russia politically, economically and militarily."

Rubio argued that instead of dividing the West, the war had revitalised NATO and reinforced cooperation among the United States and its European allies. He pointed to increased defence spending across Europe, the expansion of NATO's military preparedness and continued Western military support for Ukraine as evidence that Russia's actions had produced the opposite of their intended effect.

According to Rubio, the Kremlin had hoped to weaken transatlantic unity and reassert Russian influence across



Eastern Europe, but the invasion instead pushed European nations closer together and accelerated efforts to reduce dependence on Russian energy supplies.

"Russia expected the alliance system to fracture under pressure," Rubio said. "Instead, NATO has become more unified, more active and more determined."

He also referred to the decisions by Finland and Sweden to deepen their security alignment with NATO following the invasion, describing the development as one of the clearest signs of how the war had reshaped Europe's strategic landscape.

Rubio stressed that the conflict had imposed enormous costs on Russia's military capabilities. Western intelligence estimates and independent assessments suggest Russia has suffered significant troop casualties and heavy losses of tanks, armoured vehicles and advanced weapon systems during the

course of the war.

The US Secretary of State said the prolonged fighting had also exposed vulnerabilities within Russia's defence infrastructure and forced Moscow to rely increasingly on wartime economic measures and expanded military production.

"The image of military invincibility that Russia tried to project has been badly damaged," Rubio said.

At the same time, Rubio acknowledged that the conflict remains highly dangerous and unpredictable. He warned that the war continues to threaten global stability through disruptions to energy markets, food supplies and international trade routes.

The Russia-Ukraine war has triggered one of the world's largest humanitarian crises in recent decades. Millions of Ukrainians have been displaced from their homes, cities and infrastructure across the country have suffered extensive destruction, and thousands of civilians and soldiers on both sides have been killed since the conflict began.

Rubio reaffirmed Washington's commitment to supporting Ukraine, saying the United States would continue coordinating with allies to provide military, financial and humanitarian assistance to Kyiv.

He argued that continued support for Ukraine was necessary not only for European security but also for preserving the broader international order.

## UK PM accuses Musk of 'trying to whip up division' over student's murder

JUNE 5, 2026

LONDON (TIP): UK leader Keir Starmer accused US tech tycoon Elon Musk on Thursday of "trying to whip up division" in Britain following anger over the police handling of the murder of a white student by a Sikh man.

The case of 18-year-old Henry Nowak, who was handcuffed by police as he lay dying after being stabbed by Vickrum Digwa in the southern city of Southampton in December, has become highly politicised in the UK.

Digwa, 23, lied and told police he was the victim and that Nowak had racially insulted him.

The UK prime minister met Nowak's mother, father and stepmother at Downing Street late Thursday for about an hour. Afterwards, Starmer said the country must "choose unity and progress over division and hatred", calling this



"the only way to honor Henry's memory".

Far-right figures have claimed the murder is evidence that police forces in Britain treat white people and ethnic minorities differently -- an allegation Starmer's Labour government and police chiefs vehemently deny.

Musk, the billionaire owner of X, has

posted numerous times on the platform about the police response to the stabbing.

In one, he falsely asked whether people knew that "official police policy requires them to be racist against Whites?"

Black people in England and Wales are more than twice as likely to be arrested as white people, according to government statistics.

And an independent report last year found Britain's largest police force, London's Metropolitan Police, was "institutionally racist".

Musk has offered to fund a private prosecution against the police over its handling of the murder and insulted the Hampshire Police force involved.

"We need to also assert who we are as a country, because Musk, again, has been interfering in our politics in the last few days, trying to whip up division," Starmer told reporters.

## Kuwait releases video of Iranian drone strike on airport that killed Indian

JAUNE 4, 2026

**KUWAIT (TIP):** Authorities in Kuwait have released chilling footage capturing the first moments of a deadly Iranian drone attack on the Gulf nation's international airport on Wednesday. The strike killed an Indian national and injured at least 63 others.

The footage, published by Kuwait's General Directorate of Civil Aviation (DGCA), captures the aftermath of what authorities called a "brutal Iranian aggression" carried out using hostile drones.

The strike damaged airport facilities as well as diplomatic missions in the area. Among the 63 injured people were airport employees and passengers, the country's Health Ministry has confirmed.

Flight operations were temporarily suspended following the attack.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), however, disputed Kuwait's account of the airport strike. Iranian state media reported that the IRGC claimed the damage was caused by a wayward US Patriot missile rather than an Iranian drone.

The US military, meanwhile, said two Iranian missiles fired toward Kuwait either fell short of their targets or broke apart during the flight. It also said that several other Iranian ballistic missiles failed to reach their intended destinations.

Amid a fragile ceasefire that remains under strain, the US and Iran exchanged fresh military strikes on Wednesday, marking one of the most serious escalations in weeks.

While Iran launched missile and drone attacks targeting American military facilities in Kuwait and Bahrain, the US carried out strikes on an Iranian military ground-control station on Qeshm Island and an oil tanker near the Strait of Hormuz.

Since the conflict erupted on February 28, Iran has repeatedly launched missile and drone attacks against civilian and military sites in Gulf countries hosting US military facilities.

Despite a fragile ceasefire currently in place, hostilities have continued as Washington seeks to restore maritime traffic through the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz.



# Hezbollah rejects latest ceasefire pact as Israeli strikes kill 4 in Lebanon

JUNE 5, 2026

**BEIRUT (TIP):** Hezbollah on June 4 rejected the latest ceasefire agreement between Israel and the Lebanese government, and the militant group demanded a complete Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon as more fighting there hampered efforts to end the Iran war.

The Hezbollah announcement came as Israeli strikes killed at least four people, according to local authorities, and a UN peacekeeper was killed in the crossfire.

Hezbollah leader Naim Kasseem, in a written statement read on TV, called the negotiations "absurd, humiliating and insulting." He said the agreement's demand that Hezbollah fighters leave southern Lebanon under fire would mean "surrender, defeat and achieving the enemy's goals."

"What we are concerned about is an end to the aggression, ceasefire and Israel's withdrawal," he said, underscoring that Hezbollah has not made any commitment to stop fighting. "So long as our villages are not safe and are being bombed and destroyed and our people are killed," he said, northern Israel "will not be safe."

### Sirens sound after Netanyahu visit

Following Kasseem's statement, drone alert sirens sounded in several border communities in northern Israel, including Shlomi, a town where Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and several ministers had been meeting with local officials, his office said. Israeli



media reported that Netanyahu left a short time before the alerts sounded.

The Israeli military later said the sirens were triggered by attempts to intercept several drones that hit near soldiers in southern Lebanon. No injuries were reported.

Lt. Gen. Eyal Zamir, the Israeli military's chief of staff, acknowledged Thursday that the ongoing war was straining northern Israeli towns living under the threat of Hezbollah fire. He said Israel's operations in Iran and Lebanon had "created a new security reality," by weakening Iran and Hezbollah "to an unprecedented degree."

Lebanese troops began moving Thursday afternoon into the southern village of Dibbine, in coordination with UN peacekeepers, after Israeli forces left

the area, which saw intense clashes in recent days, state-run media reported. It was the first time Israeli troops withdrew from an area in southern Lebanon since the latest Israel-Hezbollah war began about three months ago.

Iran has demanded that any lasting truce extend to Lebanon. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who faces elections later this year, wants to press ahead with Israel's offensive until Hezbollah no longer poses a threat.

U.S. President Donald Trump, who faced a rare rebuke from Congress on Wednesday, has sought to downplay the diplomatic deadlock and the failure of declared ceasefires to end the fighting. He told reporters that in the Middle East that "a ceasefire is when you're shooting in a more moderate manner."

# Iran's Khamenei warns against divisions after 'enemy's defeat on battlefield'

JUNE 5, 2026

**DUBAI (TIP):** : Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Wednesday issued a strong warning against internal divisions and attempts to undermine public morale, saying Iran's enemies were now turning to "psychological warfare" after suffering what he described as defeat on the battlefield.

Speaking through a message delivered during ceremonies commemorating the death anniversary of Islamic Republic founder Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Khamenei said hostile powers were attempting to create fear, hopelessness and mistrust within Iranian society in a bid to weaken the country from within.

"After failing to achieve their objectives through confrontation and pressure, the enemies are now trying to spread division, despair and pessimism among the people," Khamenei said. "Any voice or action that weakens national confidence or creates disappointment among the people serves the interests of the enemy."

The remarks come at a time of heightened tensions across West Asia, with Iran remaining deeply involved in a volatile regional environment shaped by confrontation with Israel, instability in Lebanon and Syria, and uncertainty surrounding diplomatic negotiations involving the United States and regional powers. Khamenei did not directly name

any country in his speech, but Iranian officials have repeatedly accused Israel and Western governments of attempting to destabilise the Islamic Republic through sanctions, political pressure and security operations.

The Iranian leader stressed that maintaining unity among political groups, religious institutions and ordinary citizens was essential for preserving the country's strength in the face of external threats. He urged Iranians not to allow political disagreements or economic hardships to damage social cohesion. His comments were delivered during annual ceremonies honouring Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the founder of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, whose death anniversary remains one of the most politically symbolic events in Iran. Thousands of supporters, clerics, officials and members of the Revolutionary Guards gathered in Tehran for the commemoration, where state media heavily focused on themes of resistance, national independence and loyalty to the Islamic Republic.

Iranian state television framed Khamenei's speech as a warning against foreign-backed attempts to create unrest inside the country. Officials and commentators close to the government argued that Iran's adversaries had failed to achieve their strategic goals despite months of regional confrontation and were now seeking to influence public opinion through media campaigns and economic pressure.

## Pak men who gang-raped French tourist in front of her children to be executed

JUNE 4, 2026

**ISLAMABAD (TIP):** A Pakistani court has upheld the death sentences of two men convicted of gang-raping a French tourist in front of her three children after her car ran out of fuel on a motorway near Lahore.

The Lahore High Court (LHC) has dismissed appeals filed by Abid Ali and Shafqat Ali. The two men had challenged a 2021 anti-terrorism court verdict that found them guilty of gang rape, kidnapping, robbery and terrorism-related offences.

The decision means the death penalty handed down by the trial court will remain in place.

The case dates back to September 9, 2020, when a French woman of Pakistani origin was travelling with her three children on the Sialkot-Lahore Motorway.

Her vehicle reportedly ran out of fuel during a late-night journey, leaving the family stranded on the roadside.

According to investigators, the woman remained inside the vehicle with the doors locked while waiting for assistance. The attackers allegedly smashed a window, dragged her out of the car and raped her at gunpoint in front of her children.

The men also robbed the family of cash, jewellery and bank cards before fleeing.

The hunt for the attackers lasted only days. Investigators used mobile phone data to narrow down their search and later relied on DNA evidence from the crime scene to link the suspects to the assault.

Investigators said the survivor later identified both men during legal proceedings. One of the convicts, Shafqat Ali, also reportedly confessed before a magistrate. Based on the evidence, an anti-terrorism court convicted the pair in March 2021 and handed them death sentences along with life imprisonment and additional jail terms.

The crime prompted widespread protests and anger. Outrage intensified after comments made by then Lahore police chief Umer Sheikh, who questioned why the woman had been travelling at night and said she should have taken a different route.

In the appeal in Lahore High Court, the convicts had argued that there were weaknesses and inconsistencies in the prosecution's case. Their lawyers claimed the evidence was unreliable and urged the court to overturn the convictions.

However, prosecutors told the court that the case against the two men was backed by strong evidence.

## As Pak turns US stooge, Afghan Taliban lean on Russia; history comes full circle

JUNE 5, 2026

**KABUL (TIP):** History appears to be turning a full circle in Afghanistan. Decades after the Soviet Union fought a costly war there, Russia has signed its most significant defence-related agreement with Kabul since the Taliban returned to power in 2021.

The agreement, signed on May 27, comes amid a sharp deterioration in relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Following Pakistan's military offensive in February this year, which targeted Afghan cities including Kabul and Kandahar, ties between the two neighbours have sunk to their lowest point in years. The US subsequently backed Islamabad's actions, describing them as Pakistan's "right to defend itself".

Against this backdrop, the Taliban leadership has increasingly looked towards Russia as a strategic partner. Moscow, for its part, has steadily expanded diplomatic and economic engagement with Kabul since the Taliban's return to power in 2021. Russia later becoming the first and only nation to grant official recognition to the Taliban-led government in Afghanistan.

While the full details of the agreement have not been made public, officials on both sides have described it as a framework for maintaining and restoring Soviet and Russian-made military equipment already in Afghanistan. This includes a fleet of Mi-17 helicopters that were procured by the United States and Nato to equip the former Afghan Air Force. Soviet and Russian-origin equipment, ranging from small arms and armoured vehicles to trucks and helicopters, continues to form the backbone of the Taliban's arsenal. Much of this hardware was acquired during the Soviet-Afghan War, the civil war that followed, and the Taliban's takeover after the collapse of the US and Nato-backed Afghan republic in 2021.

The agreement was signed by Afghanistan's Defence Minister, Mawlawi Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid, and Sergei Shoigu, Secretary of Russia's Security Council, according to TOLO News.

Speaking at the signing ceremony on May 27, Mujahid



Afghan and Russian officials signed the military-technical cooperation agreement during a meeting on the sidelines of the Moscow International Security Conference. (Image: X/@MoDAfghanistan2)

expressed hope for closer ties between the two countries.

"We hope these interactions will be further strengthened. Afghanistan was involved in war for forty years and was occupied by the US for twenty years. As a result of that occupation, Afghanistan suffered extensive damage, and after the victory, the country has also faced economic and humanitarian challenges due to sanctions," he was quoted as saying by Kabul-based news outlet, TOLO News.

Russia wants to see Afghanistan emerge as a stable and independent state while supporting efforts against terrorism and narcotics trafficking, Shoigu was quoted as saying by TOLO News. "We are interested in Afghanistan becoming a united, independent, and peaceful country. We acknowledge the measures you have taken to combat terrorism and drug-related crimes on Afghan soil," he said.

Political analyst Abdul Basir Basirat told TOLO News that such agreements are important for regional stability and the protection of shared interests. "Such agreements are essential for regional security and for safeguarding shared interests," Basirat said.

Both Kabul and Moscow have claimed that the latest deal signed between them is not a security or defence pact, and is rather focussed on technical cooperation.

## Pakistanis build mosque illegally in Japan, embarrassments follow

JUNE 5, 2026

**KAWAGOE CITY (TIP):** For Pakistan's diaspora in Japan, a mosque built illegally in Kawagoe city has become a matter of predicament. The mosque, inaugurated in April in the presence of Pakistan's Ambassador to Japan, Abdul Hameed, is now facing the possibility of demolition after local authorities determined that it had been constructed without the permissions required under Japanese law.

Kawagoe City Hall, the municipal government administrative centre of the city, has made its position clear regarding the illegally built mosque. "The building (mosque) was constructed in an urban development control area where construction is generally prohibited unless specific permissions are secured under the City Planning Act," an official statement by the City Hall said.

"The building in question was constructed without the city's permission," the statement added. It further said that the City Hall authorities



Pakistani Ambassador to Japan, Abdul Hameed (third from right), inaugurated the mosque built on illegal land in April. (Image: Kemal\_Bourguiba/X)

spent considerable time guiding those involved toward corrective action.

Authorities have also received requests from relevant parties to demolish the mosque, and the proposal has been accepted for review, according to the City Hall statement.

After it was found out that the mosque was built illegally, the Pakistani embassy in Tokyo found itself in an unusual position. It clarified that it had no connection with projects that violate

Japanese laws. In two carefully worded statements, the Pakistan embassy urged members of the Pakistani community to fully comply with Japanese regulations, particularly when constructing places of worship.

"The Embassy of Pakistan earnestly requests and emphasises to the Pakistani community residing in Japan that they fully comply with Japanese laws in all matters, particularly with regard to the construction of places of worship. No construction project may be initiated without obtaining the necessary permits from local governments," the Pakistan Embassy posted on X on June 1.

Notably, the embassy stated that Ambassador Abdul Hameed attended the mosque's inauguration on April 3 after being informed that all necessary approvals required under Japanese law had been obtained.

In a separate statement on May 31, the Pakistani mission in Japan said that no construction project should begin without securing the required permits from local authorities.

# Sikh History This Week

## JUNE 5 TO JUNE 11

### 5th June



1984 Operation Bluestar: Fierce battle in Golden Temple Complex, Sri Akal Takhat is attacked with heavy artillery and tanks. And June 6 nights saw fierce battle between the Indian Army and GurSikhs inside the Golden Temple Complex. The onslaught began around 7pm. 15,000 hand-picked and well-trained solidiers supported by tanks and armoured personnel carriers were involved in the assault. While another 35,000 solidiers tried to put down any internal rebellion. It was rumored that Jarnail Singh Bhindranwalae has gone towards the Golden Temple. In response, the army sent their divers into the sacred tank, but they all were killed at the hands of the GurSikh freedom fighters. Subsequently, 60 commandos were sent to Sri Akal Takhat. 59 were killed in the first attack by the GurSikhs. Army's disappointment led to the deployment of heavy artillery and tanks started firing upon Sri Akal Takht. By 9:30 AM, the army took control of the Golden Temple complex. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwalae and Amrik Singh received martyrdom in this attack along with many of their companions.

1996 Baldev Singh Chahal passed away suddenly from a heart attack. He successfully campaigned to change the British law that exempted GurSikhs from wearing helmets on motorcycles.

### 6th June

1628 Guru Har Gobind Sahib fought and won the first battle of Amritsar against the Mughal army.

1663 Janam, Bhai Mohkam Singh, one of the first five GurSikh initiated into the Khalsa order. Bhai Mohkam Singh was born at Dwarka to father Teerath Chand Shanbae and Mata Dev Bhai. Bhai Mohkam Singh was one of the first five GurSikhs initiated into the Khalsa order. Bhai Mohkam died while fighting at Chamkaur.

1711 The Khalsa Dal forces, under the leadership of Banda Singh Bahadur, defeated the forces of Delhi emporer, Bahadur Shah, at Behrampur.

1737 Martyrdom Bhai Mani Singh Ji.

1984 Operation Bluestar: Indian Army occupied the Sikh Shrines, archives, libraries, museums. Most of them were later set ablaze.

The fascist Indian Armed Forces, under the orders of Indira Gandhi (then prime minister) and Zail Singh (then President) launched the final assault on the Golden Temple complex. Today, the whole Sikh Nation salutes all those GurSikh martyrs who gave their lives while protecting the sanctity of Sri Akal Takhat and Sri Darbar Sahib. So many GurSikhs were killed that although the army paid Rs. 50 for picking up a dead body and loading it onto the awaiting trucks, there weren't enough people to get this work done. People clearing dead bodies were also given permission for retain all valuables recovered from the body. The most notable GurSikhs included Jarnail Singh

Bhindrawalae, Amrik Singh and General Shahbeg Singh. Giani Puran Singh, Darbar Sahib's high priest, was told by the soldiers that the bodies of Bhindranwalae, Amrik Singh and General Shahbeg Singh were found in the courtyard of Sri Akal Takhat. Ropes were tied to the body of Gen. Shahbeg Singh. His body seemed to have been dragged from Sri Akal Takht.

### 7th June



1864 Maharaja Dalip Singh married Miss Bamba in Alexandria, Egypt.

1984 GurSikhs from rural Punjab march to defend Sri Darbar Sahib despite the heavy presence of armed forces.

1984 Operation Bluestar: Sikh solidiers rebellion. Several Sikh solidiers killed. Thousands of the Sikh solidiers arrested. The shocks of operation Bluestar were not limited to Amritsar and Punjab. As Sikh solidiers learned of this sacrilege of Sri Darbar Sahib, they anguise resulted in rebellions at several places. However, these rebelions were supressed, several Sikh solidiers killed and thousands of the Sikh solidiers arrested.

1984 Destruction of Sikh Reference Library by Indian Armed forces. The army deliberately set fire to the Sikh Reference Library. Valuable archives and material of significant historical importance were destroyed in this fire. This was yet another extremely sad incident. The army claims that the library caught fire during crossfire. However, according to Government of India's White Paper, the library caught fire because the militants were firing homemade grenades after using a match. Please note, that the exact date on this event is on question.

### 8th June

1924 Waryam Singh of Dhugga was killed at Chak No. 54, district Lyallpur.

1956 Gian Singh Rarewala announced his intention to join Congress.

1981 Secret meeting of Akali Dal where strong opinions were expressed for Khalsitan.

1984 Operation Woodrose started. Sikh youth from villages picked up and eliminated. MacCarthy style witch hunt led to killing of hundreds of Sikhs and arrest of thousands of Sikhs.

1984 Giani Zail Singh, President of India, visits Darbar Sahib after Indian Amry's assault there.

1984 Khushwant Singh returned his "Padam Sri" in protest of Indian army's attack on Darbar Sahib.

### 9 June

1716 Baba Banda Singh Bahadur and select Sikhs were tortured to death under orders of Badshah Farukhsiyar. Baba Banda Singh Bahadur was offered life on embracing Islam. After his refusal, his son was murdered before his eyes. The child's heart was thrust into Banada Singh's mouth. Then his right eye was pulled out followed by the pulling out of his left eye.

Then his left foot was chopped off, next to fo were his arms. Then his flesh was cust off bit by bit. His brain was struck with a hammer. So was Baba Banda Singh Bahadur, along with his infant son and a few select followers, was mercilessly tortured to death in Delhi by the order of Emporer Farukh Siyar (successor to Bahadur Shah). The remaining Sikhs were beheaded on June 10, 1716.

1946 Punjab board established.

1946 Sikhs rejected Cabinet Mission proposals.

1949 Hindu members of the Panjab University opposed Punjabi as a medium of instruction.

### 10th June

1716 Remaining Sikhs captured with Baba Banda Singh Bahadur were beheaded.



1746 Lakhpat Rai killed more than 10,000 Sikhs. This is known as "Chhota Ghallughara", small carnage. Over 10,000 Sikhs out of a total population of 15,000 were killed. This disaster goes by the name of "chhota ghalughara", small holocaust (as against the great holocaust of 1762). After the 1745, Sarbat Khalsa resolution, Sikhs attacked Lahore one evening and decamped with a large booty. Yahya Khan who had taken over as Governor asked Diwan Lakhpar Rai to displace the Sikhs from the nearby swamp hounts. One of the units led by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia on the way to the hills clashed with his younger brother Jaspat Rai and chopped of his head. Lakhpat Rai now in rage vowed to erase the Sikhs from the pages of history. Lakhpat Rai with the help of the provincial forces fell upon the Sikhs concentrated in the marshes of Kahnuwan on Ravi. Some cut their way through hostile hillmen to Kiratpur. The main body turned back and after heavy losses crossed the Bease and the Sutlej into Malwa. 7000 Sikhs were killed, and another 3000 taken prisoners were executed at Nakhas, horse market.

1842 During midnight, at the instance of Dhian Singh Dogra, Maharani Chand Kaur's skull was crushed with grindstone by her maids who themselves were put to death later in the day.

1896 Death of Attar Singh Bhadaur.

1957 Vir Singh passed away.

1974 Giani Kartar Singh, an Akali Leader died.

1978 Nirankari Gurbachan Singh declared apostate by Akal Takht. A Hukamnan was issued to the Sikhs for social boycott of the Nirankari Mafia organization by Akal Takht.

### 11th June

1595 Prakash Utsav, 6th Patshah, Guru Hargobind Ji.

1982 Kulwant Singh Nagoke killed in fake encounter. This murder marked the begining of the era of fake encounters.

1982 15 Birs of Sri Guru Granth Sahib were burned at village Makha, district Bathinda.

1984 Dal Khalsa announced its Government in Exile.

1984 Dawinder Singh Garcha, an Congress(I) member for Ludhiana, resigned his position in protest of Indian Army's attack on Darbar Sahib, Amritsar.

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# Tamarind leaves: A natural secret for healthy, shiny hair

For centuries, natural ingredients have played an important role in traditional hair care remedies, and tamarind leaves are among the lesser-known yet highly beneficial herbal ingredients used for maintaining healthy hair. The leaves of the tamarind tree, scientifically known as *Tamarind*, are packed with vitamins, antioxidants, minerals, and plant compounds that can nourish the scalp, strengthen hair roots, and improve overall hair texture naturally. While tamarind fruit is widely used in cooking, its leaves have long been valued in Ayurvedic and folk practices for their medicinal and cosmetic properties.

Tamarind leaves contain nutrients such as vitamin C, vitamin A, iron, calcium, magnesium, and antioxidants that help support scalp and hair health. These nutrients play a role in strengthening hair follicles, protecting the scalp from damage caused by pollution and oxidative stress, and maintaining healthy blood circulation. A healthy scalp is considered the foundation of strong and beautiful hair, and tamarind leaves are believed to help create that balance naturally.

## Ways to use tamarind leaves

You can use tamarind leaves as a hair pack or make tamarind spray. To make the tamarind spray, boil half a cup of tamarind leaves in 5 cups of water. After it cools down, wash the hair with water. At the



same time, to make a hair mask, grind tamarind leaves and mix curd in them. Now, apply the paste to the hair and massage the head. After 15 minutes, wash the hair with clean water.

Check out these amazing benefits of Tamarind here:

### Stops hair fall

The anti-inflammatory and anti-bacterial properties present in tamarind leaves are helpful in making the hair stronger from the roots. The breakage of hair is reduced, and it becomes long and thick.

### Helps in getting rid of white hair

Tamarind leaves have natural colouring agents in them. The regular use of tamarind leaves on

the hair will eliminate the white hair problem.

### Get shiny hair

A tamarind hair mask can be the best option to bring shine to your hair. For this, grind tamarind leaves and make a paste. Now mix honey in it and apply it to the hair. Leave it for some time and wash it with clean water.

### No more oily scalp

Tamarind pulp can help control scalp sebum production which will help you get rid of a greasy scalp.

### Straighten hair naturally

Mixing rice water with tamarind leaves can help you straighten your hair naturally.

## FOOD CORNER

### Kashmiri Lamb

#### Ingredients

4 dried red chile peppers (such as cayenne), 3 long, green fresh chile peppers (such as Indian Jwala), 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon Kashmiri garam masala, 1 (1 inch) piece fresh ginger root, peeled and grated, 5 cloves garlic, crushed, ¼ cup dried unsweetened coconut, 3 tomatoes, chopped, 6 tablespoons vegetable oil, 2 large onions, thinly sliced, 2 pounds lamb meat, cut into 1 1/2-inch cubes, salt to taste, ½ teaspoon ground turmeric, 1 cup plain yogurt, ½ teaspoon saffron threads, 20 whole blanched almonds, ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro,



#### Method

- Place red chiles, green chiles, cumin seeds, garam masala, ginger, garlic, grated coconut, and tomatoes into a blender; pulse several times to chop, then blend into a smooth paste.
- Heat vegetable oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat. Stir in onion; cook and stir until the onion has softened and turned translucent, about 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low, and continue cooking and stirring until the onion is very tender and golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes more.
- Stir the spice paste into the onion and cook and stir until the oil separates from the mixture, about 3 minutes.
- Stir in lamb pieces and salt. Cook, stirring frequently over medium-high heat, until the lamb pieces are browned on all sides, about 8 minutes.
- Mix in yogurt, saffron, and blanched almonds until well combined.
- Reduce the heat to low and simmer, covered, until the meat is tender and the gravy is thick, about 1 hour.
- Garnish the curry with chopped cilantro before serving.

# Wake up your skin naturally with the goodness of coffee

Coffee is no longer just a morning beverage that helps people feel energized and refreshed. Over the years, it has also become a popular ingredient in skincare because of its natural exfoliating, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties. From homemade face scrubs to premium beauty products, coffee is increasingly being used to improve skin texture, brighten complexion, and provide a natural glow. Rich in caffeine and antioxidants, coffee can help rejuvenate tired-looking skin and become an effective addition to a regular skincare routine.

One of the biggest reasons coffee is valued in skincare is its high antioxidant content. Antioxidants help protect the skin from damage caused by free radicals, pollution, and environmental stressors that contribute to premature ageing. These compounds may help reduce dullness, fine lines, and tired-looking skin, making the complexion appear healthier and more refreshed. Regular use of coffee-based skincare treatments may help improve the skin's overall appearance and vitality.

## Reduces Inflammation

Caffeine has potent anti-inflammatory properties that



make it ideal for reducing inflammation and redness in your skin. In a 1981 study performed at the Seoul National University, researchers found that caffeine is able to reduce inflammation almost as well as aspirin in rats; in a 1978 performed at the University of Tennessee, researchers found that adding caffeine to anti-

inflammatory creams significantly increased their effectiveness. Overall, use of skin care products containing caffeine will reduce and prevent inflammation and redness, leaving you with a beautiful, even skin tone.

## Helps get rid of under-eye circles

Dark under-eye circles can be caused by a number of factors, including dehydration, allergies, lack of sleep or genetics. Although caffeine cannot completely erase hereditary dark circles, applying caffeine under your eyes will reduce the puffiness and inflammation associated with dark circles. Additionally, caffeine reduces the build-up of blood under your eyes which contributes to dark shadows. Several eye creams contain caffeine, or you can apply moist tea bags to your eyes for five minutes to reduce puffiness and give you a more alert appearance.

## Gets rid of cellulite

Caffeine can also reduce the appearance of cellulite. In a 2008 study performed at the University of São Paulo, researchers found that an application of skin cream containing caffeine to cellulite reduced the size of cellulite fat cells by 17 percent.

# Jeera water vs methi water: Which morning drink is better for belly fat loss?

Jeera water and methi water are among the most commonly recommended home remedies for weight loss in Indian households. Social media influencers, wellness enthusiasts, and even family members often suggest starting the day with one of these drinks to shed extra kilos and reduce belly fat.

As a result, many people have made them part of their morning routine, hoping for quick, visible results.

However, when it comes to weight loss, especially reducing fat around the abdomen, there is often confusion about what these drinks can realistically achieve. While both jeera and methi have nutritional benefits and may support certain aspects of health, neither should be viewed as a magic solution for weight loss. According to Dt. Deepali Sharma, Clinical Nutritionist at the CK Birla Hospital, Delhi, said the effectiveness of these drinks is often misunderstood.

"While both jeera water and methi water are popular morning drinks, neither directly burns belly fat. They can support digestion, appetite control, and overall health, but sustainable weight loss depends on a combination of healthy eating, regular exercise, good sleep, and stress management," she explains.

Jeera water is prepared by soaking cumin seeds overnight or boiling them in water. It has long been used in traditional diets and is often associated with digestive health.

One reason many people prefer jeera water is its ability to reduce bloating and improve digestion. Poor digestion and water retention can sometimes make the stomach appear larger, leading people to believe they have gained fat. By supporting digestive processes, jeera water may help people feel lighter and less bloated.

Additionally, cumin contains antioxidants and plant compounds that may support metabolism. However, this does not mean it can specifically target or melt belly fat.

Methi water is made by soaking fenugreek seeds



overnight and drinking the water the next morning. Fenugreek seeds are rich in soluble fibre, which absorbs water and forms a gel-like substance in the digestive tract.

This fibre content can help increase feelings of fullness and reduce hunger between meals. As a result, people may naturally consume fewer calories throughout the day.

"Methi may be particularly beneficial for managing blood sugar levels. Stable blood sugar levels can help reduce cravings and unnecessary snacking, which often contribute to weight gain," says Dt Sharma.

For individuals struggling with frequent hunger or sugar cravings, methi water may offer an advantage by supporting better appetite control.

**WHICH ONE IS BETTER FOR BELLY FAT:** The simple answer is that neither drink directly targets belly fat.

Belly fat develops due to multiple factors, including excess calorie intake, lack of physical activity, poor sleep, hormonal changes, stress, and genetics. No single food or drink can selectively burn fat from one area of the body. *Source: India Today*



## Many breast cancer patients could safely avoid chemotherapy: Study

Breast cancer treatment has come a long way, but one of the hardest questions has always been: who really needs chemotherapy, and who can safely do without it?

Chemotherapy saves lives, but it also comes with serious side-effects and long-term risks. A new study, presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology's annual meeting in Chicago, shows that a DNA-based test of the tumour can help two-thirds of certain breast cancer patients safely avoid chemotherapy without significantly compromising their long-term outcomes. Here's what you need to know. The new approach uses a genetic test to measure the activity of a set of cancer-related genes in the tumour.

Instead of just looking at the cancer under a microscope, the test looks inside the cancer cells and measures how strongly certain genes are switched on or off. From this, it calculates a score that reflects how aggressive that particular tumour is and how likely it is to come back after standard treatment.

Doctors then use this score to guide treatment decisions. If the score is low, it suggests the cancer is less aggressive and that surgery, radiotherapy and hormone tablets are enough, so chemotherapy can be safely avoided.

If the score is high, it signals a higher risk of the cancer returning, and chemotherapy is recommended because it is more likely to make a real difference. In other words, the test helps separate patients into those for whom chemo will genuinely help and those for whom it would be all harm and no extra benefit.

This is a big step because it is based on a large, rigorous, late-stage clinical trial. For this particular, very common type of early breast cancer, the study shows that more than two-thirds of women who look high risk by traditional measures can safely skip chemotherapy if their gene test score is low, without losing protection against the cancer coming back.

That means fewer women being put through months of hair loss, nausea, fatigue, infection risk, early menopause, possible infertility and long-term heart or nerve effects when it doesn't actually improve their outlook. *Source: PTI*

## Emissions from herbal cigarettes may be more damaging than those from tobacco ones

Herbal cigarettes, widely sold in India and abroad as natural, tobacco-free, and therapeutic alternatives to conventional cigarettes, are not safer than regular tobacco cigarettes — they produce emissions that can be comparably or even more damaging than tobacco smoke, according to a study.

Findings published in *Journal of Hazardous Materials* present a comprehensive comparison of the physical, chemical, and oxidative properties of mainstream (first-hand) smoke from commercially available herbal and tobacco cigarettes in the Indian market, researchers said.

"Our findings challenge the widely held belief that tobacco-free means risk-free," author Sameer Patel, an assistant professor at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar's department of civil engineering and chemical engineering, said.

The researchers compared emissions from two of India's best-selling tobacco brands and four popular herbal varieties containing combinations of basil, clove, cinnamon, mint, green tea, water lily, and chamomile. "Emissions from herbal cigarettes are

comparable to or exceeded those from tobacco cigarettes on nearly every metric we measured. Leaf-wrapped herbal variants turned out to be the most hazardous of all the samples tested," Patel said.

The team noted that two of the herbal brands utilised tendu (ebony) leaves as wrappers, identical to those used in bidis, the country's most widely consumed smoking product.

"Our findings indicate that the emissions characteristics of HCs (herbal cigarettes) matched or even exceeded those of TCs (tobacco cigarettes), suggesting that HCs are as hazardous as TCs and underscoring the urgent need for regulatory oversight guided by a comprehensive toxicological evaluation of herbal cigarettes," the authors wrote.

"Sub-500 nm (nanometre) particle concentrations were (about) 20 per cent higher in HC than in TC," they said and added that the fine particles are increasingly linked to cardiovascular and respiratory disease.

Each cigarette was combusted inside a sealed, automated two-chamber rig designed to replicate human inhalation rate. *Source: PTI*

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# OpenAI and Anthropic are worried someone might build a biological weapon with AI

Generative AI has made it easier than ever for people to access information. Users can ask questions in natural language and receive answers that are easy to understand, often within seconds. But that convenience has also raised a troubling question: what happens if someone uses AI to learn how to create biological weapons? That concern is now prompting some of the biggest names in artificial intelligence to call for new safeguards.

CEOs of several major AI companies are urging members of the US Congress to adopt laws that would make it harder for bad actors to develop biological weapons using AI tools.

Among the signatories are Google DeepMind CEO Demis Hassabis, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, Anthropic CEO Dario Amodei, and Microsoft AI CEO Mustafa Suleyman. They have signed a public letter calling for laws that would require companies selling synthetic DNA and RNA to screen customers and orders to prevent the misuse of genetic material.

The signatories also include scientists, national security experts, and executives from gene synthesis companies.

The debate comes decades after scientist Arthur Kornberg first successfully synthesised DNA in the 1950s. Today, the process is largely automated. Dozens of companies around the world use commercial synthesisers to "print" and sell custom genetic sequences that are used in scientific research, drug development, and diagnostics.

Many providers sell only to qualified researchers, biotech companies, and educational institutions. However, not all companies thoroughly vet customers or the genetic sequences they order.

To reduce risks, many providers already use software that screens orders for "sequences of concern" — genetic material that could contribute to toxicity or help cause disease.

According to the concerns raised by the signatories, AI tools can make it much easier for someone to identify suppliers that



do not screen orders.

If prompted appropriately, AI systems can also suggest ways to modify an order so that even companies that conduct screening may find it more difficult to detect what a customer is attempting to create.

Researchers also worry that AI could make it easier to design dangerous new toxins and pathogens. While some biology expertise would still likely be required to create a functional virus from scratch, AI could lower some of the barriers that previously made such work more difficult.

The concerns are not purely theoretical. Last year, Microsoft researchers published a study showing that AI-powered protein design tools were able to generate potentially dangerous gene sequences that slipped past screening software used by some companies.

The models proposed new protein sequences that shared structural similarities with known dangerous proteins, highlighting potential gaps in existing safety systems.

## Great Conjunction alert: Venus and Jupiter to align for a rare comic kiss on June 8 and 9

Skywatchers are in for a spectacular celestial treat this month as Venus and Jupiter, the two brightest planets visible from Earth, move into a rare and dazzling conjunction.

The planetary pairing, being described as a cosmic kiss, will see Venus and Jupiter appear just 1.6 degrees apart in the evening sky shortly after sunset.

Astronomers say this will be one of the most impressive sunset conjunctions in years, offering stargazers an easy-to-spot planetary display without the need for telescopes.

A conjunction occurs when two planets appear close together in the sky from Earth's perspective.

Although Venus and Jupiter will seem almost side by side, they will remain separated by hundreds of millions of kilometres in space.

The effect is created because the planets orbit the Sun along a similar path known as the ecliptic, causing them to occasionally gather in the same region of the sky when viewed from Earth.



Observers should look toward the western horizon shortly after sunset to catch the event. Venus will be the brightest object in the scene and should be easy to identify, while Jupiter will shine nearby with a slightly softer glow.

The conjunction is being hailed as one of the standout astronomical events of June, with many astronomy enthusiasts comparing its visual appeal to some of the most memorable planetary alignments of recent decades.

The celestial pairing of Jupiter and Venus will peak on June 8 and 9.

The show will not end with Venus and

Jupiter. From June 11 to June 15, Mercury will join the pair, creating a rare mini parade of planets low in the western sky.

However, Mercury will be much closer to the horizon and may be difficult to spot without an unobstructed western view. The alignment comes during a busy month for skywatchers. Alongside the conjunction, the Moon will make several close passes to bright planets, while the arrival of the Northern Hemisphere summer will bring longer evenings and more opportunities for observing deep-sky objects.

Astronomers recommend finding a location away from city lights and ensuring a clear view of the western horizon for the best experience. Binoculars can enhance the view, but the conjunction will be visible to the naked eye. For those willing to look up after sunset, June 8 and 9 promise a rare chance to witness the Solar System's two brightest planets appearing to embrace in one of the year's most beautiful sky shows.



### World's first nuclear dustbin almost ready. It will be sealed for 1,00,000 years

Humans are finally close to creating the world's first repository to dump nuclear waste in and lock it for around 1,00,000 years, the duration it will take the radioactive material to decay to roughly the same level as natural uranium ore in the ground.

The nuclear dustbin is located deep beneath a Finnish forest, with tunnels blasted into billion-year-old rock that might soon hold the world's most dangerous waste.

Step into the lift inside a cave in Finland and descend until the lift flashes 433.

That is the number of metres below ground in Eurajoki, southwest Finland, where humanity is preparing to bury spent radioactive fuel left over from decades of nuclear power generation.

Every nuclear plant produces waste that remains radioactive for tens of thousands of years. Since the first plants came online in the 1950s, countries have been wrestling with the problem of disposing of nuclear waste. Until now, most of that waste has sat cooling in temporary water pools, a temporary solution to an everlasting issue. Finland is about to change that.

Blasted into 1.9-billion-year-old bedrock, Onkalo is expected to become the world's first permanent underground repository for spent nuclear fuel.

Finland's nuclear safety authority is due to issue its final approval this month, after which an operating licence can be granted.

"We hope to start operations at the end of this year, or most probably early next year," said Philippe Bordarier, chief executive of nuclear operator TVO, told Science Alert news.

Above ground, spent fuel rods will be encased in thick, highly corrosion-resistant copper canisters.

These will then be lowered 433 metres into holes drilled in the tunnel floors, packed with bentonite clay, which is a natural mineral that swells when wet to form a seal.

The facility has capacity for 6,500 tonnes of uranium, enough to hold waste from all five of Finland's nuclear reactors, with deposits planned for 100 years before the vault is permanently sealed.

# Oil prices hold near \$95 as Gulf tensions keep markets on edge

JUNE 5, 2026

**LONDON (TIP):** Global oil prices remained elevated on Friday, June 5, as traders continued to monitor escalating tensions in the Middle East, uncertainty surrounding US-Iran negotiations and the prolonged disruption in the Strait of Hormuz, which has now entered its 96th day.

Brent crude futures were trading around \$95.36 per barrel on Friday, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude hovered near \$93.06 a barrel, according to latest market data. Both benchmarks remained on course for weekly gains amid fears of a prolonged energy supply disruption linked to the Gulf crisis.

The oil market has remained highly volatile in recent days following Iran's missile and drone attacks towards Kuwait and Bahrain, developments that intensified concerns about the possibility of a wider regional conflict involving key Gulf energy producers.

Investors are also closely watching stalled diplomatic efforts between Tehran and Washington. Hopes for a breakthrough in negotiations have weakened after continued disagreements over regional security issues and ceasefire conditions linked to ongoing conflicts in Lebanon and the Gulf region.

The Strait of Hormuz remains the central concern for global energy markets. The narrow waterway, located between Iran and Oman, handles nearly



one-fifth of the world's oil shipments under normal conditions. Shipping activity through the route continues to face severe disruption due to military tensions, security threats and restrictions on maritime movement.

Analysts say even partial disruptions around Hormuz have added a major geopolitical risk premium to oil prices.

"Markets remain extremely sensitive to any signs of escalation in the Gulf," an energy analyst said. "The longer the Hormuz disruption continues, the greater the fear of supply shortages and inflationary pressure worldwide."

Shipping insurers have significantly increased premiums for vessels operating in the Gulf region, while several companies have reduced tanker movements because of security concerns. Some energy firms have also suspended loading operations at regional terminals after reports of drone and missile threats targeting infrastructure. Despite Friday's relatively stable trading, oil prices remain substantially higher than pre-

crisis levels. Brent crude was recorded near \$95.47 per barrel on June 5, according to commodity tracking data, although prices remain below the extreme highs touched earlier during the escalation.

Earlier this week, Brent crude briefly approached the \$100-per-barrel mark after reports that Iran had suspended indirect communications with Washington and threatened broader restrictions on maritime routes, including the Bab el-Mandeb Strait near Yemen.

The continuing energy crisis has raised concerns among major oil-importing economies including India, China, Japan and European nations. Higher crude prices are expected to increase fuel costs, transportation expenses and inflationary pressures globally, potentially slowing economic growth. International financial institutions have also begun warning about the broader economic impact of the Gulf crisis. Fitch Ratings recently lowered its global growth outlook, citing rising oil prices and supply disruptions linked to the Middle East conflict. Meanwhile, analysts note that weakening demand in some major economies has prevented oil prices from rising even more sharply. Concerns over slower industrial activity and reduced fuel consumption, particularly in China and parts of Europe, have partly offset fears of severe supply shortages.

## RBI keeps repo rate unchanged at 5.25%

JUNE 5, 2026

**MUMBAI (TIP):** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 5.25%, offering relief to existing home loan borrowers who were worried about a possible rise in their monthly repayments.

Announcing the decision, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously voted to keep the policy repo rate unchanged and continue with its 'neutral' stance.

The decision comes at a time when global uncertainties, including the conflict in the Middle East and concerns over the impact of El Nio on India's monsoon, continue to pose risks to economic growth and inflation.

The repo rate is the interest rate at which the RBI lends money to commercial banks. When the repo rate changes, banks often adjust their lending and deposit rates accordingly.

Since the repo rate has remained unchanged, home loan borrowers are unlikely to see any immediate change in their Equated Monthly Instalments (EMIs). For those with floating-rate home loans, monthly repayments are expected to stay stable unless banks make independent changes to lending rates. The decision also provides some certainty to people planning to buy a house, as borrowing costs are not expected to rise in the near term.

While the RBI has chosen to pause for now, many in the real estate sector believe the possibility of future rate cuts remains open if inflation stays under control.

Mohit Malhotra, Founder and CEO of NeoLiv, said the central bank's decision reflects a balanced approach towards maintaining economic stability while keeping inflation in check.

"The RBI's decision to maintain the repo rate is a strategic approach to ensuring economic stability and controlling inflation. However, the growing chances of a rate cut are promising for the development sector. Lower interest rates would make financing more affordable for the mid-segment projects, encouraging more people to own their dream home and fuelling growth." Industry experts say that even without a rate cut, a stable interest rate environment helps both developers and buyers plan better.

Aman Sarin, Director and CEO of Anant Raj Limited, said the decision comes at a crucial time when geopolitical tensions are creating uncertainty across markets. "This is a welcome move by the RBI, especially given the ongoing crisis in West Asia, which continues to put pressure on input costs across sectors. In such an environment, stability in interest rates is important for maintaining overall confidence in the market."

# Centre exempts foreign investors from capital gains tax on govt bonds

JUNE 5, 2026

**NEW DELHI (TIP):** The government on Friday exempted foreign institutional investors (FIIs) and the Bank for International Settlements from capital gains tax on income earned from interest payments and the sale of government securities, in a move aimed at attracting more foreign capital into India's debt market.

The decision comes at a time when the rupee has weakened more than 5% this year amid elevated crude oil prices and sustained foreign outflows from Indian equities.

The change has been brought through the Income-tax (Amendment) Ordinance, 2026, as Parliament is not in session. Promulgated by President Droupadi Murmu, the ordinance amends Schedule IV of the Income-tax Act, 2025, to exempt interest income and capital gains arising from specified government securities for eligible foreign investors and other specified entities, subject to prescribed



conditions. The exemption will take effect from April 1, 2026.

In simple terms, foreign investors who buy Indian government bonds will now get to keep a larger share of their returns.

Until now, they were subject to a 12.5% long-term capital gains tax on listed bonds held for more than a year, as well as taxes on interest income earned from government securities.

The government hopes the tax relief will make Indian government bonds more attractive to overseas investors and encourage greater participation in the country's debt market.

Policymakers have been looking for

ways to attract more stable foreign capital as rising oil prices, geopolitical tensions and foreign fund outflows have put pressure on the rupee and broader financial markets.

Analysts said the move could improve post-tax returns for foreign investors and help broaden the investor base for government securities. While the measure is unlikely to trigger an immediate surge in inflows, it could support foreign investment into Indian debt over the medium term and help cushion the economy against external shocks. The decision is part of a broader effort to deepen foreign participation in India's bond market. In recent years, the government has eased investment restrictions on certain government securities under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR), helping India secure inclusion in major global bond indices. The latest tax exemption is expected to further strengthen India's appeal among international fixed-income investors.



**BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA**

### ARIES



Ganesha says this may be a profitable week for you. The exchange of houses between Jupiter and Mercury is desirable for gains without pains. You may get decent returns for little effort. There may be an improvement in your working conditions. People may recognize your abilities during this week. It is more important to maintain balance in tough situations. Students may get acceptable returns for their toil. The mother may have health constraints throughout this week. She may lend money to doubtful people. Children may have a delay in the finalization of a marriage alliance. A spouse may have sudden changes in employment. He/she may be troubled by superiors without major reasons. Father may have disturbances with business partners. He may look for a change like work. Elder siblings may have losses in speculation. Younger siblings may suffer from health problems.

### TAURUS



Ganesha says you should be careful during this week. There may be several challenging situations in personal and professional life. Transparency and clarity are needed in all your communications. There may be an unforeseen delay in your efforts in your career. You should not expect much from higher authorities during this week. Students may get average results for their toil. Children may get improvement in earnings after persistent efforts. A spouse may have health complications throughout this week. He/she may be worried about the delay in the finalization of a career matter. Father may have a positive response to his business inquiries. He may get support from a bank in a property matter. Elder siblings may beget a child after a long time. Younger siblings may enter into a partnership business. They may fall in love this week.

### GEMINI



Ganesha says this may be a supporting week for you and highly auspicious for all-around success. You may get decent returns for your previous investments. Students may get outstanding results for their performance. Children may have a tough time with spouses. They may postpone the foreign visit because of technical problems. A spouse may have distractions at the work location. He/she may be of strong determination to have

## WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - JUNE 8, 2026 TO JUNE 14, 2026

BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

his property. Father may have success in litigation matters. He may postpone an important decision about a career. Elder siblings may fall ill for some time. Younger siblings will enjoy long journeys on pilgrimage.

### CANCER



Ganesha says this may be a normal week for you. There may not be much progress in career and financial matters. You may work averse and try to spend more time on entertainment. Great energy and determination are needed. Students may get normal results for their hard work. Mothers may like to spend time in journeys and spiritual discourses. Children may have problems in love matters. They may face minor accidents. Spouses may have grand success in career matters. He/she may be confident about prospects. Fathers may have positive changes in employment or business. Elder siblings may seriously search for business opportunities. This is a favorable time for their efforts. Younger siblings may permanently separate from their spouses.

### LEO



Ganesha says this may be a mixed week for you. There may be favorable happenings in career matters, but troubles may persist in personal life. You may not find a suitable person as a life partner. The comfort of conveyance and accommodation is assured. Positive communications about promotion may be received. There is a great need for concentration to enjoy better results. Students may get satisfactory results despite disturbances in preparation. The mother may enjoy peace of mind throughout this week. Children may have success in competitions or interviews. Spouses may have health issues on several occasions. He/she may be worried about financial prospects. Father may have a normal life in career matters. Elder siblings may find foreign employment. They may enjoy success in their love life also. Younger siblings may have financial uncertainty.

### VIRGO



Ganesha says this may be a pleasant week for you. There may be decent growth in your earnings. You may be successful in controlling the opposition. There may be a compromise in a legal matter. This is a constructive week for the search for new houses or commercial properties. Students may get decent results for their hard work. Children may have success with their efforts. They may be anxious about some entangled money. A spouse may have pressure or humiliation in their career. He/she may be offered a better designation by the end of this week. Fathers may have trouble on long journeys or be confused about the purchase of a property. Elder siblings may enjoy long journeys to beautiful locations. They may spend most of their

time in entertainment. Younger siblings may be promoted.

### LIBRA



Ganesha says this may be a challenging week for you. There may be financial uncertainty for some time. You should be more vigilant and proactive about prospects. Friends may be of great help in troubling situations. It is better to postpone career and financial decisions. Students may get normal results for their hard work. The mother may have conflicts with younger siblings. She may be successful in a legal battle. Children may have success in educational matters. However, they may not do well in career or employment. Spouses may have sudden expenditures from different sources. He/she may receive positive communication about the increment. Father may have great pressure in his employment. Elderly siblings may make risky decisions. Younger siblings may have problems with a tenant or neighbor. They may face obstructions in starting a business.

### SCORPIO



Ganesha says this may be a normal week for you. There may be a success in some interviews by the end of this week and may give success for businesspeople. Love affairs and speculation should be strictly avoided. People may often misunderstand your opinions. Students may get decent results for their appearances. Children may have uncertainty about the future. They may not be able to decide on higher studies. A spouse may have gained through business activities. He/she may invest in new projects. The father may get clearance for a foreign visit. He may enjoy peace of mind and the company of friends throughout this week. Elder siblings may face troubles with spouses or business partners. Younger siblings may gain through speculation. They may finalize a marriage decision.

### SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says this may be a troublesome week for you. Excess expenditure may humiliate you. Heavy workloads may absorb most of your time and energy. Superiors may build up extreme pressure on you. Students may get grand success in examinations. Children may have the inheritance of property from in-laws. They may be involved in some illicit activities. Spouses may have success in foreign lands. He/she may be fascinated by the uplift in financial status. Father may have expansion in the employment of business. He may have minor health problems relating to digestion. Elder siblings may have extraordinary expenditures. They may be deceived by friends. Younger siblings may start a business which may end in a flash.

### CAPRICORN



Capricorn

Ganesha says this may be a dynamic week for you and you may have desirable gains through agency business, mediumship, and contractual work. You may not be active like before. You may prefer to be at home rather than work. Students may get supporting results during this week. Children may have uncertainty in the admission for higher education. Spouses may have a tough time with business partners. He/she should give more preference to employment. Father may have a fluctuating mind throughout this week. Elder siblings will gain well during this week. Younger siblings may decide on a marriage alliance. They may get monetary benefits through occupation. It is better to be more focused on the future.

### AQUARIUS



Aquarius

Ganesha says this may be a strenuous week for you. There may be several obstructions to the completion of your activities. There may be serious problems in domestic life or may cause sharp fevers, and wounds during this week. It is better to avoid arguments or unnecessary confrontations. There may be a possibility for the materialization of love matters. Students may get normal results for their performance. Children may have challenging situations in careers or employment. They may be tested by a superior throughout this week. Spouses may have the comfort of new conveyance. He/she may inherit property from ancestors. Father may have a decent financial status during this week. However, you should have financial discipline this week. Elder siblings may acquire property. Younger siblings may be transferred.

### PISCES



Pisces

Ganesha says this may be an ordinary week for you. You may withhold the decision about your foreign employment. Despite struggle and strain, you may not be able to impress superiors. There may be decent growth for your earnings through different sources. Students may get astounding results for their efforts. Children may have an uplift in a career in the middle of this week. However, they may not perform well in educational matters. A spouse may have health disturbances during this week. He/she may be hospitalized for some time. Father may dispose of property for loss. Elder siblings may face troubles in family life. Younger siblings may have attitude problems with superiors.

**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](http://chiragdaruwalla.com). He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: [info@chiragdaruwalla.com](mailto:info@chiragdaruwalla.com)

**BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : JUNE 8, 2026 TO JUNE 14, 2026  
BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA****JUNE 8**

Ganesha says Don't chase a career behind fame or money. Doing what you love can bring you success. You may be in a positive frame of mind, which may help you recognize proper growth opportunities. You may commit to multiple tasks simultaneously, which will likely improve your productivity in all aspects of life. This day may bring important events for you.

**JUNE 9**

Ganesha says today may be the best day for you. Today, your boss may be cooperative. You are likely to get a promotion for your consistent hard work. You may plan to go somewhere with your family. Today, your enthusiasm may be at its peak, and you may try something new at the workplace. Your communication with your colleague may be good, which may make you learn new things. Today, you may witness a lot of changes, which may give you more time to relax and channel your positive

energy. This is the right time to plan for the future.

**JUNE 10**

Ganesha says this day may be very auspicious for you. You may be in a good position as far as professional and personal success is concerned. Peace and harmony may bring good progress in all areas of your life. Your happiness level may make solid progress in areas of concern today. Today, you may enter a new phase of life. This phase may motivate you to work hard and be competitive. You may get a lot of success today. Your hard work may impress your boss. Today, you may show interest in spiritual activities.

**JUNE 11**

Ganesha says today may be a very promising day for you. Your communication skills may be able to impress everyone around you. Today, you may be in a sociable mood, ready to network with people who can help both

professionally and personally. Today, you may lead the project at the workplace. You may start new tasks and show great ease in executing them. Today you may plan to go out somewhere with friends.

**JUNE 12**

Ganesha says that today can be the best day for you. This day can bring a lot of opportunities at the workplace that can lead you to a good plan. Today, your energy level can be at an all-time high, which will help you move forward. May this day bring a lot of happiness and joy into our lives. Your day can start with a lot of positivity. You can dedicate your entire day to yourself and your interests. A changed attitude towards work can keep you ahead of your competitors.

**JUNE 13**

Ganesha says that today can be the best day for you. You may be able to solve a problem at the workplace, which may make your boss happy. You can plan a business trip with your colleague. Today



can be a good day; you can meet some new people in the office. You can learn something new from them and share different stories related to work. You can travel to a place where the weather is completely different.

**JUNE 14**

Ganesha says that today you may get good mental strength. You may enjoy working in the office. You are likely to implement new ideas in the family business. Today, your hard work can help you implement the plan successfully. Today, you may choose to work hard, and the financial benefits you get today will remain with you for a long time. Today, your love life can also be as great as your professional life.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

## Trump faces setback as 4 Republicans...

The House voted 215 to 208, as four Republicans voted with Democrats in favor of the war powers resolution, which directs Trump to withdraw US troops from Iran unless Congress declares war or authorizes the use of military force.

It was the latest setback for Trump in Congress despite his party's slim majorities in both the House and Senate.

For now, the vote is largely symbolic, as legislation must pass the Senate as well as the House to become effective, and there is debate over whether war powers resolutions would be constitutional even if they are approved by Congress.

The vote, nonetheless, reflects unease among some Republicans over Trump's handling of the conflict and marks a rare bipartisan effort to curb presidential war powers as the war has entered a fourth month.

Three previous war powers resolutions had failed in the House by increasingly slim margins and the chamber's Republican leaders abruptly postponed a vote on this one last month when it looked likely to pass.

The Senate advanced a separate, but similar resolution last month in a procedural vote, after seven previous attempts had failed. Further votes on the Senate measure have not yet been scheduled.

The four House Republicans who voted for the war powers resolution were Representatives Tom Barrett of Michigan, Warren Davidson of Ohio, Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania and Thomas Massie of Kentucky.

No Democrats voted against it. Seven House members did not vote.

### RECENT PUSHBACK AGAINST TRUMP

Trump recently has faced some opposition from members of his party in Congress, after months in which very few Republicans pushed back against his policy initiatives.

Separately on Wednesday, the House approved a procedural motion that clears the way for a vote on the Ukraine Support Act, which would provide security aid to Ukraine as it fights a Russian invasion. The act reached the floor only after a petition reached a 218-signature threshold last month to move ahead.

Six Republicans and one independent who normally votes with Republicans voted in favor of the Ukraine measure.

Republicans recently have revolted against Trump's plans to create a "weaponization" fund to pay his political allies who said they had been the subject of

government abuse.

Republican lawmakers on Wednesday also criticized Trump's pick of loyalist Bill Pulte - a mortgage regulator with no national security experience - to serve as acting director of national intelligence.

### SEPARATION OF POWERS

Democrats have called on Trump to come to Congress for authorization to use military force in the Iran conflict, noting that the US Constitution says only the legislature, not the President, can declare war.

They warned that Trump may have pulled the country into a long conflict without setting out a clear strategy and also railed against higher prices for gasoline, food and other products since the joint U.S.-Israeli air strikes on Iran began on February 28.

"The passage of this WPR today signals a significant turning point: more and more Republicans are listening to their constituents who do not want another open-ended war in the Middle East," Representative Gregory Meeks, who sponsored the war powers resolution and serves as ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, said in a statement after the vote.

Democrats have made affordability a central theme of their economic message ahead of midterm elections in November that will decide whether Republicans keep control of Congress.

US producer prices posted their biggest increase in four years in April, boosted by soaring costs for goods and services since the war began.

The Trump administration insists that the war on Iran is necessary for US national security, citing an urgent need to prevent the Islamic republic from developing a nuclear weapon.

Republican critics of the war powers resolutions call them political grandstanding by Democrats who want to weaken the United States and score points against Trump.

## India, Venezuela vow deeper energy...

reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the interests of the Global South.

"Happy to meet with the Acting President of Venezuela, Delcy Rodríguez. We had extensive discussions on expanding our cooperation in energy, critical minerals, technology, agriculture, health and people-to-people ties," Modi said after the meeting.

The talks assume added significance amid heightened uncertainty in global oil markets triggered by the crisis in West Asia and concerns over disruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical artery for global crude supplies. The

developments have reinforced India's efforts to diversify energy sources and strengthen partnerships with major oil-producing nations.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), energy dominated the discussions as India and Venezuela sought to leverage what officials described as a "perfect complementarity" between one of the world's largest holders of proven oil reserves and one of the fastest-growing consumers of energy.

"Venezuela has already emerged as the third-largest supplier in our spot purchases this month," Secretary (East) Rudrendra Tandon said during a special media briefing. He added that both sides discussed cooperation across the energy value chain, including upstream and downstream activities.

Petroleum and Natural Gas Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, who also met Rodríguez, said Venezuela was among India's largest crude suppliers in April and May. He announced that an Indian technical team would soon visit Venezuela to explore opportunities for expanding energy cooperation and investments.

"Venezuela possesses the biggest proven reserves of oil in the world, while India has both the demand and the technological expertise to refine Venezuelan crude," Puri said.

Beyond hydrocarbons, the two sides explored cooperation in critical minerals, mining, pharmaceuticals, transportation, agriculture and the automotive sector. Officials said Indian companies could find significant opportunities in Venezuela's resource-rich economy as the country seeks to revive growth and attract investment.

The pharmaceutical sector also figured prominently in the discussions, with the Venezuelan side expressing interest in India's affordable generic medicines and public healthcare initiatives, including the Jan Aushadhi program.

This was Rodríguez's first visit to India since assuming charge as acting head of the Venezuelan government following the capture of President Nicolás Maduro by US forces during an operation in Caracas in January. Rodríguez was subsequently appointed interim president by Venezuela's Supreme Court to ensure continuity of the government.

While no major agreements were announced during the visit, officials described the discussions as substantive and business-oriented, aimed at creating conditions for greater participation by Indian public and private sector companies in Venezuela.

Officials said the visit was expected to impart fresh momentum to bilateral ties and open new avenues of cooperation in sectors critical to energy security, economic growth and the development priorities of the Global South.

## Over 200,000 applicants paid USD...

Mullin said applicants paying USD 100,000 get their papers processed in about 15 days and it takes about 7.5 months to process other applications.

Collins told the subcommittee that a hospital in Presque Isle, a rural community in northern Maine, recently had to pay the fee to secure a much-needed surgeon from overseas.

She said that medical service providers serving remote areas should be treated differently from employers recruiting highly skilled workers in sectors with larger domestic labor pools.

"Would you be willing to consider carving out an exemption for medical professionals from this fee when a community can demonstrate that there is not a medical professional available?" Collins asked.

Mullin assured the Senator that he would look at possible solutions on whether such applications could be dealt with some flexibility on a case-by-case basis.

"I would suggest that there's a huge difference between bringing in a computer expert from another country to work in wealthy California and Silicon Valley versus a much-needed surgeon to work at a rural hospital in northern Maine," she said.

Republican Senator from Alaska Lisa Murkowski flagged concerns about the shortage of teachers in school districts in rural areas of her state.

"I'll follow up with you about the issue that I raised previously with regards to H-1B visas for teachers," Murkowski told Mullin.

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**By June 15, 2026**

# Badrinath: The divine tale of Shiva, Vishnu and the sacred himalayan abode

High in the serene Himalayas, where icy winds whisper through ancient mountains and the sound of sacred chants echoes across the valleys, lies Badrinath Temple - one of Hinduism's most revered pilgrimage sites and a spiritual jewel of the famed Char Dham Yatra. Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, Badrinath is not merely a temple; it is a sacred realm steeped in mythology, devotion, penance, and divine mysteries. Yet, beneath the temple's association with Vishnu lies another powerful spiritual thread - the profound connection between Vishnu and Lord Shiva.

The legend of Badrinath is one of divine transformation, cosmic purpose, and the harmonious relationship between two of Hinduism's greatest deities. It is a story that reflects the unity of Shaivism and Vaishnavism and reveals how the Himalayas became the eternal abode of meditation, renunciation, and salvation.

## The Sacred Land Before Vishnu

According to ancient Hindu legends, the region now known as Badrinath originally belonged to Lord Shiva. The majestic Himalayan terrain, filled with snow-clad peaks, caves, rivers, and silence, was considered Shiva's realm of meditation and asceticism. Not far from Badrinath lies Kedarnath Temple, one of the holiest shrines dedicated to Shiva and part of the sacred Jyotirlingas.

The Himalayas have long been described in scriptures as the dwelling place of Shiva and Goddess Parvati. Shiva, the great yogi, preferred isolated mountains and deep meditation away from worldly distractions. Badrinath, with its divine stillness and breathtaking natural beauty, was once one of the regions where Shiva and Parvati resided peacefully.

But destiny had another purpose for this sacred land.

## Vishnu's Search for a Place of Meditation

Ancient legends narrate that Lord Vishnu wished to undertake intense penance and meditation for the welfare of the universe. He searched for a place that was peaceful, spiritually powerful, and untouched by worldly disturbances. His search eventually led him to the Himalayas.

However, the area where Vishnu wished to meditate was already the abode of Shiva and Parvati. Different versions of the legend describe what happened next, but all carry deep spiritual symbolism.

One popular tale says that Vishnu arrived in the form of a crying child. When Shiva and Parvati saw the helpless child near their dwelling, Parvati's maternal instincts awakened immediately. She insisted that the child be cared for and protected. Shiva, who is often portrayed as all-knowing, sensed that the child was no ordinary being but Lord Vishnu himself in disguise.

The divine child continued crying until Shiva and Parvati stepped away briefly to tend to him. When they returned, they found themselves unable to re-enter the abode. Vishnu had claimed the place as his own meditation site.

Understanding the deeper cosmic purpose behind this act, Shiva peacefully accepted Vishnu's presence and moved toward Kedarnath, where he established his sacred abode. Thus, Badrinath became the seat of Vishnu, while Kedarnath remained the eternal realm of Shiva.

The story is not seen as a rivalry between the deities but as a profound symbol of divine cooperation and cosmic balance.

## The Meaning Behind the Legend

The legend of Badrinath carries layers of



philosophical and spiritual meaning. In Hindu thought, Shiva and Vishnu are not opposing forces but complementary manifestations of the Supreme Divine. Shiva represents renunciation, destruction of ego, and transcendental consciousness, while Vishnu symbolizes preservation, compassion, and cosmic order.

The transition of Badrinath from Shiva's abode to Vishnu's meditation site symbolizes the continuity of spiritual energy rather than conflict. It reflects how divine forces work together for the welfare of creation.

Pilgrims visiting both Badrinath and Kedarnath often believe that the journey is spiritually incomplete without paying homage to both Vishnu and Shiva. The two shrines, though dedicated to different deities, are deeply interconnected through mythology and devotion.

## Why the Name 'Badrinath'?

The name Badrinath comes from the Sanskrit word "Badri," referring to wild berry trees, and "Nath," meaning lord. According to legend, while Vishnu meditated in the harsh Himalayan climate, Goddess Lakshmi took the form of a Badri tree to protect him from snow, rain, and cold winds.

Touched by her devotion and sacrifice, Vishnu named the place Badrikashram or Badrinath - the Lord of the Badri forest.

This aspect of the legend highlights themes of love, protection, and divine companionship. Even amid extreme penance and spiritual discipline, compassion and devotion remain central to the spiritual path.

## Nar and Narayan: The Eternal Sages

Badrinath is also associated with the twin sages Nar and Narayan, who are considered incarnations of Vishnu engaged in eternal meditation for the welfare of humanity. The towering mountain peaks near the temple are named after them, adding another layer of sanctity to the region.

Ancient scriptures describe Badrinath as a land where sages, saints, and seekers performed severe austerities to attain liberation. The Alaknanda River flowing beside the temple is regarded as spiritually purifying, and every stone and mountain in the region is

believed to carry divine vibrations.

## Adi Shankaracharya and the Revival of Badrinath

Though the temple's origins are ancient, the shrine is believed to have been revived in the 8th century by Adi Shankaracharya. According to tradition, he discovered the black stone idol of Vishnu in the Alaknanda River and enshrined it in the temple.

Shankaracharya's efforts helped re-establish Badrinath as a major pilgrimage centre and strengthened its role in Hindu spiritual life. Since then, millions of devotees from across India and the world have undertaken the difficult Himalayan journey to seek blessings at the sacred shrine.

## The Spiritual Experience of Badrinath

Even today, pilgrims describe Badrinath not simply as a destination but as a deeply transformative spiritual experience. The towering mountains, icy rivers, and thin Himalayan air create an atmosphere where worldly concerns seem distant and insignificant. The temple's vibrant rituals, ringing bells, sacred hymns, and flickering lamps evoke a sense of timeless devotion. Many devotees believe that prayers offered at Badrinath cleanse the soul and bring one closer to liberation.

At the same time, the nearby presence of Kedarnath reminds pilgrims of Shiva's eternal connection to the region. Together, the two shrines symbolize harmony between devotion and detachment, preservation and transformation, Vishnu and Shiva.

## A Message of Unity

One of the most beautiful aspects of the Badrinath legend is its message of unity within Hindu spirituality. Though different traditions may worship Shiva or Vishnu as supreme, the story of Badrinath shows that the divine ultimately transcends divisions.

Shiva willingly made way for Vishnu's meditation, while Vishnu honoured the sacredness of Shiva's Himalayan realm. Their relationship reflects mutual respect, cosmic purpose, and spiritual interconnectedness.

# History This Week

JUNE 05 - JUNE 11

## JUNE 5

June 5, 1783 - The first sustained flight occurred as a hot-air balloon was launched at Annonay, France, by brothers Joseph and Jacques Montgolfier. Their 33-foot-diameter globe aerostatique ascended about 6,000 feet. In September, they repeated the experiment for King Louis XVI, using a sheep, rooster and duck as the balloon's passengers.

June 5, 1968 - Robert F. Kennedy was shot and mortally wounded while leaving the Hotel Ambassador in Los Angeles. The shooting occurred after a celebration of Kennedy's victory in the California presidential primary. He died at 1:44 a.m., June 6, at age 42, leaving behind his wife Ethel and eleven children, the last one born after his death. President John F. Kennedy had named his brother and campaign manager, Robert Francis Kennedy, to the post of U.S. Attorney General in 1961. Robert served as the president's closest confidant. After the assassination of JFK, Robert remained as Attorney General until 1964, when he resigned to make a successful run for the U.S. Senate from New York. Allied with the plight of the poor and disadvantaged in America, he spoke out against racial discrimination, economic injustice and the Vietnam War. In March of 1968, he had announced his candidacy for the presidency. And with the win in California, appeared headed for the nomination.

Birthdays - Scottish economist and philosopher Adam Smith (1723-1790) was born in Kirkcaldy, Scotland. He wrote *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, published in 1776. The book described the workings of a market economy and established him as one of the most influential figures in the development of modern economic theory.



Birthdays - British economist John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) was born in Cambridge, England. He wrote *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* in 1936, stating his ideas about government responsibility and commitment to maintaining high employment. He claimed that business investors and governments, not consumers, were the source of business cycle shifts.

## JUNE 6



June 6, 1872 - Pioneering feminist Susan B. Anthony was fined for voting in a presidential election at Rochester, New

York. After voting rights had been granted to African American males by the 15th Amendment, she attempted to extend the same rights to women. She led a group of women that voted illegally, to test their status as citizens. She was arrested, tried and sentenced to pay \$100, which she refused. Following her death in 1906 after five decades of tireless work, the Democratic and Republican parties both endorsed women's right to vote. In August of 1920, the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was finally ratified, allowing women to vote.

June 6, 1944 - D-Day, the largest amphibious landing in history, began in the early-morning hours as Allied forces landed in Normandy on the northern coast of France. Operation Overlord took months of planning and involved 1,527,000 soldiers in 47 Allied divisions along with 4,400 ships and landing craft, and 11,000 aircraft. The Germans had about 60 divisions spread along France and the Low Countries. American forces landed on two western beaches, Utah and Omaha, while British and Canadian troops landed farther east on Gold, Juno and Sword beaches. By the end of the day 150,000 Allied soldiers and their accompanying vehicles had landed with 15,000 killed and wounded.

June 6, 1978 - By a vote of almost two to one, California voters approved Proposition 13, an amendment to the state constitution severely limiting property tax rates.

Birthdays - American patriot Nathan Hale (1755-1776) was born in Coventry, Connecticut. During the American Revolution, he volunteered for a dangerous spy mission in Long Island and was captured by the British on the night of September 21, 1776. Brought before British General William Howe, Hale admitted he was an American officer. Howe ordered him to be hanged the following morning. As Hale mounted the gallows he uttered, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

## JUNE 7

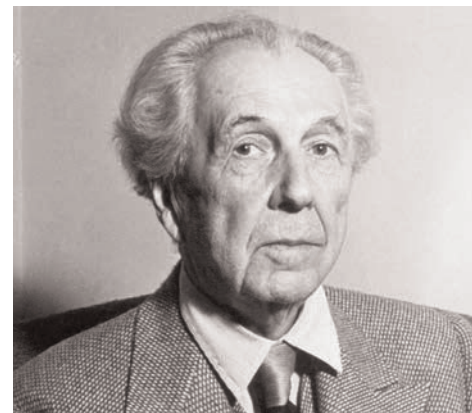
June 7, 1965 - The U.S. Supreme Court struck down a Connecticut law banning contraception. In *Griswold v. Connecticut*, the Supreme Court guaranteed the right to privacy, including freedom from government intrusion into matters of birth control.

Birthdays - French painter Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) was born in Paris. He worked as a stockbroker, then became a painter in middle age. He left Paris and moved to Tahiti where he developed an interest in primitive art. Among his best known paintings; *Vision After the Sermon* (1888), *When Shall We Be Married?* (1892), *Holiday* (1896), and *Two Tahitian Women* (1899). His style using broad, flat tones and bold colors, inspired artists such as Edvard Munch, Henri Matisse, and the young Pablo Picasso.

## JUNE 8

June 8, 1874 - Apache leader Cochise died on the Chiricahua Reservation in southeastern Arizona. After a peace treaty had been broken by the U.S. Army in 1861, he waged war against settlers and soldiers, forcing them to withdraw from southern Arizona. In 1862, he became principal chief of the Apaches. He and 200 followers avoided capture by

hiding in the Dragoon Mountains. In June of 1871, Army General George Crook assumed command in Arizona and managed to win the allegiance of many Apaches. Cochise then surrendered. He disappeared briefly in the spring of 1872, but returned and settled on the reservation where he died.



Birthdays - American architect Frank Lloyd Wright (1867-1959) was born in Richland Center, Wisconsin. He designed about 1,000 structures and is considered the most influential architect of his time. He became the leader of a style known as the Prairie School featuring houses with low-pitched roofs and extended lines that blend into the landscape. He once wrote, "No house should ever be on any hill or on anything. It should be of the hill, belonging to it, so hill and house could live together each the happier for the other."

## JUNE 9

June 9, 1898 - The British signed a 99-year lease for Hong Kong, located on the southeastern coast of China. Hong Kong, consisting of an area measuring 400 square miles, was administered as a British Crown Colony until July 1, 1997, when its sovereignty reverted to the People's Republic of China.

Birthdays - Composer and lyricist Cole Porter (1893-1964) was born in Peru, Indiana. He published his first song *The Bobolink Waltz* at the age of ten. His Broadway career was launched in 1928 when five of his songs were used in the musical play *Let's Do It*. Among his many contributions to the Broadway stage; *Fifty Million Frenchmen*, *The Gay Divorcee*, *Anything Goes*, *Leave It to Me*, *Du Barry Was a Lady*, *Something for the Boys*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Can Can* and *Silk Stockings*.

## JUNE 10

June 10, 1652 - In Massachusetts, silversmith John Hull opened the first mint in America, in defiance of English colonial law. The first coin issued was the *Pine Tree Shilling*, designed by Hull.

June 10, 1942 - In one of the most infamous single acts of World War II in Europe, all 172 men and boys over age 16 in the Czech village of Lidice were shot by Nazis in reprisal for the assassination of SS leader Reinhard Heydrich. The women were deported to Ravensbrück concentration camp where most died. Ninety young children were sent to the concentration camp at Gneisenau, with some later taken to Nazi orphanages if they were German looking. The village was then completely leveled until not a trace remained.

Birthdays - African American actress Hattie McDaniel (1889-1952) was born in Wichita, Kansas. She won an Academy Award in 1940 for her role as 'Mammy' in *Gone with the Wind*.

Birthdays - Judy Garland (1922-1969) was born in Grand Rapids, Minnesota (as Frances Gumm). She is best remembered for her portrayal of Dorothy Gale in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939) and other films including *Meet Me in St. Louis* (1944) and *Easter Parade* (1948). She became one of the most popular concert performers of the 1950s and '60s and broke box-office records in New York City and London. She was found dead of an overdose of sleeping pills in London on June 22, 1969.

## JUNE 11

June 11, 1991 - Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines erupted, spewing ash into the air, visible over 60 miles. The surrounding areas were covered with ash and mud created by rainstorms. Nearby U.S. military bases were also damaged.

June 11, 1994 - After 49 years, the Soviet military occupation of East Germany ended. At one time there had been 337,800 Soviet troops stationed in Germany. Over 300,000 Russians died during World War II in the Battle for Berlin.

Birthdays - German composer Georg Richard Strauss (1864-1949) was born in Munich. His best known works include; *Till Eulenspiegel* (1895), *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (1896) and *Don Quixote* (1898).

Birthdays - American feminist and politician Jeannette Rankin (1880-1973) was born in Missoula, Montana. She was the first woman elected to the U.S. Congress. She was a reformer and a pacifist and was the only member of Congress to vote against a declaration of war against Japan following the attack on Pearl Harbor in December of 1941.

Birthdays - Undersea explorer Jacques Cousteau (1910-1997) was born in Ste-Andre-de-Cubzac, France. In 1943, he helped invent the first underwater breathing apparatus, called the *Aqualung*. He is best known for his Emmy Award winning television series, *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau*, which premiered in the U.S. in 1968.



Birthdays - American football coach Vince Lombardi (1913-1970) was born in Brooklyn, New York. In 1959, he became head coach of the Green Bay Packers, winning five NFL titles and two Super Bowls in nine seasons. He is generally regarded as the greatest coach and the finest motivator in football history. He retired in 1968, but was lured back to coach the Washington Redskins. He contracted cancer after coaching the Redskins for just one season and died September 3, 1970, in Washington, D.C.

# Meghalaya: Exploring the abode of clouds

Hidden in the lush hills of Northeast India, Meghalaya is a destination where nature appears untouched, waterfalls plunge dramatically into misty valleys, clouds drift through mountain villages, and ancient traditions continue to thrive amid breathtaking landscapes. Often called the "Abode of Clouds," Meghalaya is one of India's most enchanting travel destinations, offering a perfect blend of scenic beauty, adventure, culture, and serenity.

Bordered by Bangladesh and surrounded by rolling hills and dense forests, Meghalaya captivates travellers with its emerald-green valleys, crystal-clear rivers, mysterious caves, living root bridges, and vibrant tribal heritage. Whether one seeks adventure, spirituality, photography, or peaceful retreats in nature, Meghalaya offers experiences that remain unforgettable long after the journey ends.

## Shillong: The Scotland of the East

The capital city, Shillong, is often referred to as the "Scotland of the East" because of its rolling hills, cool climate, pine-covered slopes, and colonial charm. Unlike the chaos of many Indian cities, Shillong moves at a gentler pace, where cafés, music, and nature blend harmoniously.

Shillong is known for its lively music culture and is often considered India's rock music capital. Streets lined with cafés and local eateries create a youthful atmosphere, while nearby viewpoints offer sweeping vistas of the surrounding hills.

Among the city's popular attractions is Uiam Lake, a vast man-made reservoir surrounded by forested hills. The calm waters and misty surroundings make it one of Meghalaya's most photographed destinations. Boating, kayaking, and lakeside picnics attract visitors throughout the year.

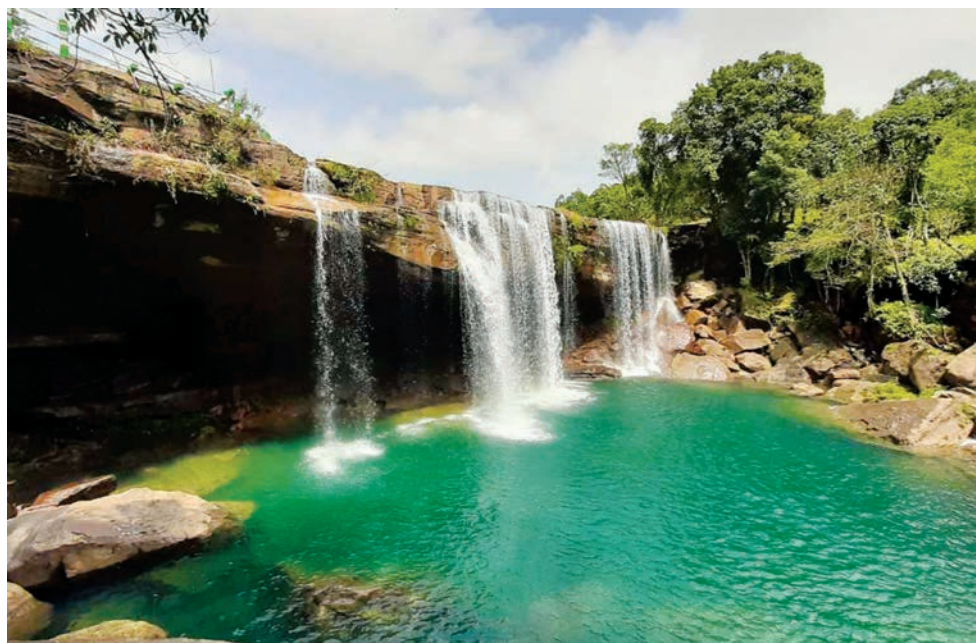
Another major attraction is Shillong Peak, the highest point in the state, offering panoramic views of Shillong city and the distant plains of Bangladesh.

## Cherrapunji: Land of Rain and Waterfalls

No journey to Meghalaya is complete without visiting Cherrapunji, locally known as Sohra. Famous for receiving some of the highest rainfall in the world, Cherrapunji is a magical landscape of dramatic cliffs, mist-covered valleys, caves, and roaring waterfalls.

During the monsoon season, clouds descend so low that entire villages seem wrapped in white mist. Waterfalls gush down from towering cliffs with breathtaking force. Among the most spectacular is Nohkalikai Falls, India's tallest plunge waterfall. The sight of water plunging into a turquoise pool surrounded by green cliffs is unforgettable.

The region is also home to several limestone caves, including Mawmai Cave, where travellers can walk through narrow passages adorned with natural rock formations created over thousands of



years.

## The Living Root Bridges

One of Meghalaya's most extraordinary attractions is its living root bridges, created by the Khasi tribes using the roots of rubber trees. Instead of cutting trees for bridges, villagers guide the roots across streams and rivers over decades, forming strong natural bridges capable of lasting centuries.

The most famous among them is the Double Decker Living Root Bridge in

Nongriat. Reaching the bridge requires descending thousands of stone steps through dense forests and remote villages, but the journey itself becomes a memorable adventure.

These bridges symbolize harmony between humans and nature and reflect the ecological wisdom of Meghalaya's indigenous communities.

## Dawki: The River of Crystal Waters

Near the India-Bangladesh border lies Dawki, famous for the crystal-clear waters

of the Umngot River. During winter, the water becomes so transparent that boats appear to float in the air.

Surrounded by lush green hills and rocky riverbanks, Dawki offers boating experiences unlike anywhere else in India. The peaceful environment and breathtaking clarity of the river have made it one of Meghalaya's biggest tourist attractions in recent years.

Nearby villages also provide insight into the simple lifestyles and traditions of local communities.

## Culture and Tribal Heritage

Meghalaya is home to three major indigenous communities - the Khasi, Garo, and Jaintia tribes - each with its own language, traditions, festivals, and cultural identity. One of the unique aspects of Khasi society is its matrilineal system, where lineage and inheritance pass through women.

Traditional music, dance, and festivals continue to play an important role in everyday life. Festivals such as Wangala, celebrated by the Garo tribe, showcase rhythmic drum performances, colourful attire, and deep spiritual connections to nature and harvest traditions.

Local markets in Meghalaya are vibrant spaces where visitors can experience regional cuisine, handmade crafts, spices, bamboo products, and traditional textiles.

## A Paradise for Adventure Lovers

Meghalaya has emerged as a major destination for adventure tourism. Trekking through forests, exploring caves, camping near waterfalls, river canyoning, mountain biking, and ziplining attract thrill-seekers from across the country.

The state's extensive cave systems are among the longest and deepest in India, making Meghalaya a paradise for cave explorers and researchers.

For nature lovers, birdwatching and eco-tourism opportunities abound in Meghalaya's forests and wildlife sanctuaries.

## Cuisine of Meghalaya

The food of Meghalaya reflects simplicity, freshness, and local traditions. Rice forms the staple diet, accompanied by meat, fish, bamboo shoots, and locally grown herbs.

Popular dishes include Jadoh, a rice and meat preparation of the Khasi community, and Dohneiiong, pork cooked with black sesame seeds. Smoked meats and fermented ingredients are also common in local cuisine.

Traditional food is often cooked using natural ingredients and minimal spices, allowing authentic flavours to stand out.

## Best Time to Visit

Meghalaya can be visited throughout the year, but each season offers a different experience. The monsoon months transform the state into a lush green paradise with powerful waterfalls and dramatic clouds. Winter brings clear skies and ideal conditions for sightseeing and trekking.

# FIFA World Cup 2026: Canada names its team as Brazil arrive in the US



BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

JUNE 5, 2026

**TORONTO (TIP):** With just 5 days to go for the opening game of the FIFA World Cup 2026 between one of three hosts - Mexico - and South Africa, the entire North America is in the grip of soccer fever.

Most talked about issue anywhere in the continent is availability of tickets for the 104-match extravaganza.

After two games on the opening day in Mexico on June 11, the FIFA World Cup will reach out its audiences in Canada (Toronto) and the US where the hosts will take on Paraguay.

Most of the 48 participating nations have already announced their squads for the prestigious event as USA plays its final pre-event send-off game against Germany on June 6 in Chicago.

Meanwhile, the Brazilian team arrived in Newark as it plays its opener against Morocco on June 13 at Rutherford, NJ.

Toronto is getting finishing touches before the home team's opener against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After a formal announcement, it was clear who all 26 players would be part of Canada's roster at the biggest FIFA World Cup ever.

On Friday night, Canada Soccer announced head coach Jesse Marsch's squad for the big tournament, which kicks off on June 11. Canada will play its first match, against Bosnia & Herzegovina in Toronto on June 12.

On the goalkeeping front, Dayne St. Clair and Maxime Crepeau will battle for the starters' spot. They'll be backed up by Owen Goodman.

St. Clair was part of Canada's squad at the last FIFA World Cup, Qatar 2022. Crépeau missed out due to injury.

The deep defense will be headed by captain Alphonso Davies. Since he is still recovering from a hamstring injury, and Marsch has said he may not be ready for the opener on June 12.

Fellow fullbacks Richie Laryea, Alistair Johnston and Niko Sigur are also on the squad. They will be joined by central defenders Moïse Bombito, Derek Cornelius, Luc de Fougerolles, Alfie Jones and Joel Waterman.

In central midfield are vice-captain Stephen Eustáquio, Ismaël Koné, Jonathan Osorio, Nathan Saliba and Mathieu Choinière. They are supported on the flanks by Tajon Buchanan, Ali Ahmed, Jacob



Shaffelburg, Liam Millar and Marcelo Flores.

The forwards are led by the team's two most prolific goal scorers of all time, Jonathan David and Cyle Larin. Supporting them will be Tani Oluwaseyi and Promise David (no relation to Jonathan).

Exactly half (13 of 26 players) were part of Canada's roster at Qatar 2022. One of them, Osorio, is both the oldest (33) and most experienced (89 national-team appearances) Canadian on the 2026 squad.

He is one of just five players (with Crépeau, Larin, Laryea and Waterman) in their 30s. On the flip side, there are six players (de Fougerolles, Flores, Goodman, Koné, Saliba and Sigur) who are 23 or younger.

Team Canada prepared for the tournament with two friendlies at home. It faced Uzbekistan in Edmonton on June 1 and will now go up against the Republic of Ireland in Montreal on June 5.

After the World Cup opener on June 12, Canada heads to Vancouver to face Qatar (June 18) and Switzerland (June 24).

This is Canada's second consecutive appearance in the FIFA World Cup, following a 36-year absence. Though Davies scored Canada's first-ever World Cup goal at Qatar 2022, the team is still seeking a first-ever World Cup point (win or draw).

Since the squad lists for the FIFA World Cup 2026 have been published by FIFA, representing one of the tournament's most exciting with 48 teams and 1,248 players made available to take to the pitch across 104 matches in Canada, Mexico and the United States, this edition represents a watershed moment for the global game, opening the door to more nations, players and their fans than ever before, a release by FIFA said. It further said that the confirmed squad lists underline the scale and enduring appeal of the tournament with 357 players

returning after at least one previous FIFA World Cup squad inclusion. Some 891 players are set to experience the competition for the first time, highlighting both continuity and renewal across the global game.

The generational breadth is equally striking, with over 25 years separating the oldest player (Scotland's Craig Gordon at 43 years and 162 days old) from the youngest (Mexico's Gilberto Mora at 17 years and 240 days old). A total of 22 players under 20 years old and seven players aged 40 or above at the start of the tournament could feature, whilst 22 FIFA World Cup winners are returning to the global stage.

Combined with the return of established stars to football's premier competition, this tournament also brings a new wave of players and nations into the spotlight. Cabo Verde, Curaçao, Jordan and Uzbekistan are set to experience the FIFA World Cup for the first time, highlighting how the expanded format is making the competition more representative of the global game.

One of the standout stories is Uzbekistan's historic first appearance

on the world stage, with rising stars such as Manchester City's Abdulkodir Khusanov making dreams come true back home. Other highlights of the next generation of players include France's Warren Zaïre-Emery, New Zealand's Finn Surman and Morocco's Bilal El Khannouss, among many others. Meanwhile, Argentina's Lionel Messi, Portuguese talisman Cristiano Ronaldo and Mexico's goalkeeping icon Guillermo Ochoa are set for record-breaking sixth FIFA World Cup campaigns.

The confirmed lists reflect the global nature of modern football, with 449 different clubs from 71 countries represented (14 from the AFC region, six from CAF, seven from Concacaf, eight from CONMEBOL, one from the OFC, and 35 from UEFA). The squad lists also highlight contrasting national profiles, ranging from Qatar and Saudi Arabia, whose teams are built almost entirely from domestically based players (25 out of 26 in both cases) to others, such as Cabo Verde, Congo DR, Côte d'Ivoire, Curaçao, Senegal and Uruguay, that draw their entire squads from overseas leagues.

When it comes to those masterminding the squad lists, Ghana's Portuguese tactician Carlos Queiroz is coaching at his fifth consecutive FIFA World Cup, having previously led Portugal in 2010 and Iran in 2014, 2018 and 2022. He is only the second coach to appear at five straight tournaments, after Bora Milutinović (1986-2002).

The confirmed squad lists embody what makes the tournament truly unique - a celebration of excellence, diversity and global unity through football.

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

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# Sunil Gulati, a man of Punjabi descent who got the USA, Canada, and Mexico, the 2026 FIFA World Cup



BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

JUNE 5, 2026

People of Indian descent in the Americas hold their heads high as the world talks about the USA, Canada, and Mexico playing host to the 104-match FIFA World Cup 2026. The reason: Sunil Gulati. In the annals of the 100-plus years of U.S. Soccer Federation history, there is only one person who stands out for his unprecedented contributions that had a greater impact on the growth of soccer than Sunil Gulati.

Belonging to a "refugee" family-his parents shifted from the other side of the border during the 1947 partition and settled in Allahabad-Sunil Gulati and his parents migrated to the USA and made Connecticut their new home.

Sunil Gulati has been a lecturer in international economics and the former three-term president of the US Soccer Federation. Before Gulati's work with the US Soccer Federation and the FIFA Executive Committee, he was an economist with the World Bank. Today, he pursues a full-time teaching course load in economics, where his sports economics class is one of the most popular courses on campus. In 2019, he was inducted into the National Soccer Hall of Fame.

While recognizing his role and contribution to the development of US soccer, former U.S. Soccer President Alan Rothenberg summed it up the best: "Sunil is the single most important person in the development of soccer in this country."

Sunil had a phenomenal rise in US Soccer. He has the distinction of becoming the first person of Indian descent to reach the highest levels, both in United States soccer and in

FIFA, the world body.

He was elected president of the US Soccer Federation in 2006 and re-elected twice. He served as the steward of the Federation for 12 years and presided over a period of unprecedented growth. During his tenure, the U.S. Women's National Team won two World Cups, and the men qualified for five straight. The United States hosted consecutive Women's World Cups and the historic and wildly successful 2016 Copa America Centenario.

Equally significant, his leadership in growing the influence and prestige of U.S. Soccer in the global soccer community had a lasting impact. First elected to serve as a member of the powerful FIFA Executive Committee (now FIFA Council) in 2013, Gulati positioned the United States among the decision-makers within world soccer's governing body.

It was his vision and pioneering work that climaxed when he engineered the effort to establish a united bid with Canada and Mexico to bring the 2026 FIFA World Cup to North America. It was a milestone to bring three nations together to hold the biggest single-sport tournament featuring a record 104 matches. The first-of-its-kind approach proved successful, and the tournament, now set for inauguration in June, will long serve as a huge driver of interest in sport. It comes at a time when Los Angeles is set to hold its third summer Olympic Games in 2028.

At the FIFA level, Gulati has served on the FIFA Confederations Cup Committee, the Strategic Committee, the Youth Competitions Committee, and the FIFA Task Force Football 2014 and currently serves on the FIFA Ticketing Subcommittee. He was also named to the Independent Governance Committee, a group that provides recommendations for governance changes within the FIFA structure.



Sunil Gulati- the man who got the USA, Canada, and Mexico, the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Arguably, his most notable achievements have come in his tireless advocacy of women's soccer in the United States and around the world. Long a champion of the effort to grow the women's game, Gulati led the charge in establishing the National Women's Soccer League, a competition that has eclipsed its predecessors in both longevity and viability and provides an important platform for the development of women's players, coaches, and referees.

With more than four decades of service at various levels of the game, Gulati rose through the ranks in the mid-eighties to become an integral part of the bid and the USA's successful execution of the 1994 FIFA World Cup, which remains the most successful tournament in World Cup history. In his role as Deputy Commissioner of Major League Soccer at its inception in 1996, he was a key architect in player acquisitions, bringing home the top American stars along with impactful foreign signings. He departed in 1999 to become the president of Kraft Soccer Properties, a position he served in until 2011.

Before becoming president of the

Federation, he served as U.S. Soccer's executive vice president from 2000 to 2006. In the last year of that role, he led an overhaul of U.S. Soccer's governance institutions and policies. He has held numerous other positions in U.S. Soccer, including interim general secretary, managing director of national teams, chairman of the International Games Committee, chairman of the National Teams Committee, and chairman of the Technical Committee. He has served on the U.S. Soccer Board of Directors since 1995. Gulati served on the bid committee for the 1994 FIFA World Cup and chaired the U.S. bid efforts for the 2022 World Cup.

He was also the original managing director of U.S. Soccer's Project 2010 and served as chairman of both U.S. Cup '92 and U.S. Cup '93, two events that helped showcase U.S. Soccer's rise and prepare the federation for the upcoming 1994 FIFA World Cup. Additionally, Gulati served on the Board of Directors of the FIFA Women's World Cup USA in 1999 and 2003.

Currently, Gulati remains a member of the Board of Directors for the U.S. Soccer Foundation.

Gulati graduated Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Bucknell University and earned his M.A. and M.Phil. in economics at Columbia University. He served on the Columbia economics faculty from 1986 to 1990 before joining the World Bank through its Young Professionals Program in 1991 and serving as a country economist for the emerging country of Moldova. He is currently a Michael K. Dakolias Senior Lecturer at Columbia.

Gulati, 66, and his wife Marcela have one son, Emilio, and one daughter, Sofia. They live in New York City. He was enshrined during the 2019 induction ceremony at the National Soccer Hall of Fame, located at Toyota Stadium in Frisco, Texas.

## Imagine a world of sports without a whistle

BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

This handheld musical instrument, weighing a few grams, has the power to decide the best. One firm blow with the referee pointing towards the dreaded spot in an equally well-contested encounter between two of the best teams can be ruined, leading to violent clashes and even snapping of political relations between the two otherwise friendly nations. This is the power of a whistle. Though the decision of the referee is now challengeable, as the impacted team can seek a video review of events leading to the award of

a penalty kick, it is the whistle that determines the progress of the remainder of the game.

Even in normal life, the whistle plays not only as an instrument of entertainment but also facilitates the removal of irritants. A cop using his whistle to clear a traffic jam or a PT instructor using a whistle to conduct a parade are the normal procedures supporting the use of a whistle for restoring or maintaining order in normal life.

Change, they say, is the only permanent thing.

Evolution is a continuous process. It

brings with it changes that minimize the irritants and make games free, fair, and spectator-friendly. Though the basics of soccer have been the least impacted by the changes in rules, playing surface, playing equipment, playing kit, or other paraphernalia, it continues to be a common man's sport, easy to understand, follow, and enjoy. The only interruption, if at all, is the blowing of a whistle to indicate an infringement or some violation of rules by one or more players. Again, it is the whistle that fixes the responsibility.



Satinder Sharma with golden whistle.

Continued on Page 42

Continued from Page 41

Let it be a game of soccer, hockey, basketball, water polo, volleyball, or any other team sport; a whistle plays a crucial role in adjudicating the contest between the two teams. It is why the international sports federations have stringent rules in deciding referees for international contests, including World Cups, Olympic Games, continental games, and other such mega events.

2026, like any other year, has many major sporting events that will be the cynosure of all eyes. The FIFA World Cup in June and July, the FIH World Cups for men and women, the Commonwealth Games, and the Asian Games are some of the prime events that will draw world focus. And all these major sporting events will witness extensive use of whistles. After all, these tiny, modernized, and effective musical instruments come packed with powers that rule books vest in referees and umpires.

Slovenian water polo referee Boris, a highly respected name in water sports, says, "We play water polo for spectators. Spectators demand a fast, clean, intelligent game and understandable rules. Nobody wants static and physical games. So, these were and still are key goals which we want to achieve with the new rules. "It was a big change, and everybody needs time to adapt, understand, and follow the new rules, including referees. Until now, a great job has been done with explanations, instructions, and the progress of those rules. I strongly believe that it was a step forward to speed up the game, to get more actions, more goals, and especially to ensure that the movement of the players is under maximum

protection. "In all team sports, protecting the movement of an attacker is a fundamental rule. I would like to mention and congratulate TWPC for the use of modern techniques like VAR and referees' review of the game. All those elements give a full picture of the success of the new rules. Of course, the process is still not over. Some rules need more changes or explanations. But we are on the right path, and our game has become faster and less physical," he said.

I vividly remember the 2006 FIFA World Cup final, for which I was fortunate to get a ticket to watch Italy beat France in a penalty shootout to wrest the title. It is a different thing that Italy failed to qualify for this year's FIFA World Cup. Soccer fans remember this final, like all past and future finals, for some of its unique features. On July 9, 2006, before a sardine-packed Olympia Stadion in Berlin, with supporters of both Italy and France in full flow, the stands nearly burst when the French captain Zinedine Zidane scored an early "Panenka" penalty (7) before being sent off (110) for head-butting Italy's Marco Materazzi (who scored the equalizer in the 19') in his final career match.

Some romance of whistling was witnessed at crucial and exciting moments of the game. After a 1-1 deadlock in normal time and extra time, Italy defeated France 5-3 in the penalty shootout. Italy's victory marked its fourth World Cup title, its first since 1982.

In the second half of extra time, Zinedine Zidane head-butted Marco Materazzi in the chest. Referee Horacio Elizondo of Argentina sent Zidane off after consulting

the fourth official, a defining moment in his final-ever professional game.

In the penalty shootout, Italy scored from all five of its penalties, while France's David Trezeguet missed his shot after it hit the crossbar. Italy's Andrea Pirlo was named Man of the Match, while Zinedine Zidane was awarded the Golden Ball as the best player of the tournament.

How competitive the game of soccer can be is imagined from the story of the 2006 FIFA World Cup champion Italy, which was relegated to 26th position in the 2010 edition and moved up to 22nd position in 2014 and has since. They failed to qualify for the World Cup finals in 2018, 2022, and 2026.

FIFA referees primarily use the Molten Valkeen whistle, which is specially designed for elite-level soccer and has been used at the FIFA World Cup since 2010. It is known for its high-pitched, penetrating sound (125 dB) that can be heard over loud crowds, often featuring a specific finger-flip grip. Other popular choices among top officials include the Acme Tornado and Fox 40.

Other whistles used by FIFA referees include the Molten Valkeen, known as the "standard" for elite soccer. This Japanese-designed whistle produces a unique, four-octave sound (3.67 kHz and 4.15 kHz) designed to be heard even in chaotic, noisy stadiums. Acme Tornado 2000: A popular, very loud (122 dB) whistle used in international matches and the Premier League; and the Fox 40 Sonik Blast: another high-pitched, loud, pealeless option designed to cut through crowd noise.

These professional-grade whistles are

"pealeless," meaning they do not contain a small cork ball, ensuring the sound remains consistent and cannot be "choked" even when wet. The other day, a senior and respected hockey umpire, Satinder Sharma, told me that the International Hockey Federation (FIH) gives its international umpires Fox 40 Sonik whistles. For uniformity, no other whistles are allowed by the FIH. After an umpire has done 100 international games in hockey, he or she is awarded a "golden whistle." Satinder Sharma has been a recipient of the Golden Whistle and has the distinction of officiating in both the World Cups and Olympic Games. Since he has now retired from umpiring, he is the co-chair of the Umpiring Commission of Hockey India.

"Umpiring," he says, needs lots of mental and physical fitness, concentration, and complete knowledge of rules and regulations, besides nerves of steel to keep the tempers cool as games at the highest level are contested by putting everything at stake." Some of the most experienced umpires and referees in soccer, hockey, basketball, volleyball, water polo, and other team sports are held in high esteem, as they represent not the nations but the global community, assigned an important task of adjudicating the fiercest of the fierce contests.

*(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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**By June 15, 2026**

# It was Julia who called me to the 2006 FIFA World Cup



BY  
PRABHJOT SINGH

Memories of the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Germany will remain etched on my mind forever. It was not only my first World Cup but also my last visit to my childhood pen pal, Julia Mariam Willner. It was an emotive meeting as she lay calmly with a big smile on her face. Her mother, Anna, stood by my side as Julia just watched us arrive at her cemetery with flowers in her hands. She did not get up to hug either of us but watched us quietly with tears running down her face. "I managed to get you here" was what his eyes were conveying to me as Anna explained how Julia came back from her last sojourn to Ghana. More about our last meeting is in the piece below, as I took a couple of days off from the busy schedule of the FIFA World Cup 2026.

## Last meeting with Julia

I boarded the train to Kronach with mixed feelings. Once the train started moving, my last trip to Kronach in the late 1990s flashed before me. At that time, Julia, my friend, had insisted that I must visit her mother, Amma Willner. And now I was going to visit Amma, 84, to share her grief as Julia left us forever in 2003.

News of her untimely demise came to me only a few months ago. For the past couple of years, I have not received any mail or even a Christmas card from Julia. Intuition told me that something was wrong before I asked my friend Barjinder Sodhi in Berlin to find the telephone number of her mother in Kronach. In 2002, she had written to me that she was moving back to her mother's home.

When my friend returned the call, he had sad news. Brave Julia fell to the mosquitoes of Ghana. She would never care about hostile terrain or environments in her quest to explore new territory. She travelled to Kashmir as well as Sri Lanka during the insurgencies.

Julia was the second of three children. It was in the early '60s that we started corresponding with each other as pen friends. And in 1986, almost 20 years later, we were face to face with each other. Julia

married Dr Grasberger, a financial wizard, who used to advise sick industrial units.

Julia, carrying both her children—daughter Ute and son Tilo—had come to receive Jaspal Bhatti and me at Cologne railway station and escorted us to her beautiful bungalow in Freshen, a suburb. But before we could take our baggage out, she drove us to a nearby hotel. The reason: she wanted us to be comfortable.

I was pleasantly surprised the next morning when a waiter, without any order, brought me a cup of tea with sugar and milk. On inquiry, he said that Julia had instructed him to do so. What a sharp memory she had, as more than 10 years ago, I had once written to her that I was fond of bed tea with sugar and milk. In 1997, when my entire family visited her, she had displayed in her living room a drawing made by me in 1969. We were amazed when she showed us the entire correspondence she had with me. It was neatly piled and kept in a box.

Without taking a break from her work, she would take us sightseeing. I vividly remember that in 1986 she drove us to the then-German capital, Bonn, at midnight. After dropping us back at our hotel at three in the morning, she turned up for work at six. Between 1986 and 1998, Julia visited India several times. Besides being a trained gymnastics teacher, she was an excellent photographer. During one of her trips to India, she lost her camera and a bag while she was on her way to Chandigarh from Srinagar on a bus. She was upset not over the loss of the camera but the films she had exposed in the valley. Every time she went back from India, she organized an exhibition of photographs depicting the diverse and rich Indian heritage and culture.

Whenever she would come to India, she would sit beside me on the front seat in the car and tell my wife, Vinky, that she enjoyed a priority because she had known me longer. She was always smiling and would laugh loudly even at the slightest provocation. Since she was fond of smoking strong cigars, she would normally walk out, sit on the railing of the park opposite our house, puff away, and then come back. One room remained reserved for her as she would leave some of her belongings behind every time she visited us. During one of her visits, she joined us for New Year's Eve celebrations at the



Julia Mariam Willner.

Chandigarh Press Club, and on another occasion, she accompanied us to the wedding of my brother-in-law in Ludhiana.

When my family visited her at her Hollfeld studio near Bayreuth in 1997, she made sure that we all were "very comfortable." She organized a special dinner in our honor by calling some guests. She made sure that we were taken to all major tourist attractions in the area. At that time, Julia was a broken woman. She had separated from her husband.

Though she was extremely attached to her children, she did not have enough money to pay for their education and care. It was perhaps the only reason she never sought their custody. Instead, she would visit them in their boarding houses. On one such occasion, I accompanied her to a boarding house where Tilo was training as a horse rider.

After a few years of lonely life in Hollfeld, she returned to her mother's home, the place where she was born and spent her childhood with her elder sister, Jutta, and younger brother, Toni. Her father, a soldier, died when she was young. Her mother, a schoolteacher, had initially worked in a post office during World War II. It was during her stint there that she learned English, as she had to interact with American soldiers.

During my last visit to Kronach, Amma told me several stories of the hardships Germans suffered because of the war. At times, she recalled how she and her family would survive on a dry loaf of bread for several days.

While on the train, I was trying to imagine how lonely Amma would be and how she would have taken the death of her "brave" daughter. Amma, looking fit and agile, was at the railway station to receive me. She drove me home, saying that we should have food first before visiting the

cemetery. In the same cemetery, her husband had been buried.

It was on the dining table that Amma told me the story of Julia's last journey. After putting up an exhibition of her photographs at the annual craft festival of Kronach in December 2002, Julia left for Ghana without even telling her mother. Amma thought she had gone to Munich to meet her boyfriend till she received a letter from Ghana in which Julia had asked her to receive her at the railway station some days later.

"I went to pick her up. But she did not come out. So, I went inside the station and found her lying on the platform, unconscious. She was running high temperature. I got her admitted to a hospital. Doctors told me that it was a bad case of malaria and the chances of her survival were slim. I informed her children and her ex-husband. She remained in the hospital for three weeks before she gave up the fight. Unfortunately, after her return from Ghana, she could not speak even a word. Both Ute and Tilo wanted me to inform you about her death, but I did not have your address.

"She had mentioned somewhere that after her death, she should be cremated. So, we cremated her and then raised this burial. In one of her bags, I found a picture on the back of which she had written that 'my camera, bag and purse have been stolen. I am hungry and very sick.' This was written almost a week before her return from Ghana. Why couldn't she return immediately? I still cannot understand." Some of the photographs taken by Julia now adorn the walls of Amma's house. "This is all that is left of her," Amma said sobbingly.

After the food, she took me to the cemetery. Julia, who always took pride in taking me around in Germany, was no longer there to greet me with her ever-smiling face or her loud laughter. She lay there, quiet, unlike the Julia I knew.

And when we walked into the old town, there was a festival of traditional crafts. Though the town looked the same, something was missing. Last time it was Julia who had taken me around and explained every exhibit there. The crowded streets of this historical town now seemed deserted and lifeless.

Everything looked different as Amma tried to put up a brave face.

# Shreyas Iyer to replace Suryakumar Yadav as India's T20I captain

NEW DELHI (TIP), JUNE 5, 2026

Shreyas Iyer is set to replace Suryakumar Yadav as India's T20I captain, and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is set for his maiden call-up, as the national selectors look ahead to the Los Angeles Olympics in 2028 and the next T20 World Cup in Australia and New Zealand the same year.

The T20I squad will be announced on Saturday for the upcoming tour of Ireland and England, India's first T20I assignment since Suryakumar led them

to the T20 World Cup tile in March.

Suryakumar, 35, is likely to be dropped from the squad altogether. The debate around his position arose following a lukewarm 2026 T20 World Cup, where he scored 242 runs in nine innings at a strike rate of 136.72, and a poor IPL 2026 where he recorded only 270 runs in 13 innings at an average of 20.76 and a strike rate of 147.54.

His successor Shreyas is 31 but has not played a T20I since December 2023 due to India's inability to find a place for him due to squad combinations,

with Suryakumar and Tilak Varma occupying middle-order positions. Shreyas was most recently called up to the T20I squad as an injury replacement during the home series against New Zealand in January this year, but did not play a game because India preferred to pick the players who were going to play in the T20 World Cup that followed.

Shreyas, however, has proven captaincy credentials, having led Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to the IPL title in 2024 and led Delhi Capitals (DC) and Punjab Kings

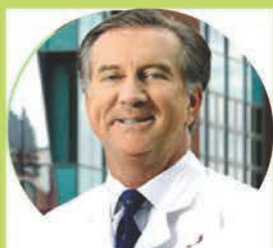
(PBKS) to the final in 2020 and 2025, respectively. He scored 604 runs at a strike rate of 175.07 in IPL 2025 and 498 runs at a strike rate of 168.81 in IPL 2026. It is the second successive year in which India's selectors are making such a decision. In 2025, Rohit Sharma had captained India to the Champions Trophy title in March, but the selectors replaced him as ODI captain before India's next series in Australia in October. Rohit, however, continued to be part of the ODI squad.



## An Eye Institute in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh combating avoidable blindness in children.

On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MD. I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautifully facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctos, nurses, and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion.

Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



New Goutami Institute to be constructed 2024



In 2018 Prasanth, Sushanth and Nisanth were diagnosed and treated and Prematurity Retinopathy. An illness in premature babies which can cause blindness.

Luckily through GEMROP an initiative funded by EFA to screen premature babies throughout hospitals in India, the triplets were able to receive an expensive surgery free of charge. The boys are now the age of 4 with perfect vision.

**3.5 + million served**  
**325,000 + vision restoring surgeries**  
**30,000 + surgeries on children**

### Services include :

- Treating disease and vision problems
- Performing free cataract surgeries
- Distributing glasses and visual aids
- Conducting community research
- Providing education to physicians and the public

## Join our Vision. Give the gift of sight today.

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