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US-Canada trade war heats up as Trump signs memorandum to exclude Canadian products from federal procurement

THE PROCUREMENT EXCLUSION MARKS THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF PUNITIVE ECONOMIC MEASURES TAKEN BY WASHINGTON AGAINST OTTAWA.



US President Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Carney have adopted rigid postures, and the trade war between their two countries has intensified.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
WASHINGTON, DC (TIP)

The trade dispute between the United States and Canada continues to intensify after US President Donald Trump signed a Presidential Memorandum directing his administration to identify and take steps to remove Canadian-origin goods from the US federal civil procurement system.

The White House said the move was in response to what it described as Canada's measures that have denied US firms equal access to Canadian federal and provincial procurement markets.

The memorandum directs the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the US Trade Representative, in coordination with the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council, to identify and take steps toward removing or otherwise making

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Freezing Trinamool Congress name, symbol CEC's 'birthday gift' to PM Modi: Congress

VOTE CHORI, GOVERNMENT CHORI, NOW PARTY CHORI': RAHUL GANDHI SLAMS ELECTION COMMISSION ORDER ON TMC



Vote chori, government chori, now party chori': Rahul Gandhi slams Election Commission order on TMC

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026
NEW DELHI (TIP)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday, September 18, slammed the Election Commission over its decision of directing rival Trinamool Congress factions not to use the party name and the "flowers and grass symbol" during the West Bengal bypolls, saying the poll body's constitutional responsibility is to protect the mandate but instead, it is

CONTD ON PAGE 40

India flags bilateral fallout, vows to protect trade interests as US passes Russia, Iran sanction bill

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
NEW DELHI (TIP)

Hours after the US Congress passed the Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act, India on Thursday, September 17, said it had in recent months flagged the potential implications for bilateral ties to the United States and added that it would take all necessary steps to safeguard its trade and economic interests.

"This issue has been discussed at high levels in recent months with various US interlocutors," the Government said,



Russia-Iran sanctions Bill to hit ties, India warns the US

adding that India had "very clearly articulated" the potential implications not only for the bilateral relationship but

CONTD ON PAGE 40



The Indian Panorama Chief Editor Honored with National Pluralism Award

Prof. Indrajit Singh Saluja is receiving the National Pluralism Award from Dr. Akbar Ahmed, a former Pakistan diplomat. Mike Ghouse, the founder and president of the Center for Pluralism is seen on the extreme right. Also seen in the picture, on the extreme left is Ashok Arora, a senior lawyer, and a former Secretary of the Supreme Court of India Bar Association.

FULL STORY ON PAGE 7



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COMMENT**FRAUD IS FRAUD: LET THE
LAW APPLY EQUALLY****BY INDRAJIT
SALUJA**

America rightly takes pride in calling itself a nation of laws. But that description carries an obligation greater than writing laws or prosecuting spectacular cases. The real test is whether the law applies with consistency-whether the same basic standard of accountability follows wrongdoing regardless of who committed it, what profession the offender belongs to, or which government program was cheated.

The latest campaign against pandemic-era fraud raises precisely that question.

The Small Business Administration recently announced the suspension of approximately 870,000 borrowers connected with an estimated \$39 billion in suspected fraudulent activity involving the Paycheck Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Those suspended are barred from future SBA loans and certain other SBA programs.

Protecting public money from fraud is a legitimate responsibility of government. Money stolen from the Treasury is not some abstract government loss. It is money belonging to taxpayers.

But an important principle follows.

Fraud should not become more or less serious because of the government program from which the money was taken.

If someone deliberately cheated a COVID relief program, the government has every right-after appropriate investigation and due process-to recover the money and impose penalties authorized by law. But why should that principle stop with pandemic programs?

Consider Medicare and Medicaid.

Every year the government investigates doctors, medical businesses and other providers accused of billing federal health programs for services that were unnecessary, improperly billed or never provided. The scale is substantial. In its 2026 nationwide health-care fraud enforcement action, the Justice Department announced charges against 455 defendants, including 90 doctors and other licensed medical professionals, involving more than \$6.5 billion in alleged false claims.

Some health-care fraud cases are criminal prosecutions. Others are civil cases under the False Claims Act. Some end in settlements, repayment, exclusion from federal programs or administrative sanctions. These distinctions matter: an allegation is not a conviction, and a civil settlement does not necessarily establish a criminal offense.

But once deliberate fraud has been proved, another question arises.

Should writing a large check be enough?

Financial recovery is important. Taxpayers should get back every dollar that can lawfully be recovered. Yet restitution and punishment are different concepts. Returning improperly obtained money-or paying additional civil penalties-should not automatically erase the question of professional responsibility.

This becomes especially serious when the offender occupies a position of trust.

A physician is entrusted not merely with access to public funds but with human life. Medicare and Medicaid exist largely to serve the elderly, the poor, people with disabilities and others requiring medical assistance. Knowingly exploiting those programs therefore injures both the Treasury and public trust.

Where intentional criminal fraud is proved, professional licensing authorities should examine whether the conduct is compatible with continued licensure. Federal authorities should similarly determine, under clear and consistently applied standards, whether the offender should remain eligible for federally financed programs, contracts, loans or other benefits.

But this principle cannot be reserved for physicians either. It should apply wherever comparable misconduct is established.

Contractors who deliberately cheat federal agencies, businesses that falsify records to obtain grants, individuals who knowingly steal government benefits, financial operators who defraud federally backed programs-all should face rules based upon the nature and seriousness of the wrongdoing rather than the political prominence of the program involved.

There must, however, be an equally important safeguard: due process.

Suspicion is not guilt. An administrative flag is not a criminal conviction. Government possesses enormous power, and denying a person or business access to federal programs can have severe consequences. There must therefore be a meaningful opportunity to challenge erroneous findings. Otherwise, in our eagerness to punish fraud, we risk punishing people who did not commit it.

Consistency must operate in both directions: equal accountability for the guilty and equal protection for the innocent.

Then there is another subject that often puzzles ordinary Americans-bankruptcy.

How, people sometimes ask, can somebody declare bankruptcy and later appear wealthy?

The answer is that bankruptcy does not necessarily mean that a person has surrendered every possession and become penniless. American bankruptcy law permits different forms of relief. Some proceedings liquidate eligible assets; others allow individuals or businesses to reorganize debts. Certain property may be exempt, secured interests may survive, and some debts cannot be discharged at all.

Bankruptcy is therefore not itself wrongdoing. It is a lawful mechanism intended, among other purposes, to permit an honest debtor a fresh start. The troubling issue is abuse of bankruptcy.

If assets are deliberately hidden, ownership is deceptively transferred, false statements are made or fraud is otherwise used to escape legitimate obligations, that is entirely different from honestly invoking bankruptcy protection. The law already provides mechanisms for challenging discharge in circumstances involving concealment, false statements and certain fraudulent conduct.

Again, we return to the same principle.

America does not need one morality for COVID fraud, another for Medicare fraud, another for contracting fraud and yet

another for financial fraud.

It needs one standard: Public money is public trust.

Anyone seeking government assistance accepts a corresponding responsibility to deal honestly with the government. Anyone entrusted with taxpayer money-recipient, contractor, corporation, professional or public official-should understand that deliberately stealing from the public carries consequences.

Those consequences should be established by law, proportionate to the offense and imposed after due process. They should include recovery of stolen money and, where authorized and warranted, criminal punishment, civil penalties, professional discipline and exclusion from appropriate government programs.

Such a system would accomplish something more important than punishment. It would strengthen deterrence.

The person contemplating fraud should not be calculating whether, if caught, a profitable scheme can simply be settled for a fraction of the gain. The calculation should be much simpler: dishonesty with public money carries lasting consequences.

That principle transcends administrations and political parties.

Presidents change. Attorneys General change. Prosecutorial priorities change. But equality before law cannot be allowed to change with them.

A republic earns confidence not by announcing that it is a nation of laws, but by demonstrating that neither wealth, profession, influence nor status places anyone beyond those laws.

Let us prosecute fraud vigorously. Let us recover the people's money. Let us protect the innocent through due process. And above all, let us apply the principle consistently.

Fraud is fraud. The law should recognize neither privileged fraudsters nor preferred ones. That is not vengeance. That is equality before the law.

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Indo-American Cultural Association Honors the Legacy of Late Natu Patel with Prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award



BY NITIN VYAS
SEPTEMBER 15, 2026
FORDS, NJ (TIP)

The Indo-American Cultural Association of Edison, NJ (IACA), one of the region's oldest and most respected organizations, hosted a memorable memorial evening honoring the extraordinary leadership and selfless service of its former President and Trustee, the Late Natu Patel.

Held at the Royal Albert Palace (Nil Kamal Hall) in Fords, NJ, the solemn yet celebratory event paid tribute to Natu Patel's more than three decades of unwavering commitment to community service by posthumously presenting him with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The grand gathering drew an esteemed crowd from across the tri-state area, including prominent physicians, pharmacists, community organizers, and organizational presidents who gathered to honor a true community pioneer.

The event was led by esteemed IACA Trustee, well-known pharmacist, and community leader Girish Soni alongside Pushpa Patel (wife of the late Chairman Dr. Rasikbhai Patel). The evening was gracefully emceed by Ronak Jani, while Trustee Krishnakant Sangani provided event direction. Seamless backstage technical operations were managed by youth volunteer Aayushman Jani, who oversaw audio and video production. Key organizational leadership, event coordination, and direction were spearheaded by committee leader Nitin Vyas, whose dedicated efforts earned high praise from attendees and committee members alike.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVENING:

CULTURAL & MUSICAL PERFORMANCES:

A spectacular, jubilant dance showcase presented by the acclaimed Sonalee Vyas Dance Company (Sonalee.com).

Moving, heart-touching musical renditions by Azam Ali



Khan and Bina Kadarkhan representing the Kalavant Center for Music & Dance (New York).

TRIBUTES & SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

Inspiring speeches reflecting on Natu Patel's legacy were delivered by prominent physicians Dr. Harish Bhatt, Dr. Mukesh Solanki, and Dr. Manoj Desai; pharmacist Manu Parikh; community leaders Nalin Shah, Nilesh Dasandi, Edison Councilman Patil, AIA Past President Uma Swaminathan, Mahesh Wani (Gandhian Society), Mukund Parikh (Indo-American Council of Senior Citizens of Edison), Rajen Shah (Swajan), Yoga Guru Vijay Trivedi and senior leaders G.K. Patel, Bhagwat Patel, and Ratilal Patel. Potato Patel, Maya Patel

Additional tributes were shared by Bipin Parekh (Gujarat Samaj NJ), Kaushik Vyas (Royal Rice), Manish Parikh (Taxi & Limo Association), Prakash Patel (ICS of Union, NJ), Harish Vyas (Saptak Group), and Mukesh Kashiwala (Dwarkadhish Temple volunteer).

An Appreciation Award was presented to FISANA in memory of Late Natu Patel, accepted on behalf of his



family by wife Mina Patel, Son Dhawal, and Deval Patel, alongside FISANA Secretary Yogesh Trivedi and past FISANA presidents / Committee Members.

COMMUNITY GATHERING:

Attendees enjoyed a specially curated, delicious plant-based dinner designed for vegan food lovers, providing a warm atmosphere for friends, family, and community members to reconnect and share cherished memories.

Through this deeply moving tribute, IACA reaffirmed its mission to honor the visionary leaders who established a lasting foundation for the Indian-American community in New Jersey.

ABOUT INDO-AMERICAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF EDISON, NJ (IACA)

The Indo-American Cultural Association (IACA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving Indian heritage, supporting community welfare, and fostering cultural harmony across the tri-state area.

Attorney General James Secures Over \$9 Million for New York from Abbott Laboratories for Manufacturing Potentially Unsafe Baby Formula

ABBOTT ALLEGEDLY MISLED STATES AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ABOUT THE SAFETY OF ITS BABY FORMULA, LEADING TO MEDICAID AND WIC SPENDING ON POTENTIALLY CONTAMINATED FORMULA

ABBOTT WILL PAY MORE THAN \$384 MILLION TO STATES AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

New York Attorney General Letitia James today announced that baby formula manufacturer Abbott Laboratories (Abbott) will pay more than \$384 million to states and the federal government, including more than \$9.3 million to New York. Attorney General James and a coalition of 39 other attorneys general sued Abbott in 2025, alleging that the

company failed to ensure its formula products were safe. The lawsuit alleged that from January 2018 through December 2022, Abbott failed to maintain proper safety standards in its manufacturing facilities, putting its baby formula products at risk of contamination, while misleading safety inspectors about the quality of its products. During this time, Abbott sold baby formula products that were purchased with public assistance funding from Medicaid and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). As a result, state and federal funds were used to purchase potentially contaminated formula that failed to comply with Medicaid and WIC requirements. Abbott will pay more than \$348 million to the federal government and more than \$35

million to the coalition of states, including more than \$9.3 million to New York.

"Parents should never have to worry about whether the baby formula they buy for their children is contaminated with dangerous bacteria," said Attorney General James. "Abbott prioritized profits over people when it produced and sold baby formula in potentially unsafe conditions. My office will continue to go after anyone who puts families at risk with dangerous products and get justice for New Yorkers."

In their lawsuit, Attorney General James and the coalition alleged that, between January 1, 2018, and December 31, 2022, the products Abbott manufactured at its facilities in Sturgis, Michigan and Casa Grande, Arizona, were at high risk of contamination.



New York State Attorney General Letitia James

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian Diaspora: Religious Practice and Cultural Identity

BY ANGELA ANAND



SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

As winter approaches, many Indian Americans take part in festive, social, and cultural activities that strengthen their sense of community and belonging. These gatherings often bring together religious observance, family tradition, language, food, music, and shared memories, making celebration an important expression of cultural identity.

A recent Pew Research Center study of Asian Americans highlights how closely religion and culture can overlap in the Indian American experience. About 48% of Indian Americans identify as Hindu, but when respondents were also asked whether they feel close to Hinduism because of family background, culture, or ancestry, the share rose to about two-thirds.

This distinction is important: for many Indian Americans, religious practice is not only a matter of belief, but also a way of sustaining cultural connection. Rituals, festivals, and everyday traditions help preserve family history and reinforce a broader sense of Indian identity across generations.

One of my strongest childhood memories is of late-night community theater in India, where religious stories



came to life. These performances often centered on the Ramayan, retelling the lives and values of revered deities through drama, music, and shared participation.

I also remember celebrations such as Janmashtami, where devotion, storytelling, and community gathering came together. These experiences shaped my understanding of religion not only as



worship, but also as a living cultural practice passed down through performance, memory, and collective celebration.

In my culturally diverse family, nearly every relative's home had an altar or prayer room, often one of the household's most meaningful spaces. Morning prayers for wellness, health, and prosperity reflected devotion, family

care, cultural continuity, and daily faith at home. In the diaspora, these practices continue in adapted forms.

More recently, my visits to temples, gurudwaras, and community halls have deepened my understanding of how diaspora practices connect younger generations to their heritage. Our children and grandchildren are growing up among diverse faiths, philosophies, and lifestyles. As a result, they may connect with religious traditions differently than earlier generations. Some may not follow any religion, but this does not necessarily mean they have rejected their heritage. Instead, their connection may take cultural and familial forms, such as: celebrating Diwali with family, learning a grandmother's recipes, joining cultural events, and listening to stories from India. They are equally excited about Thanksgiving, Halloween, and Christmas. These practices and tendencies show that heritage can continue even when religious identity changes.

(Angela Anand is Past President of AAUC, Vice Chair of AAUC Board, President of South Asian Women's Network (SAWN), & Former President of National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA))

New Zealand Sikh community donates \$50,000 to Nepal flood relief

Daljit Singh who represents Central Sikh Association, announced Sikh community's \$50,000 contribution



Members of Central Sikh Association and Nepalese community along with PM Christopher Luxon at the fundraising event.

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026
AUCKLAND (TIP)

New Zealand's Nepalese community, political leaders and community organizations came together in Auckland on Friday night to raise support for families affected by devastating floods in Nepal, with the Sikh community contributing \$50,000 towards relief efforts.

The fundraising event, organized by the New Zealand Nepal Society, drew support from people and organizations across New Zealand, highlighting the strong bonds between the country's communities and their commitment to standing with Nepal during this difficult time.

New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon attended the gathering

and reaffirmed the government's support for Nepal. He said New Zealand was providing \$3.1 million in relief support and confirmed that he had spoken with Nepal's Prime Minister Balen Shah earlier in the day regarding the situation.

Representing the Central Sikh Association, Daljit Singh announced the Sikh community's \$50,000 contribution and expressed solidarity with the people of Nepal.

He offered condolences to families who had lost their loved ones in the floods and said the Sikh community stood with Nepal in its time of grief and recovery.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-origin man declared fugitive in US after defrauding Medicare scheme of USD 93 million

The Department of Health and Human Services says Khadeer Khan Mohammed purportedly submitted, or directed others to submit, claims for laboratory genetic testing ineligible for reimbursement

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

An Indian-origin individual has been declared a fugitive in the US after allegedly defrauding the Medicare health care scheme of USD 93 million by submitting false claims for genetic tests.

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SAID KHADEER KHAN MOHAMMED PURPORTEDLY SUBMITTED, OR DIRECTED OTHERS TO SUBMIT, CLAIMS FOR LABORATORY GENETIC TESTING INELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT.

Over the course of the conspiracy, Mohammed used American Premier to submit approximately USD 93 million in alleged fraudulent Medicare claims, resulting in payments of at least USD 65 million, the Office of the Inspector General, Department of Health and Human Services said.

In a 10-day period in 2023 alone, Medicare paid approximately USD 13 million against suspected fraudulent claims.

According to the Department of Health, Mohammed is believed to be in Hyderabad, India.

It said that from about August 2023 to October 2024, in the Northern District of



According to the Department of Health, Mohammed is believed to be in Hyderabad, India.
Photo for representation

Texas and elsewhere, Mohammed allegedly used physicians' personal identifying information without their knowledge or consent to submit claims for genetic tests for beneficiaries with whom the physicians had no treatment relationship.

"These tests were not ordered by the physicians and were not used in the care of the beneficiaries," the Department of Health said.

Mohan Bhagwat's London remarks come as British Indians increasingly diverge politically

BY SHYAM BHATIA



THE INDIAN-ORIGIN POPULATION HAS BECOME MORE ESTABLISHED AND CONFIDENT, SO ITS POLITICAL CONCERNS INCREASINGLY RESEMBLE THOSE OF THE WIDER ELECTORATE



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat -Photo / ANI file

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
LONDON (TIP)

Mohan Bhagwat, chief of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, was asked in London last week what would happen if British and Indian interests ever diverged.

His answer was revealing. British Hindus, he said, would stand with Britain. "There is no conflict if British Hindus are Acha, Pakka, Sacha Hindus," Bhagwat said at a London event on Sunday. "It is obvious that British Hindus will go with Britain."

He went further. "Your Karma Bhoomi is where your loyalty lies," he said. "From Janam Bhoomi you get your

values, and you implement those values at your Karma Bhoomi. Hindutva never asks you to betray your Karma Bhoomi."

The remark stretches beyond the immediate controversy surrounding Bhagwat's visit. For Britain's Indian-origin population is becoming politically much less predictable than it ever was.

Previous assumptions listed British Indians as broadly a Labour constituency, with the Conservatives making occasional inroads, particularly among more affluent voters. That calculation no longer applies.

Research by the 1928 Institute, a group of Oxford academics studying Britain's Indian community, found that Labour support among British Indians had fallen from 48 per cent at the 2024 General Election to 35 per cent in its subsequent survey. Conservative support stood at 18 per cent, while Reform UK rose from just 4 per cent at the election to 13 per cent. The Greens had also reached 13 per cent, with particularly strong support among younger voters.

The significance lies not simply in Reform's rise. It is that British Indians are fragmenting politically.

Nikita Ved, a co-author of the 1928 Institute report, put it bluntly: "Reform UK's rise is disrupting traditional voting

patterns within the British Indian community."

As economic and social frustrations deepen, she argued, the major parties will face growing pressure to engage with a community "whose political loyalties can no longer be taken for granted".

Striking examples include Savitha Prakash, a first-generation Indian immigrant and NHS doctor who chairs Reform UK's Harrow branch. Prakash, who arrived in Britain from Mysore in 2003, sees a parallel between Nigel Farage and Narendra Modi.

"He's [Modi] one of those people, like Nigel, he walks the talk," she told the Guardian.

Her attraction to Reform is particularly interesting because she is herself an immigrant and supports the party's tougher approach to immigration, rejecting the suggestion that this makes her hostile to other migrants.

"The country decides the amount of net immigration they need to have," she said. "I wouldn't be wanting to have more than the required number of people in more than the required number of places."

Her conclusion?: "We have to put

Britain first."

Yet it would be a mistake to interpret these developments as a simple Hindu or Indian shift to the political right.

The Sikh experience demonstrates why.

Support for Reform among British Sikhs rose from 3 per cent in 2024 to 7 per cent in 2025, while Labour's share fell from 40 per cent to 18 per cent, according to figures cited by the British Sikh Report. Reform has attracted Sikh activists and candidates in several parts of Britain.

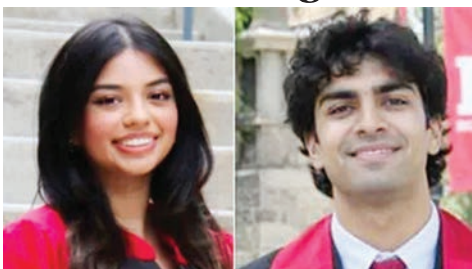
"There's a genuine battle going on between Reform UK and Labour for Sikh voters," said Dabinderjit Singh of the Sikh Federation.

But the relationship between Sikhs and Reform is hardly straightforward. The party's position on the wearing of the kirpan, the ceremonial Sikh dagger, has created serious unease among some of its own Sikh supporters.

Jasvir Singh, founder of the charity City Sikhs, said: "The Sikh community feels slightly adrift when it comes to political support."

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian woman, friend 'laughing on tracks' killed after being struck by train in New York



Malaika Chitre and Navam Kaul were on the roadbed at the Spring Street subway station when they were hit by a southbound No. 4 train.

Photo: Social media

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

An Indian-origin woman and her Nepali-American friend, both 24, were killed after they were struck by a subway train while sitting on the tracks at a station in Lower Manhattan, according to reports.

Malaika Chitre, of Dayton, New Jersey, and Navam Kaul, of Sayreville, New Jersey, were on the roadbed at the Spring Street subway station when they were hit by a southbound No. 4 train at around 3:15 am, the New York Police Department (NYPD) said.

A video recorded by a bystander and widely circulated on social media appeared to show the two friends sitting calmly on the tracks just seconds before the train struck them.

According to sources cited by The New York Post, the train operator told supervisors that Chitre appeared to

be laughing as she pulled Kaul towards her while the two were sitting on the tracks.

Law-enforcement sources said one of the two victims may have either fallen or climbed onto the tracks, prompting the other to go down to help.

The train operator reportedly told supervisors that she saw Chitre and Kaul on the tracks and attempted to use the emergency brake but could not stop the train in time.

Police officers responding to reports of two people needing assistance at the station found both on the tracks after they had been struck. They were pronounced dead at the scene, police said. About 100 passengers were evacuated from the train following the incident, according to the New York Daily News.

Why were the two on the tracks?

The circumstances surrounding why Chitre and Kaul were on the tracks remain under investigation.

Law-enforcement sources told The New York Post that detectives were examining whether the two may have been intoxicated and failed to realize the danger until it was too late.

No suicide notes were found, the sources said, although investigators had not ruled out suicide as a possible motive.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

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MIRACLES 2.0: THE RECKONING - WORLD PREMIERE IN HOLLYWOOD ON OCTOBER 3, 2026

A GLOBAL CINEMATIC JOURNEY OF HUMANITY, JUSTICE, COURAGE & HOPE

**SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
PLACENTIA, CA (TIP)**

Filmmaker, Producer and Director Reema Kapani, Founder of EchoDreams Production USA, proudly announces the **WORLD PREMIERE** of her highly anticipated feature film, *Miracles 2.0: The Reckoning*, taking place on Saturday, October 3, 2026, at 1:00 PM at the PYLUSD Theater, 512 Bradford Avenue, Placentia, California.

This landmark World Premiere will bring together the worlds of cinema, music, culture and humanity, featuring the first-ever public screening of *Miracles 2.0: The Reckoning*, along with a selection of powerful and inspiring music videos created through EchoDreams Production USA.

A FILM WITH A GLOBAL MESSAGE

Miracles 2.0: The Reckoning is a suspenseful and emotionally driven story exploring greed, power, injustice, human resilience and the choices that define us-while carrying a deeper

message of compassion, courage and hope.

Created for audiences across cultures and continents, the film reflects Reema Kapani's vision of using cinema as a universal language that can entertain, inspire, awaken and unite.

BRIDGING HOLLYWOOD, BOLLYWOOD, LOLLYWOOD & NOLLYWOOD

Through EchoDreams Production USA, Reema Kapani continues to build creative bridges between Hollywood, Bollywood, Lollywood and Nollywood, bringing together artists, filmmakers, performers and storytellers from diverse backgrounds.

The World Premiere will be a celebration of this global creative vision, welcoming members of the entertainment industry, media, artists, community leaders, celebrities, cast, crew and audiences.

ONE WORLD. MANY STORIES. ONE HUMANITY.

For Reema Kapani, filmmaking goes beyond entertainment.

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The World Premiere of *Miracles 2.0: The Reckoning* represents another milestone in EchoDreams Production USA's journey to use film, music and the arts as a force for connection, healing, inspiration and positive change.

WORLD PREMIERE DETAILS

MIRACLES 2.0: THE RECKONING - WORLD PREMIERE
October 3, 2026

1:00 PM
PYLUSD Theater
512 Bradford Avenue, Placentia, California



ABOUT REEMA KAPANI & ECHODREAMS PRODUCTION USA

Reema Kapani is a Producer, Director, Writer, humanitarian and creative visionary, and Founder of EchoDreams Production USA.

Her mission is to create meaningful stories, empower artists and use the arts to build bridges across cultures and communities.

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Reema Kapani
Producer o Director o Writer
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House Passes Suozzi-Led Bipartisan Bill to Protect Fraud Victims from Tax Penalties

H.R. 9500 RESTORES THE THEFT LOSS DEDUCTION REMOVED IN THE 2017 TCJA
THE BILL'S PROTECTIONS APPLY RETROACTIVELY



Congressman Tom Suozzi

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)**

The House today passed H.R. 9500, the Tax Relief for Fraud Victims Act, a bipartisan bill co-led by Congressman Tom Suozzi (D-NY) to ensure victims of fraud are not forced to pay taxes on the money scammers stole from them.

This bill would restore the theft loss deduction for victims of scams and fraud, which was removed in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, allowing them to deduct qualifying losses from their taxes. It would also waive the 10% early withdrawal penalty charged to victims under age 60 who are forced to take money from their 401(k) or IRA as part of the fraud scheme. Importantly, the bill provides retroactive relief for victims who fell prey to scams up to five years ago while the deduction was restricted.

"Americans are being scammed at unbelievable rates, and our seniors are especially vulnerable. Right now, victims of fraud and theft are hit twice: first by the scammer, and then by the IRS when they're taxed on the money stolen from them," said Congressman Suozzi. "The Tax Relief for Fraud Victims Act would right this wrong by ensuring victims are not taxed on the money they lost to scams, and provide essential retroactive relief for those who have already been saddled with tens of thousands of dollars in tax penalties on money they no longer have. I'm proud to have led this bipartisan, commonsense bill to restore the theft loss deduction and provide fraud victims the relief they deserve."

Fraud is increasingly costly for Americans. Consumers reported more than \$15 billion in fraud losses to the Federal Trade Commission in 2025, a 25% increase from the year prior. The impact is particularly devastating for older Americans. AARP reports that four in ten older Americans have lost money to fraud, amounting to \$7.7 billion in losses reported by people aged 60 and older in 2025-60% more than the previous year. These numbers are likely underreported, with the FTC estimating that Americans could be losing almost \$200 billion to criminals each year.

The Tax Relief for Fraud Victims Act recognizes this reality and would restore the theft loss deduction, waive the 10% early withdrawal penalty, and provide retroactive relief to ensure no victims of scams are unfairly penalized or taxed on the money stolen from them by scammers.

After Supreme Court Defeat, Trump Signs Two New, Narrower Birthright Citizenship Orders

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)**

President Trump's push to limit birthright citizenship has taken a new shape. On August 6, 2026, roughly five weeks after his original 2025 order was struck down by the Supreme Court, the President signed two new executive orders that go after narrower slices of the same issue rather than reviving the broad approach the Court rejected.

THE SUPREME COURT'S RULING, IN PLAIN TERMS

In *Trump v. Barbara*, decided June 30, 2026, the Court sided against the administration's original order, which had tried to deny citizenship to children born in the U.S. to parents who were undocumented or only temporarily present. The majority grounded its ruling in a plain reading of the Fourteenth Amendment: birth on U.S. soil confers citizenship, with only a narrow set of historical exceptions, and a parent's immigration status at the time of birth does not remove a child from that guarantee.

WHAT EACH NEW ORDER ACTUALLY DOES

Both orders signed August 6 were clearly drafted with that ruling in mind - neither one tries to relitigate the broad question the Court already resolved.

Executive Order 14418, "Continuing to Protect the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship," tells federal agencies to withhold citizenship documentation from certain U.S.-born individuals when neither parent is a citizen and the case fits one of several defined categories. Those categories, as drafted, reach children of alien enemies;

children of qualifying foreign government employees; situations tied to commercial arrangements or fraud aimed at securing citizenship, including certain birth-tourism or surrogacy setups; and people born in U.S. territories or territorial waters where citizenship isn't conferred by federal statute.

Executive Order 14419, "Ending Birth Tourism," takes a different path entirely, working through immigration enforcement rather than citizenship documentation. It hands the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security the authority to act against people who enter the U.S. on a nonimmigrant visa for the purpose of giving birth here - up to and including denying or revoking a visa, denying entry, or removal, along with other measures otherwise permitted by law.

HOW THIS DIFFERS FROM THE ORIGINAL 2025 ORDER

The contrast with 2025 is really a contrast in scope. The original order tried to carve undocumented and temporary-status parents out of the citizenship guarantee wholesale - the exact approach the Court foreclosed when it held that a child born here to such parents is, in the Court's words, "subject to the jurisdiction" of the United States and a citizen at birth under the Fourteenth Amendment. EO 14418 instead limits itself to categories the administration argues sit outside that holding altogether, while EO 14419 leaves citizenship untouched and works the visa and entry angle against birth tourism specifically.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

THE INDIAN PANORAMA CHIEF EDITOR HONORED WITH NATIONAL PLURALISM AWARD

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

The Center for Pluralism held on September 14, 2026, at the Capitol here a special ceremony to honor with National Pluralism Award, Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, Chief Editor of The Indian Panorama, and 18 others, "who have devoted themselves to fostering connections across religious, cultural, and social divides, strengthening the fabric of American Society". They were honored for their contribution in bridge-building, understanding, and community leadership.

Speaking on the occasion, Founder and President of Center for Pluralism, Mike Ghouse said: "Building upon more than three decades of public engagement, interfaith dialogue, and civic leadership, the Center for Pluralism views these awards as more than just an annual recognition program; they are a part of a broader national movement. By celebrating individuals who foster trust, encourage dialogue, and inspire cooperation, the organization aims to elevate pluralism as one of America's defining strengths for generations to come".



A group photograph of the Honorees with their guests.



Mike Ghouse, Founder and President of the Center for Pluralism giving a PowerPoint presentation on the Centre's work

Get to the Point



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From Demonetization to a Cashless India: Who Really Pays the Price?

BY DAVE
MAKKAR



FROM DEMONETIZATION TO UPI-AND NOW A PRICE ON DIGITAL PAYMENTS



"Digital India" should not simply mean: less cash in the hands of ordinary people. It should mean: safer payments, lower costs, stronger consumer protection, greater competition, better financial literacy and genuine financial inclusion.

When India announced demonetization in November 2016, one of the arguments put forward was that a less-cash economy would make transactions more transparent, reduce the role of unaccounted money and accelerate India's transition toward digital payments.

Eight years later, the transformation is undeniable.

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched in 2016, has become the backbone of India's digital-payment revolution. In August 2026 alone, UPI processed approximately 24.5 billion transactions worth ₹29.82 lakh crore, with 752 banks live on the system. What began as a relatively new payment platform has become one of the world's largest real-time payment systems.

But India's digital-payment success story is now entering a new and controversial phase.

Beginning October 15, 2026, a 0.4% Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) will apply to specified person-to-merchant UPI transactions above Rs 2,000. For transactions of ₹75,000 or more, the MDR will be capped at Rs 300. Person-to-person transactions will remain free, and the government says approximately 96% of P2M transactions will remain unaffected.

The government emphasizes that MDR is not a tax charged to consumers. It is a fee within the payment ecosystem that will be distributed among participating banks, payment-service providers and payment-application providers to support infrastructure, cybersecurity, innovation and customer service.

That explanation deserves to be heard.

But it also raises a much larger question:

After spending years encouraging Indians to move from cash to digital payments, who ultimately pays for the digital infrastructure-and who ultimately benefits from it?

UPI: A Remarkable Indian Success Story

There is no question that UPI has transformed the way Indians pay.

A street vendor, taxi driver, small shopkeeper or family member can receive money instantly by scanning a QR code. Consumers do not need to carry cash, and transactions can be recorded electronically.

The scale is extraordinary. UPI processed about 24.5 billion transactions in August 2026 alone. That is roughly 792 million transactions every day.

The government is therefore correct to argue that such a massive system cannot operate without continuous investment in servers, cybersecurity, fraud prevention, customer support and technological development.

The question is not whether UPI costs money to operate.

Of course it does.

The question is who should bear that cost-and how much?

The New 0.4% MDR

Under the new framework, eligible merchant transactions above ₹2,000 will carry a 0.4% MDR.

A Rs 3,000 eligible transaction would therefore generate an MDR of ₹12.

A Rs 50,000 transaction would generate ₹200.

For transactions of ₹75,000 and above, the charge is capped at Rs 300.

The government says the customer will not be charged separately. Banks have been instructed not to allow merchants to pass the MDR directly to customers, and UPI application providers are prohibited from imposing hidden platform charges.

The government also says transactions up to ₹2,000 remain free and that approximately 96% of P2M transactions will remain unaffected.

These protections are important.

But the economic question does not end there.

If a merchant's cost of accepting a payment increases, the merchant still has to absorb that cost somewhere. It may come out of the merchant's margin. It may influence payment preferences. And in competitive markets, businesses may eventually seek to recover higher operating costs through their overall pricing.

That does not mean that consumers will necessarily pay more. It means that the ultimate economic incidence of a merchant fee deserves to be watched rather than assumed away.

WHO WILL RECEIVE THE MONEY?

This is where the UPI story becomes particularly interesting.

The two dominant consumer-facing UPI applications are **PhonePe**, backed by Walmart, and **Google Pay**, owned by Alphabet.

Together, they account for roughly four-fifths of UPI transaction volume, although their combined share has recently fallen below 80% as competitors such as Navi have gained ground.

This concentration matters.

UPI itself is not owned by PhonePe or Google Pay. The underlying payment infrastructure is operated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), and multiple banks and payment applications participate in the ecosystem.

But for millions of Indians, PhonePe and Google Pay are effectively the front door to UPI.

The new MDR framework therefore creates an important economic question: if a large new revenue stream develops around UPI merchant payments, how will that money be divided among banks, payment-service providers, payment aggregators and third-party application providers?

PhonePe's CEO Sameer Nigam has argued that the MDR is necessary to create a sustainable revenue model for the payments industry and reduce dependence on government subsidies. He has also explained that the MDR will be distributed among several participants in the ecosystem, including banks, PSP banks and third-party application providers.

So this is not simply a story about consumers paying a new fee.

It is also a story about **how a public digital-payment infrastructure creates commercial opportunities for a relatively small number of dominant private platforms.**

That deserves public scrutiny without assuming that either the government or these companies are acting improperly.

IS UPI STILL REALLY "FREE"?

The government is correct that consumers are not being directly charged the 0.4% MDR.

But there is an important distinction between "the consumer does not directly pay the fee" and "the transaction has no economic cost."

Businesses incur costs throughout the economy and recover them in different ways.

The same principle applies to digital payments.

If a merchant pays a fee to accept a payment, that fee becomes part of the merchant's cost of doing business. Whether the merchant absorbs it, changes payment preferences or eventually reflects some of the cost in pricing is an empirical question.

That is why the impact of the new MDR should be measured after implementation rather than dismissed in advance.

ASHNEER GROVER RAISES A DIFFERENT QUESTION

Entrepreneur and former BharatPe co-founder Ashneer Grover has criticized the new MDR.

Grover has described the levy as "tax collection" and questioned why merchants should bear another payment charge when India's banking and payment ecosystem is already financially substantial.

He has cited an RBI surplus transfer to the government of ₹2.87 lakh crore, listed bank profits of ₹4.11 lakh crore and an NPCI pre-tax surplus of ₹1,888 crore. He has also questioned whether the government is actually subsidizing UPI and, if so, how much.

Those numbers are part of Grover's argument and should not automatically be treated as a calculation of UPI's actual operating cost or profitability. Different financial periods and entities are involved.

But the question he raises is legitimate:

What exactly is the economic problem that the MDR is intended to solve, and how much revenue does the UPI ecosystem actually need to remain sustainable?

That is a question that deserves transparent answers.

THE COST OF CASH VERSUS THE COST OF DIGITAL PAYMENTS

Grover has also compared the cost of maintaining India's cash infrastructure with the cost of digital payments. He has cited approximately ₹30,500 crore in ATM and cash-logistics costs and argued that wider use of UPI could reduce some of those costs.

This comparison deserves serious examination.

Cash is not free.

Notes have to be printed, transported, counted, stored, insured and replaced. ATMs require installation, maintenance, security and replenishment. Banks maintain cash-handling infrastructure.

Digital payments also are not free.

They require telecommunications networks, servers, cybersecurity, fraud detection, software development, payment processing, customer service and continuous technological investment.

Therefore, the real policy question should not be:

CASH OR DIGITAL?

It should be:

Which payment system provides the greatest security, convenience and financial value to ordinary Indians at the lowest overall social cost?

What About the Poor?

This is where the debate becomes much more important.

India's digital revolution should not be judged only

CONTD FROM PAGE 8

by the number of transactions processed.

It should also be judged by what happens to the poor, financially vulnerable and less financially literate consumer.

A wealthy consumer may barely notice a ₹10 or ₹20 fee.

For a low-income family, repeated small fees can represent real money.

This is one reason the experience of prepaid debit cards in the United States deserves attention.

A prepaid card can provide legitimate convenience and financial access. But "prepaid" does not mean "free."

Depending on the product, consumers may encounter activation fees, monthly maintenance fees, transaction fees, cash-reload fees, ATM withdrawal fees, inactivity fees and other charges.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau specifically advises consumers to examine prepaid-card fee schedules because these products can carry multiple types of charges.

The lesson for India should be simple:

Do not replace one financial system with another without examining the costs imposed on the people least able to absorb them.

WILL INDIA BE FLOODED WITH PREPAID CARDS?

I would not predict that India will automatically be "flooded" with prepaid debit cards because of the new UPI MDR.

But it is a possibility worth watching.

If merchants or consumers begin shifting toward alternative payment instruments as the economics of UPI change, prepaid cards and other electronic-payment products could find a larger market.

The problem arises if financial inclusion becomes another opportunity to sell expensive financial products to people who have the least ability to understand or absorb the fees.

A poor person should not be told:

"You can now have a plastic card just like a wealthy person."

The more important question is:

"How much will the poor actually pay for the privilege of accessing their own money?"

A person may pay to obtain the card, pay to load money onto it, pay to withdraw cash, pay a monthly maintenance fee, and potentially pay transaction or other service fees.

This is particularly important in a country such as India, where millions of consumers are still highly sensitive to small transaction costs.

The danger is not that every prepaid card is inherently abusive. It is that a payment system designed for financially vulnerable consumers can become expensive through a collection of individually small fees. That is precisely why fee transparency and financial literacy matter.

There is also a broader policy question about financial inclusion. Digital payments should not simply replace cash with another system in which consumers repeatedly pay fees to access, load, transfer or withdraw their own money.

Financial inclusion should mean lower-cost access to financial services-not simply more financial products.

WILL DIGITAL PAYMENTS ELIMINATE BLACK MONEY?

Another argument surrounding the transition from cash to digital payments is that electronic transactions will reduce black money.

There is some logic to the argument: properly identified and recorded electronic transactions can create an audit trail that cash transactions do not.

But it would be a mistake to assume that every electronic payment is automatically clean or that every cash transaction represents black money.

Digital payment systems can also be abused for fraud, identity theft, account manipulation and money laundering. Their effectiveness depends on identification, monitoring, reporting, cybersecurity and enforcement.

Therefore:

Digital does not automatically mean legitimate.

The real question is whether the payment system has sufficient safeguards to identify and prevent abuse.

THE IRONY OF A "CASHLESS" REVOLUTION

There is an irony in India's journey.

In 2016, demonetization was presented in part as a way to attack unaccounted wealth and accelerate the digital economy.

India then built one of the world's most successful real-time payment systems.

Millions of Indians adopted UPI because it was fast, convenient and essentially free.

Now, after UPI has reached extraordinary scale, a commercial revenue model is being introduced for specified higher-value merchant transactions.

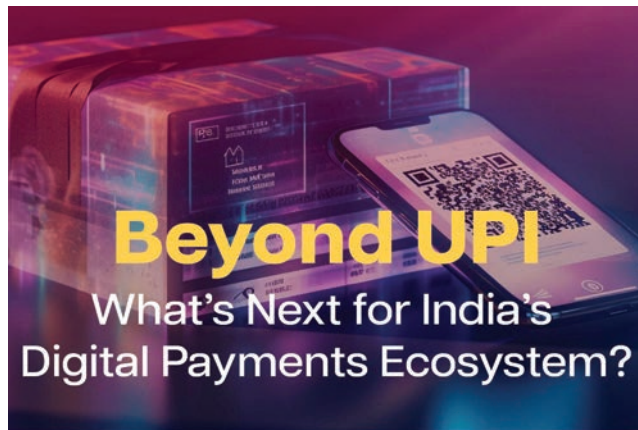
The government says this is necessary to make UPI financially sustainable.

That may prove correct.

But the transition should be accompanied by **maximum transparency.**

Indians deserve to know:

- How much does it actually cost to operate UPI?
- How much does the government spend subsidizing the system?
- How much revenue will the MDR generate?
- How will that revenue be divided?
- How much will banks receive?
- How much will payment-service providers receive?
- How much will third-party application providers receive?
- How will the money be used for cybersecurity and fraud prevention?



Beyond UPI

- Will small merchants actually benefit?
- And will the new revenue model encourage greater competition among UPI applications?

These are reasonable questions in a system handling billions of transactions every month.

PHONEPE, GOOGLE PAY AND THE COMPETITION QUESTION

The dominance of PhonePe and Google Pay makes the competition question especially important.

India created UPI as an interoperable system precisely so that consumers could use different banks and applications without being locked into one proprietary network.

Yet the consumer-facing market has become highly concentrated.

NPCI has maintained a 30% market-share ceiling for individual third-party UPI applications, although implementation has been repeatedly delayed. NPCI has now linked the development of a sustainable revenue model to the ability of smaller domestic applications to compete more effectively.

This creates an interesting policy paradox:

The introduction of MDR is being presented not only as a way to make UPI financially sustainable, but also as a way to help smaller payment companies compete against dominant platforms.

If that happens, it could make India's digital-payment ecosystem more competitive.

But the result should be measured-not assumed.

WHAT SHOULD "DIGITAL INDIA" REALLY MEAN?

India should absolutely embrace digital payments. There is no reason to romanticize cash.

Digital payments can improve convenience, record-keeping, transaction speed and financial transparency. They can also reduce some of the costs associated with handling physical cash.

But "Digital India" should not simply mean:

less cash in the hands of ordinary people.

It should mean:

safer payments, lower costs, stronger consumer protection, greater competition, better financial literacy and genuine financial inclusion.

If a poor worker receives ₹1,000, he or she should not have to pay multiple fees merely to access or spend that money. If a small merchant receives a payment, the cost of accepting that payment should not destroy an already thin margin.

If a digital platform earns revenue from millions of transactions, consumers should know how that revenue is generated and who ultimately pays for it.

And if the government introduces a new payment charge, the public deserves transparent evidence showing why the charge is necessary and how the money will be used.

FROM "CASHLESS INDIA" TO A FAIR DIGITAL INDIA

India's transformation since 2016 is remarkable.

UPI has demonstrated that a country can build digital public infrastructure at extraordinary scale and bring hundreds of millions of people into a modern payment ecosystem.

That achievement should be recognized.

But success creates responsibility.

The next stage of India's digital-payment revolution should not be measured merely by how many transactions are processed or how little cash circulates.

It should be measured by who benefits, who pays and who has the power to set the terms.

The poor and financially vulnerable should not become the easiest source of revenue simply because they have fewer alternatives.

India should not move from a cash economy to a fee economy without asking whether the new system is actually fairer.

And the ultimate test of Digital India should not be whether every Indian carries a smartphone, scans a QR code or owns a plastic card.

The real test should be much simpler:

Does digitalization leave ordinary Indians with more money, more security, more choice and greater financial freedom-or merely give them new ways to pay?

SOURCES AND CURRENT-DATA CHECKS

The key 2026 figures in the draft are supported by NPCI's own statistics: August 2026 UPI volume was 24,508.96 million transactions, worth ₹29,82,355.95 crore, across 752 live banks.

The government's September 15 framework confirms the 0.4% MDR on specified P2M transactions above ₹2,000, the ₹300 cap for transactions of ₹75,000+, continued free P2P payments, zero MDR for qualifying small merchants, and the government's assertion that approximately 96% of P2M transactions remain unaffected.

The current reporting also confirms that PhonePe and Google Pay together account for roughly four-fifths of UPI transaction volume, although their combined share has recently fallen below 80%.

One particularly useful point for the above article is that PhonePe CEO Sameer Nigam has publicly defended the MDR as a way to create a sustainable revenue model and reduce reliance on government subsidies; he also described how MDR revenue would be distributed among different ecosystem participants. He could not state how much subsidy GOI has given to UPI that support Ashneer Grover's contention that GOI must disclose subsidy to UPI.

(Dave Makkar is a prominent New Jersey-based social and political activist who regularly serves as a contributing writer and commentator for The Indian Panorama. He can be reached at davemakkar@yahoo.com)

Common Sense May Yet Win the Day: Tom Suozzi and the Politics of the American Dream

BY GEORGE
ABRAHAM



When Tom Suozzi won the special election for New York's Third Congressional District in 2024, I wrote that he had succeeded by swimming against the current. At that time, the political winds were not necessarily blowing in favor of the Democratic Party, particularly on Long Island. Yet Suozzi understood the pulse of the people and spoke about issues that mattered to them in their daily lives.

Two years later, he is once again facing a difficult election, and the political environment may be even more challenging. President Donald Trump carried this congressional district in the 2024 presidential election. Yet many of the same voters who supported Trump also voted for Tom Suozzi for Congress. That should tell us something.

What does it mean? It simply means that the average voter is not always as ideological as party leaders and political pundits would like us to believe. People are quite capable of voting for a Republican for President and a Democrat for Congress if they believe those people understand their concerns and are willing to work for them. That is precisely where Tom Suozzi appears to have an advantage.

President Trump has already made this congressional race a priority. Vice President J.D. Vance has also campaigned against Suozzi. The Republican Party knows that this is a district they can win, and they are putting considerable effort into defeating him. Yet Suozzi continues to remain competitive.

Why? The answer may be quite simple: common sense. Suozzi has refused to allow himself to be pushed into either extreme of American politics. He has strongly opposed many of Donald Trump's policies. Still, he has made it clear that he does not identify with the Democratic Socialists, who are increasingly trying to influence the Democratic Party's direction.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. Being a Democrat does not mean that one has to accept every policy promoted by the far left. The Democratic Party has always been a broad coalition of working people, minorities, immigrants, labor unions, professionals, small-business owners, and middle-class families. Its strength has traditionally come from that diversity.

There is nothing un-Democratic about believing in capitalism, law and order, secure borders, fiscal responsibility and love of country. In fact, these were once considered basic American values shared by Democrats and Republicans alike.

Suozzi understands that capitalism, despite all its shortcomings, has created enormous opportunities in this country. It has lifted millions of people into the middle class and given immigrants arriving on these shores the opportunity to build a better future through hard work, education and disciplined living. For people like us who came to America many decades ago, the American Dream was not an abstract political slogan. It



Suozzi has already demonstrated that many voters are willing to cross party lines. He has proven that once before. He may do it again.

was real.

We came to a country where we believed that if we worked hard, obeyed the law, educated our children and remained loyal to the country and its system of governance, we would have an opportunity to succeed.

America was never perfect. It is not perfect today either. There have always been injustices, inequalities and failures in the system. But the answer is not to tear down the system that has provided opportunities to millions. The answer is to correct its faults and make it work better for everybody.

That is where the Democratic Socialists and mainstream Democrats often part company. Many Americans simply do not believe that socialism is the answer to the problems facing this country. They believe government has an important role to play. It must protect the poor, provide educational opportunities, ensure access to health care, defend civil rights and prevent powerful interests from exploiting ordinary people.

But that is very different from rejecting capitalism itself. Suozzi seems to understand that distinction very clearly. He also understands another political reality that some Democrats have been reluctant to confront that is concerns over immigration and border security are real.

People who have followed the legal process to come to this country do not necessarily support an open border. Immigrants themselves often understand better than anybody else why laws and orderly immigration procedures are important. At the same time, secure borders should not mean abandoning compassion or treating every immigrant as a criminal.

Why should these two positions be mutually exclusive? We can secure the border and still treat human beings with dignity. We can remove violent criminals while finding sensible solutions for law-abiding immigrants who have worked, paid taxes, and raised families in this country for many years.

Once again, that is common sense. The same applies to crime. People want to feel safe in their neighborhoods. They want to travel on the subway without fear. They want their children to walk home safely. They do not want to hear political explanations when their basic sense of security is threatened.

It is easy for politicians living far away from troubled neighborhoods, often with Security details, to lecture people about ideology. It is much harder for the family actually living with the consequences. Suozzi appears to understand that as well.

Another quality that sets him apart from many politicians today is his willingness to engage in bipartisanship. That word itself has almost become unpopular in Washington. Politicians are often reluctant to work with the other party for fear of criticism from their own political base. Compromise is portrayed as weakness. Cooperation is sometimes treated as betrayal.

But how does democracy function without compromise? Our system of government was designed around negotiation, balance and accommodation. Democrats and Republicans are not enemies. They are political opponents operating within the same constitutional system.

Suozzi has often demonstrated that he is willing to work with Republicans when he believes it benefits his district. That does not make him less of a Democrat. It makes him a legislator.

People in Nassau County and Queens are not sitting at home worrying about ideological purity. They are worrying about property taxes, grocery bills, mortgages, health insurance, tuition costs and whether their children can afford to buy a home near where they grew up.

They want results. That is where the political extremes often lose touch with ordinary people. Both parties would be wise to understand it.

The MAGA movement has its own ideological rigidity, and Democratic Socialists have theirs. But the vast majority of Americans probably live somewhere between those two poles. They may be liberal on one issue and conservative on another. They may support immigration but also want secure borders. They may support social programs but oppose wasteful government spending. They may deeply believe in civil rights while also strongly believing in law enforcement.

They may dislike Donald Trump but still reject socialism.

They should that surprise anybody? That is the America most of us know. It is also the America in which Tom Suozzi

is running for reelection.

The fact that President Trump and Vice President Vance are personally campaigning against him shows how important this race has become. They clearly believe that Republican voters in this district can be persuaded to defeat him. Perhaps they can!

But Suozzi has already demonstrated that many voters are willing to cross party lines. He has proven that once before. He may do it again.

The larger lesson should not be lost on the Democratic Party. Elections are not won only by exciting the people who already agree with us. They are won by persuading people who may disagree with us on some issues but are still willing to listen. That requires moderation. It requires respect for people with different viewpoints. Most of all, it requires common sense.

The Democratic Party should never abandon its historic commitment to working people, minorities, immigrants, civil rights and social justice. But neither should it allow itself to be defined by policies that ordinary Americans consider too far removed from their everyday concerns.

There must still be room in the party for Democrats who believe in capitalism, patriotism, strong national defense, law and order, secure borders and fiscal responsibility.

Tom Suozzi appears determined to occupy that space. And perhaps that is why he continues to survive politically in a district that Donald Trump himself carried. The message from this district could not be clearer.

People are tired of the extremes. They want their government to work. They want safe neighborhoods, affordable living, secure borders, good schools and opportunities for their children. Above all, they still want to believe that if they work hard, play by the rules and remain loyal to this nation and its democratic system, the American Dream is still within their reach. Tom Suozzi seems to understand that better than many politicians today.

That may ultimately be the secret of his success.

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

Beautiful Animals From A Beautiful Place

"BRINGING THE CHEETAH BACK TO INDIA: HOW DIPLOMACY MADE CONSERVATION'S BIG MISSION POSSIBLE" IS A 2026 NON-FICTION BOOK AUTHORED BY SENIOR INDIAN DIPLOMAT PRASHANT AGRAWAL. PUBLISHED BY HACHETTE INDIA, THE BOOK PROVIDES AN EXCLUSIVE, INSIDER ACCOUNT OF THE COMPLEX GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS AND STATECRAFT THAT ENABLED PROJECT CHEETAH-THE WORLD'S FIRST INTERCONTINENTAL TRANSLOCATION OF A LARGE CARNIVORE.

Undoubtedly, the cheetah is a stunningly beautiful animal. Feline supermodels, they can reach speeds of 105 kmph, accelerating from 0 to 95 kmph in just three seconds - performance that would make a Tesla take notice. India lost its last cheetahs at the dawn of independence, but the animal's image and prowess have remained etched in the minds of generations of Indians, particularly Indian diplomats. In the main meeting room of Hyderabad House, where world leaders are received by India's leadership, the dominant painting is of a cheetah. It was painted by George Stubbs and commissioned by Lord Pigot of Patshull, the late-18th-century Governor of Madras in British India.

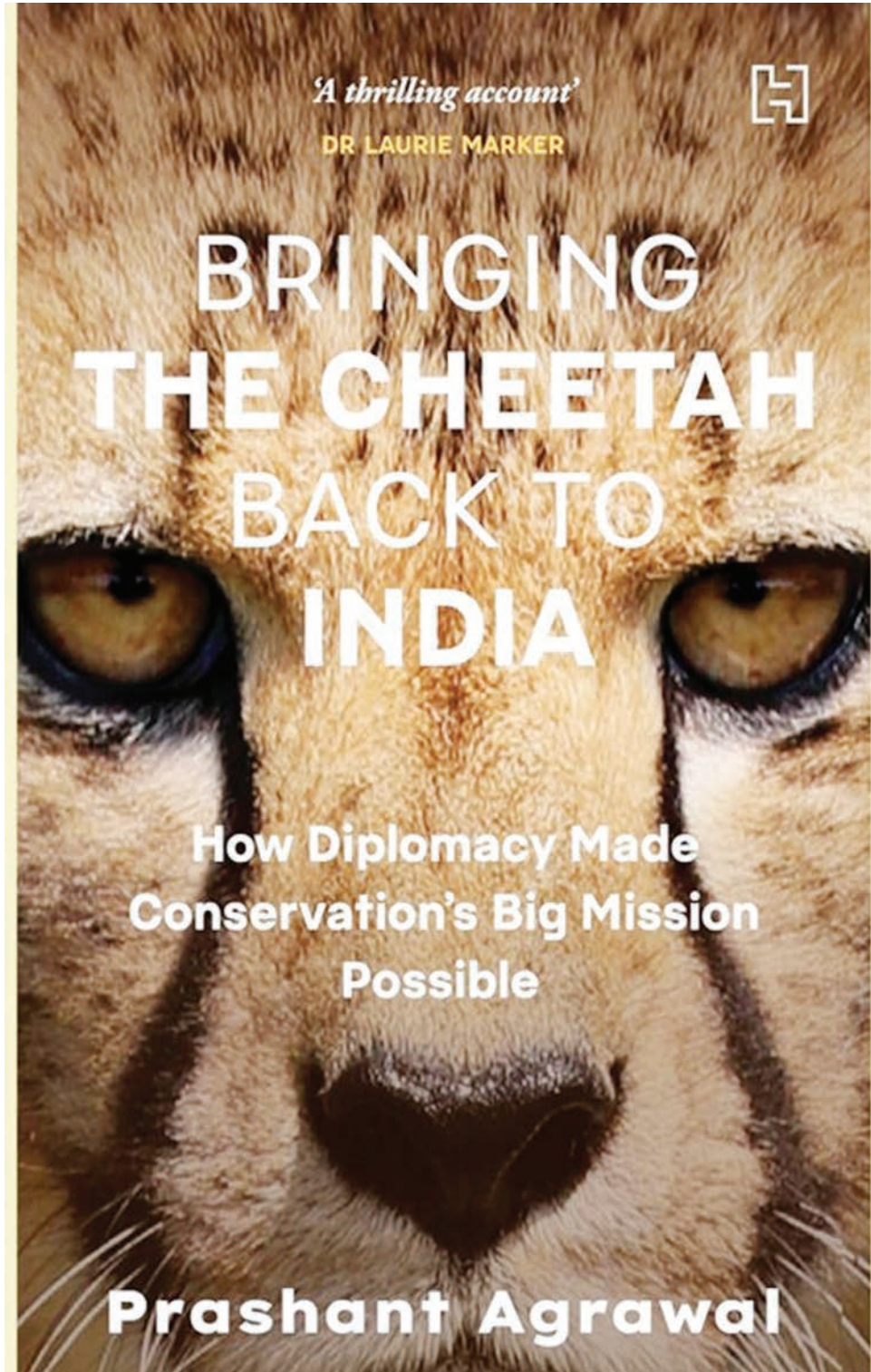
Dr Lawrie Marker, whose Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) played a key role in bringing the cheetah back to India, is based near the town of Otjiwarongo in Namibia. The name means "beautiful place" in the local Herero language. It was from this beautiful place that the cheetahs reintroduced to India eventually came.

Their disappearance had left a void in India's wildlife ecosystem. The translocation project sought to fill it. Before I left for Indonesia in August 2023 to take up my assignment as Ambassador, I had the privilege of calling on Prime Minister Modi. Among the many leads he asked me to pursue with my Indonesian interlocutors was the possibility of relocating some orangutans to an uninhabited island in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. As a diplomat with a forestry background, I immediately understood the logic. Dispersing the orangutans could increase the chances of survival of the species. It was only later, after reading a fast-paced page-turner by my IFS colleague, that I began to wonder whether the cheetah project had been on the Prime Minister's mind when he mentioned the orangutans to me.

My etymological mind was also delighted by what I learnt from the book: the word cheetah derives from *chitraka*, the Sanskrit word for "the spotted one". Interestingly, orangutan is a combination of two Bahasa words - *orang*, meaning people, and *hutan*, meaning forest. Quite literally, "people of the forest".

A DIPLOMATIC THRILLER

Prashant Agrawal's *Bringing the Cheetah Back to India: How Diplomacy Made Conservation's Big Mission Possible* is, in many ways, a thriller. The author tells a true story but manages to build suspense, twists and even a climax towards the end. The title gives away the outcome; we know the cheetahs eventually made it to India, yet the journey is sufficiently uncertain to make the story engrossing. It is an odyssey that unfolds over many years. I am one of



those people with a collection of half-read books. This was not one of them. I finished this roller-coaster ride in continuous reading.

But the book is much more than the story of how cheetahs came to India. It is a masterclass in persistent diplomacy. Agrawal documents how the Ambassador of India in Namibia, supported by a small but dedicated team, was able to turn a national mission into a multinational effort. He shows, almost minute by minute, how the Indian team built the relationships needed to persuade its hosts to participate in a transcontinental conservation project that had never been attempted before. He seems to have recorded almost everything: meetings, phone calls and even the menu served at India House. The only detail I found myself looking

for was the cost of the project, and whether India had to pay Namibia for the cats.

BUILDING A COALITION

One of the most important ingredients of the project's success was the extensive outreach undertaken by the Indian team in Windhoek. A sense of purpose brought together people from remarkably diverse backgrounds and nationalities. They met everyone who could help. And, eventually, help came from almost everywhere. The Namibian government, of course, deserves enormous credit for finally allowing the translocation to happen. But the presence of an institution such as the CCF, and its founder Dr Lawrie Marker, made a huge difference. When Agrawal became involved, there was hardly

BY SANDEEP
CHAKRAVORTY



anyone in India with experience in handling cheetahs. Perhaps, therefore, Agrawal himself became India's foremost cheetah expert. His passion, knowledge and commitment come through almost every episode of the book. As a fellow diplomat, I found another aspect particularly heartwarming. Indian diplomats have been involved in many challenging assignments over the years, but very few write about them. By documenting this story, Agrawal has done a great service to his fraternity.

Right from the beginning, the project was seized of one fundamental problem. Bringing cheetahs to India was India's priority. It was not Namibia's. In fact, India's initial request had been denied. Yet Agrawal skillfully transformed the issue into an important bilateral agenda item and stayed with it through Covid, bureaucratic delays and complacency. He knocked on every door, including that of the President. He appears to have been possessed by the idea. Failure simply was not an acceptable answer. In the process, he built a coalition of the willing - and the unwilling - to bring a coalition of cheetahs to India.

THE POWER OF A WORD

Then came an even more fundamental obstacle. India and Namibia approached wildlife protection from very different philosophical positions. Namibia follows a conservation model that allows what is described as the sustainable consumption of wildlife. India, by contrast, is fundamentally opposed to legal wildlife consumption. This difference delayed the conclusion of the MoU on cheetah translocation. What initially appeared to be a philosophical divide seemed almost impossible to bridge. This is where diplomacy, at its best, becomes less about winning an argument and more about finding languages both sides can live with. Agrawal proposed a simple but ingenious solution. Instead of "sustainable consumption" he suggested "sustainable utilisation". The Namibians could accept it. The Indians could live with it. And the cheetahs could move closer to Kuno. Sometimes diplomacy turns on grand principles. Sometimes it turns on a single word.

THE PROTAGONIST, THE VILLAINS AND THE HEROES

Agrawal is the protagonist of the story. Circumstances are the villains. And the heroines are, of course, the cheetahs. The beauty of the story is that there are very few conventional villains. Everyone is constrained by their own logic. One cannot blame the oil company for refusing to allow the "Queen of the Skies" to take off when payment has not been received. Nor can one blame Namibia's national veterinarian for refusing to sign the NOC when the quarantine period is incomplete. Each person is doing what makes sense from where they sit. Agrawal is different. He sees the whole picture. And he puts together the giant jigsaw puzzle, with its

CONTD FROM PAGE 11

many moving parts. His passion and love for nature keep him going. It comes through at every stage of the story. Anyone else in his place might well have given up. His IIT background clearly helped with meticulous planning. But the book also demonstrates the limits of planning when confronted with bureaucratic obduracy, last-minute changes and the inevitable vacillations of large institutions.

And these came from both sides. If Agrawal had to jump through hoops in Namibia, India threw its own curve balls at him. The last-minute decision to change the airport of arrival from Jaipur to Gwalior could easily have stalled the entire project. Anyone who has handled VIP flights and in this case a VIC, or Very Important Cat, flight knows how much depends on details such as runway length and ground-handling equipment. Fortunately, Gwalior had a runway long enough to accommodate a Boeing 747. The Indian Air Force was also able to provide ground handling at short notice. That in itself was no small feat. Anyone familiar with aircraft operations knows that stairways and lifts do not always reach the required heights.

Then came another problem. The IAF Chinooks that were supposed to transport the cheetahs from Gwalior to Kuno National Park might be too noisy for them. Who would have imagined that modern American Chinooks could be noisier than the veteran Russian Mi-17?

A RACE AGAINST TIME

The moment the cheetahs left the CCF



Cheetah is the fastest running animal that can reach speeds of 105 kmph.

at Otjiwarongo, the project became a race against time. Agrawal and his team knew that the animals could survive the relocation journey for only a limited number of hours. At every stage, something could go wrong. First came the road journey from the CCF in open trucks to Hosea Kutako International Airport in Windhoek. Then the cheetahs had to wait under the blazing sun because airport authorities would not allow personnel onto the tarmac with the animals until the usual formalities had been completed. Every bottleneck threatened to strangle the project. The time taken to board the aircraft at Windhoek. The flight to Gwalior aboard the "Queen of the Skies". The helicopter journey from Gwalior to Kuno. And finally, the moment when the cheetahs would be released. Everything had to work with clockwork precision.

As the book reveals, the team almost went to hell and back. Many things went

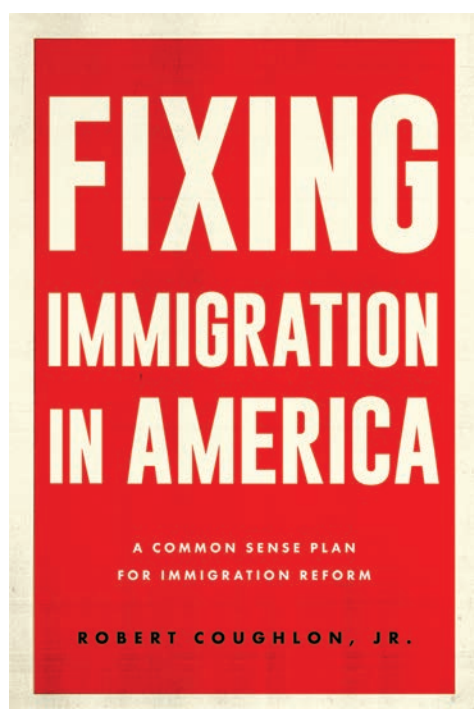
wrong - not because of a lack of planning, but because circumstances have a habit of rubbing plans. Of course, planning helped, but so did thinking on one's feet. And resourcefulness. Whenever necessary, Agrawal drank deep into his well of contacts and knowledge to salvage the situation. At one point, a standoff with the fuel supplier at the airport threatened the flight. Agrawal resorted to a little Indian jugaad. He remembered that the manager of the fuel supply company knew him from Mauritius. Somehow, the right telephone number was obtained at exactly the right moment. Another problem solved. Another narrow escape. There were many more instances of Agrawal having to seize the bull by the horns - including some mock anger, sleight of hand and dissimulation. All, as it turns out, were part of the diplomat's toolbox.

WHEN SCIENCE MEETS ART

What fascinates me most about this story, however, is that every decision ultimately had to come back to one question: What was best for the cheetahs? Should they be sedated or tranquilised during the air journey? Should they be given food? How should their crates be designed? Even the size of the crate mattered. It had to be large enough for the animals to be comfortable, but not so large that they could move around excessively. The reader gradually becomes aware of the extraordinary intricacies involved in transporting and caring for wildlife. It is both science and art. And Agrawal, through this extraordinary sojourn, mastered both. Bringing the Cheetah Back to India is therefore much more than a book about bringing a large carnivore from one country to another. It is a story about persistence. About relationships. About finding common ground where none appears to exist. And, above all, about diplomacy. The beautiful animals from a beautiful place came to a beautiful country that had been waiting for them for 75 years. And somewhere between Namibia and India, through the persistence of one diplomat and the cooperation of many others, a remarkable piece of history was made. For nature lovers, it is a must read. For diplomats, even more so.

(Sandeep Chakravorty is ambassador of India to Indonesia and former Consul General of India, New York)

Veteran Immigration Attorney Offers Blueprint for Fixing America's Broken System



FIXING IMMIGRATION IN AMERICA: A COMMON SENSE PLAN FOR IMMIGRATION REFORM

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**AVAILABLE FROM
HTTPS://WWW.AMAZON.COM/FIXING-IMMIGRATION-AMERICA-COMMON-REFORM/DP/BOHFM1T65P**

One of the most common questions in the immigration debate is: "Why don't they just do it the right way?" Veteran immigration attorney Robert Coughlon, Jr., has a counter-intuitive answer: For many, the law itself makes that virtually impossible. His new book, *Fixing Immigration in America*, details nonpartisan, actionable legislative fixes that would create a legal path for longtime residents while strengthening border security, modernizing enforcement and protecting the U.S. economy.

For millions of longtime undocumented immigrants, "doing it the right way" may not be an option. Immigration attorney Robert Coughlon, Jr., says a central problem with America's immigration system is that the law itself can prevent people who have lived and worked in the United States for decades from obtaining legal status, even when they want to follow the rules.

Coughlon draws on more than 30 years of immigration law experience to propose a different approach: change the law to create an earned legal pathway for longtime residents while strengthening border security, reforming enforcement and immigration courts, and protecting the workforce essential to the nation's economy.

"Millions of long-term immigrant residents are already living in our

communities, doing essential work in agriculture, construction, healthcare and manufacturing," Coughlon said. "Allowing these experienced workers to stay and contribute legally is not just practical, it is an economic necessity for national prosperity."

FIXING IMMIGRATION IN AMERICA OFFERS WORKABLE SOLUTIONS, INCLUDING:

- o **REGISTRY REFORM:** Coughlon proposes updating a largely forgotten legal tool, Section 249, to create an earned path to legal status for peaceful, long-term residents.
- o **INDEPENDENT IMMIGRATION COURTS:** The book argues for moving immigration judges out of Executive Branch control to restore judicial independence and address massive court backlogs.
- o **TARGETED CIVIL LAW ENFORCEMENT:** Coughlon proposes ICE reforms designed to restore agency integrity, establish a strict "50-mile rule" to prevent profiling and keep federal agents focused on serious transnational crime.
- o **MODERNIZED BORDER SECURITY:** The book advocates deploying 100% non-intrusive inspection technology at ports of entry to help prevent drug trafficking.

- o **ECONOMIC REALITIES:** Coughlon examines how legal workforce channels could protect American agriculture, residential construction and national fiscal stability.

Written in clear, understandable language, yet packed with concrete legislative proposals for lawmakers, this book gives everyday Americans a straightforward guide to understanding the immigration crisis and the legislative changes Coughlon believes could help solve it.

Ira Kurzban, past national President and former General Counsel of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, calls the book "an important contribution to the discussion of immigration reform."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert Coughlon, Jr., graduated from the University of Iowa in 1990 with a bachelor's degree in English. In 1993, he graduated with a Juris Doctor degree from Whittier College School of Law. He is a member of the California and Arizona state bars. He has been practicing immigration law for over 30 years, primarily representing immigrants in family-based immigration petitions, naturalization and deportation defense. He lives in Phoenix, Arizona.

For more information, please visit <https://robertcoughlon.com>

Satya Nadella addresses "IDEAS4INDIA": Indian American Tech CEOs Forum hosted by CGI Seattle

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
SEATTLE (TIP)

Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella addressed the "Ideas4India: Indian American Tech CEOs Forum | Unlocking the Tech Dividend" hosted by the Consulate General of India in Seattle.

According to a press release issued by the Consulate General of India, the forum held discussions focusing on strengthening technology cooperation between India and the United States.

The forum, held on September 17 as a follow-up to the India AI Impact Summit 2026, brought together more than 40 Indian-origin technology CEOs and CTOs from the Greater Seattle and Pacific Northwest technology ecosystem.

Nadella, who attended the forum as Guest of Honour, spoke about the growth of Seattle's technology community over the past 35 years and its evolving relationship with India.

He described artificial intelligence as a general-purpose technology and said its benefits would depend on its broad diffusion across countries, communities and sectors, according to the press release.

The interactive forum provided a platform for Indian-origin technology leaders to share ideas on expanding the India-US technology partnership. Discussions covered AI infrastructure, data centers, semiconductor design and manufacturing, quantum research, talent and skilling, aerospace and



Clockwise: Chief Guest Mr. Satya Nadella, Chairman and CEO of Microsoft, was the Guest of Honour. He was welcomed with a bouquet by India's Ambassador to the US, Mr. Vinay Kwatra. A group photograph of the guests. Consul General of India in Seattle, Mr. Prakash Gupta presented a memento to Mr. Nadella. Chief guest Mr. Satya Nadella in his address said he was extremely happy and proud to have watched the Seattle technology community grow over roughly 35 years and was pleased to see it forming and strengthening its relationship with India. He described artificial intelligence as a general-purpose technology whose benefits would depend on its broad diffusion across countries, communities and sectors.

advanced manufacturing.

More than 40 CEOs and CTOs representing companies and organizations, including Microsoft, Amazon, Boeing, OpenAI, Anthropic, Intel, Veeam Software, Helion, Zenoti, Viome Life Sciences and others, participated in the deliberations, the press release said.

Indian Ambassador to the US Vinay

Kwatra also addressed the gathering and welcomed the participants' interest in further strengthening the India-US technology partnership.

Kwatra reaffirmed the Indian government's commitment to ensuring that the country's AI Mission remains anchored in inclusivity, openness, sovereignty, democratized access, safety and trust.

The event also paid tribute to two Indian-origin technology leaders from Seattle who recently passed away -- Samir Bodas, Co-Founder and CEO of Icertis, and S Somasegar, Managing Director of Madrona Venture Group and former Corporate Vice President at Microsoft. The gathering began with a minute's silence in their memory.

Padma Shri Ajay Bhatt, known for his work on USB technology and formerly associated with Intel, also participated in the discussions.

The press release highlighted the growing two-way nature of India-US technology ties, noting that several companies represented at the forum have significant engineering, research and business operations in India.

Microsoft has announced a USD 17.5 billion investment in India between 2026 and 2029, while Amazon has announced plans for a USD 48 billion investment between 2026 and 2030, including expanding AWS data center capacity in Mumbai and Hyderabad.

The Consulate said the "Ideas4India" forum is expected to continue as a platform for deepening India-US technology cooperation, including under the India-US TRUST Initiative, which focuses on connecting innovation ecosystems and advancing collaboration in areas such as AI, quantum technology, semiconductors, space, telecommunications and biotechnology.

(Source: ANI)

Consul General Satish Kumar Sivan Engages with Indian-American Youth in an Interactive Community Session

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
MILPITAS, CA (TIP)

The Association of Indo Americans (AIA) hosted a special interactive session for youth with Hon'ble Satish Kumar Sivan, Consul General of India, San Francisco, on September 16 in Milpitas. The exclusive session brought together middle school, high school, and college students for an open and engaging conversation on culture, identity, community, and opportunities for young Indian Americans.

The session provided a unique platform for youth to share their perspectives, ask questions, and discuss how they navigate and embrace both Indian and American cultures. The conversation explored ways young people can appreciate the richness of Indian traditions while also embracing the diversity, values, and opportunities of life in the United States.

Consul General Sivan encouraged the students to recognize the strengths of both cultures and thoughtfully discussed some of the challenges and gaps that young people may experience while balancing their cultural heritage with their lives in America. The discussion also focused on practical ways to bridge those gaps and help youth develop a broader, more versatile perspective.

Consul General Sivan also shared insights into the role of the Consulate General of India, San Francisco, and how the Consulate can support young people and help strengthen connections between the youth and the broader Indian-American community. He encouraged the students to remain engaged, curious, and open to learning from both cultures while building their own individual identities and paths for the future. Consul General shared that one of the best ways to learn about other places and cultures is by actually visiting them



and spending time to understand, reason, and appreciate.

The participating students greatly appreciated the opportunity to interact directly with the Consul General and expressed their gratitude for his time, thoughtful perspectives, encouragement, and willingness to listen to their ideas and concerns.

The discussion highlighted the importance of creating more opportunities for meaningful youth-community-Consulate engagement, particularly as the next generation of Indian Americans grows up at the intersection of two rich and diverse cultures.

"Engaging our youth and giving them a platform to share their voices is essential to building a stronger and more connected community," said the Association of Indo Americans Team. "We deeply appreciate Consul General Sivan for spending valuable time with our young people, listening to them, and sharing his insights and encouragement. These conversations can make a meaningful difference not only in the community, but also in the students' homes, schools, and future careers."



The Association of Indo Americans looks forward to continuing to create platforms that connect, empower, and inspire the next generation, while strengthening appreciation for Indian heritage and fostering greater understanding of the diverse communities in which Indian Americans live and contribute.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Canada keeps shutting doors to those engaged in criminal activities

BY
PRABHJOT SINGH



SEPTEMBER 17, 2026
TORONTO (TIP)

Canada has been currently removing approximately 400 inadmissible individuals every week, says an official statement issued on Monday. And latest on the list of those being deported are four "foreigners" - all from India - and their cases illustrate the Canadian Border Services Agency's (CBSA's) ongoing efforts to identify and remove individuals linked to extortion and organized criminal schemes in Canada.

THE FOUR, ACCORDING TO THE CBSA, ARE:-

PALWINDER SINGH, a foreign national linked to an extortion-related shooting in the fall of 2025, was removed from Canada after the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) found him inadmissible under IRPA for being a member of a criminal organization linked to extortion-related violence.

JASMER SINGH, a foreign national convicted in Canada of forcible confinement, was found inadmissible for serious criminality under IRPA. He was issued a deportation order and removed from Canada.

AMITOZ BAJWA, a foreign national, was removed from Canada after the IRB found him inadmissible under IRPA for being a member of an organization engaged in a pattern of criminal activity. He was also linked to firearms-related activity and an extortion-related shooting.

SAHIBJOT SINGH, a foreign national linked to an organization engaged in a pattern of criminal activity, was found inadmissible under IRPA by the IRB. Singh acknowledged committing offences that formed part of the organization's pattern of criminal activity. He was subsequently removed from Canada.

Gary Anandasangaree, Minister of Public Safety, while reacting to the growing menace of extortions, said in a statement that "Extortion and organized crime threaten the safety of our communities. The Government of Canada is committed to disrupting these activities through strong collaboration with law enforcement partners and decisive enforcement action. By identifying and removing inadmissible individuals involved in criminal activity, we are strengthening public safety."

"The removal of more than 100 individuals linked to extortion activities reflects CBSA's sustained efforts to identify, investigate and take action against those who



Headshots of 4 persons removed from Canada. Palwinder Singh, Jasmer Singh, Amitoz Bajwa, and Sahibjot Singh were linked to extortion-related activity.

pose a threat to our communities. These results also demonstrate the impact of strong collaboration with law enforcement partners across Canada and our shared commitment to combatting organized crime," said Erin O'Gorman, President, Canada Border Services Agency.

The process of deporting aliens was accelerated last year when a large number of members of Punjabi Diaspora in some major provinces, including British Columbia, Manitoba, Alberta, and Ontario, started feeling threatened, extorted and unprotected amidst growing demands for huge ransoms. Many were extorted.

Even the Premier of the impacted States sought the intervention and help of the federal government. At one stage, Premier of British Columbia even offered to hold a meet of police and CBSA officials to find ways and means to end this serious menace that had started forcing many well settled members of the Punjabi Diaspora in general and the Sikh Diaspora in particular, to move to unknown safer havens.

Bowing to growing public criticism, the provincial and federal police and law enforcement agencies created special cells to track down those behind the extortion gangs. Initial investigations and description of those already removed from Canada had no legal status as they had come to Canada either by illegitimate means or on visits visas.

In 2025, the CBSA removed 23,160 inadmissible persons,

1,010 of which were subject to serious inadmissibility for serious criminality (national security, war crimes or human rights violations, organized crime, and criminality). CBSA is currently removing approximately 400 inadmissible individuals every week. Through Canada's Border Plan (CBP), \$30.4 million was allocated to strengthen the CBSA's capacity to complete 20,000 removals annually last fiscal year and in 2026-2027.

A recent statement by the CBSA said that it was continuing to take action against individuals with suspected links to extortion activities, working with law enforcement partners across Canada to identify, investigate, and remove those who are inadmissible under the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA).

"Through joint enforcement efforts nationwide, the CBSA supports a coordinated response to extortion. The agency investigates foreign nationals who may be in violation of IRPA, including those engaged in criminal and organized crime activities, such as extortion. These investigations are built on information from law enforcement partners, other government agencies, CBSA-led investigations, and public reporting. The CBSA places the highest priority on enforcement and removal of cases involving criminality, organized crime and individuals who pose a risk to public safety.

"The CBSA dedicated resources to investigating cases with potential links to extortion in the Pacific and Prairie regions in August 2025, and expanded the initiative to the Greater Toronto Area in November 2025.

"As of September 3, 2026, 188 removal orders have been issued on various inadmissibility grounds, and 111 individuals have been removed from Canada. These figures can be further broken down by region:

*In Pacific Region, 91 removal orders have been issued, and 58 individuals have been removed from Canada.

*In Prairie Region, 47 removal orders have been issued, and 30 individuals have been removed from Canada.

*In Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Region, 50 removal orders have been issued, and 23 individuals have been removed from Canada.

The CBSA has been operating a tip line that allows the public to share information or directly report on the whereabouts of those who are inadmissible to Canada. Tips received are reviewed and investigated.

(Prabhjot Singh is a Toronto based senior journalist. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

Italy: Even after 81 years of the World War II, Sikh soldiers are remembered with respect and honor

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
RAVENNA, ITALY (TIP)

Hundreds of families in Italy who were impacted by the war of liberation continue to remember fondly Sikh soldiers who fought as a part of the Anglo-American allied troops.

They eulogize the turbaned Sikh soldiers who travelled thousands of miles away from their homes to make supreme sacrifices for the liberation of a country that was least known to them. Going by the true military regimen, they asked no questions when put on combat duties even in cold and harsh weather conditions on difficult terrains of northern Italy to secure liberation of their territory from the German of the Wehrmacht but also the Italians of the Italian Social Republic. In a war of freedom against the German and some of its own people, those seeking liberation held Sikh soldiers as members of the allied troops as a part of the English colonial elements as their heroes.

And more than 80 years after their liberation, they continue to hold special events to pay their homage to all those Sikh soldiers who never returned home from the war.

One such event was organized in Ravenna - a city in Emilia-Romagna- in the province of Toscana. The memorial service held on September 13 to mark the 81st anniversary of the liberation was organized in true



In Italy Sikh soldiers are remembered with respect for their acts of valor. -Pics: Prithipal Singh

military traditions.

To express their gratitude to the supreme sacrifices of Sikh soldiers, they extended a special invitation to the World Sikh Martyrs Memorial Society.

The Society was represented by its President, Prithipal Singh, and members Satnam Singh, Manjinder Singh Suzaru, Ravinder Singh Bhau and Parminder Singh besides others. Last year, the Society had installed the Sikh identity mark - Khanda Sahib - at the memorial.

The memorial ceremony started with the laying of wreaths at the memorial by members of the Italian military and members of Carabinieri, which is a military police force that also handles civilian policing.



They wear dark blue uniforms with red stripes and answer to both the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior. During the German regime, the then Carabinieri worked as a part of the State.

The men in uniform first organized an impressive march past and saluted the slain Sikh soldiers.

The Mayor of Gevalia also joined the commemoration parade. While paying tributes to she lauded the selfless and dedicated services of Sikh soldiers and maintained that Italians would never ever forget them.

Freedom fighters and Mayors of nearby towns also joined the memorial parade and the ceremony.

Ambassador of India undertakes Regional Outreach across Romania to Strengthen Bilateral Partnerships



Meeting with President Horia Teodorescu, Prefect Eugen Terente, Vice Presidents Lavinia Vizauer and Iancu Naciadis, Member of Parliament Mirela Furtun?, and Deputy Mayor George Singhi of Tulcea

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

Ambassador of India to Romania and the Republic of Moldova, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, undertook a series of official engagements across Romania, including Tulcea County, Cernavoda, Sulina, Dej, Câmpia Turzii, Turda, Sighisoara and Cluj-Napoca, with a view to strengthening India-Romania

cooperation at the regional and local levels.

The engagements focused on expanding cooperation in energy, infrastructure, investment, trade, tourism, connectivity, education, technology, culture and people-to-people relations. The visits highlighted the diverse economic and cultural potential of Romania's regions and explored

opportunities for partnerships between Indian companies and Romanian regional authorities, municipalities, businesses, universities and local communities.

The regional outreach assumes particular significance in the context of the decision taken during the visit of the

Hon'ble President of India Smt. Draupadi Murmu to Romania to work towards doubling bilateral trade between India and Romania over the next three years. It also contributes to strengthening the bilateral partnership ahead of the 80th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in



Meeting with Mr. Liviu Cristea-Negoita, Mayor of Cernavoda



Meeting with Ms. Maria Balan, Mayor of Sulina, and Mr. Laurentiu Praz, Deputy Mayor

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Ambassador met Mr. Dorin Nicolae Lojigan, Mayor of Câmpia Turzii



Ambassador met Mr Cristian Octavian Matei., Mayor of Turda

2028.

TULCEA COUNTY, CERNAVODA AND SULINA

In Tulcea, Ambassador Mohapatra met Mr. Horia Teodorescu, President of the Tulcea County Council, Vice Presidents Ms. Lavinia Vizauer and Mr. Iancu Naciadis, Ms. Mirela Furtuna, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Mr. George Singhi, Deputy Mayor of Tulcea, and Mr. Eugen Terente, Prefect of Tulcea County. Discussions focused on Tulcea's strategic location at the intersection of the Danube and the Black Sea and opportunities in infrastructure, logistics, tourism, investment and the blue economy. The Ambassador encouraged stronger links between Indian businesses and the region.

In Cernavoda, Ambassador Mohapatra met Mayor Mr. Liviu Cristea-Negoita. Discussions covered the strategic importance of the city's nuclear energy sector, infrastructure, technology and investment. India's experience in the renewable energy and the potential for engagement by Indian companies and institutions were highlighted.

In Sulina, Ambassador Mohapatra met Mayor Ms. Maria Balan and Deputy Mayor Mr. Laurentiu Praz. Discussions explored opportunities in sustainable tourism, maritime connectivity and the promotion of the Danube Delta's natural and cultural heritage, including greater visibility of the region among Indian travelers.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS IN TRANSYLVANIA

During his visits to Dej, Câmpia Turzii, Turda and Sighisoara, Ambassador Mohapatra held meetings with Mayors Mr. Costan Morar, Mr. Dorin Nicolae Lojigan, Mr. Cristian Octavian Matei and Mr. Ioan-Iulian Sirbu respectively, to explore opportunities for strengthening India-Romania cooperation at the grassroots municipal level. Discussions focused on trade, investment, tourism, local economic development and cooperation in emerging areas such as the green economy and recycling. The Ambassador highlighted the growing interest among Indian companies and investors in exploring opportunities in Romania and using the country as a gateway to the



Ambassador with Mr. Ioan-Iulian Sirbu, Mayor of Sighisoara, during his visit to the city



H.E. Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India, alongside Mr. Aliodor Alexa

wider EU market. He noted that Indian investors would benefit from reliable local partners who could facilitate market entry, including assistance with local registration, marketing, product labelling and other market-related requirements, while helping Indian products and companies establish themselves in Romania and expand into European markets. In this context, the Ambassador proposed facilitating direct business-to-business and municipality-

to-company meetings between Romanian local authorities/business communities and interested Indian companies, with a view to identifying concrete investment and commercial opportunities.

As part of this effort to develop practical and mutually beneficial partnerships, Ambassador Mohapatra invited the Mayors to visit India along with business representatives from their respective municipalities and meet Indian companies, industry associations

and potential investors. The proposed visits would provide an opportunity for Romanian municipalities to present their investment potential, local economic ecosystems and specific projects directly to Indian businesses, while enabling Indian companies to identify suitable Romanian partners and explore opportunities for establishing operations and accessing the EU market. The Ambassador emphasized that stronger engagement between Indian companies and Romanian municipalities could create a two-way investment and trade partnership, bringing Indian capital, technology and business expertise together with Romanian local knowledge, market access and institutional support. Such grassroots-level linkages would complement the broader bilateral economic relationship and contribute to translating the objective of expanding India-Romania trade and investment into concrete partnerships across Romania's regions.

CLUJ-NAPOCA: EDUCATION, INVESTMENT AND CULTURE

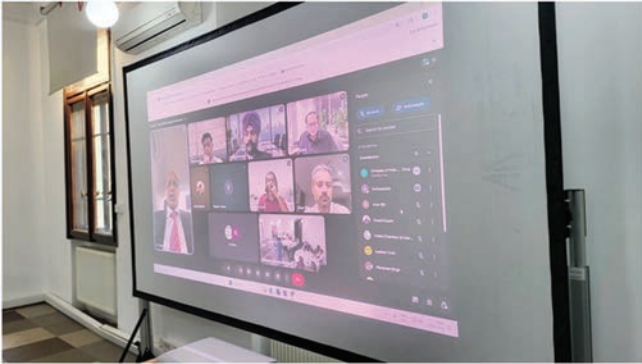
In Cluj-Napoca, Ambassador Mohapatra inaugurated the "Voice of India - Cluj Chapter" and the presentation of the Romania-India "bridge" initiative developed by Integral Partners. The initiative seeks to strengthen links in education, investment and culture, including by promoting Romanian universities among Indian students, facilitating economic partnerships and enhancing interaction between the Indian community and Romanian society.

The Ambassador welcomed initiatives that create regional platforms for India-Romania engagement and emphasized the importance of connecting universities, businesses, local authorities and communities.

The regional outreach underscores India's commitment to translating the strong political momentum in India-Romania relations into concrete local-level partnerships, facilitating business-to-business linkages, promoting trade and investment, encouraging educational and cultural exchanges, and creating new opportunities for Indian and Romanian stakeholders across the country.

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

Embassy of India Organizes India-Romania Hybrid B2B Meeting on Leather and Footwear Sector



The event commenced with special remarks by Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador who joined online.



Mr. Manpreet Singh, Chairman, ICIB, highlighted the immense potential for expanding India-Romania business collaboration in the field of leather and footwear.



Romanian companies actively participated and explored opportunities with Indian firms

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

Embassy of India, in association with ICIB, India organized an India-Romania Hybrid Business-to-Business (B2B) Meeting on Leather and Footwear on 11 September 2026 at the Embassy premises. The meeting brought together Indian manufacturers, exporters and industry representatives with Romanian business stakeholders with the objective of identifying new opportunities for trade, investment, sourcing and long-term business partnerships in the leather and footwear sector. The initiative forms part of the Embassy's ongoing efforts to promote India-Romania economic and commercial engagement through focused, sector-specific business interactions and to facilitate direct connections between companies from the two countries.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, emphasized the importance of strengthening business-to-business engagement as a key pillar of the growing India-Romania economic partnership.

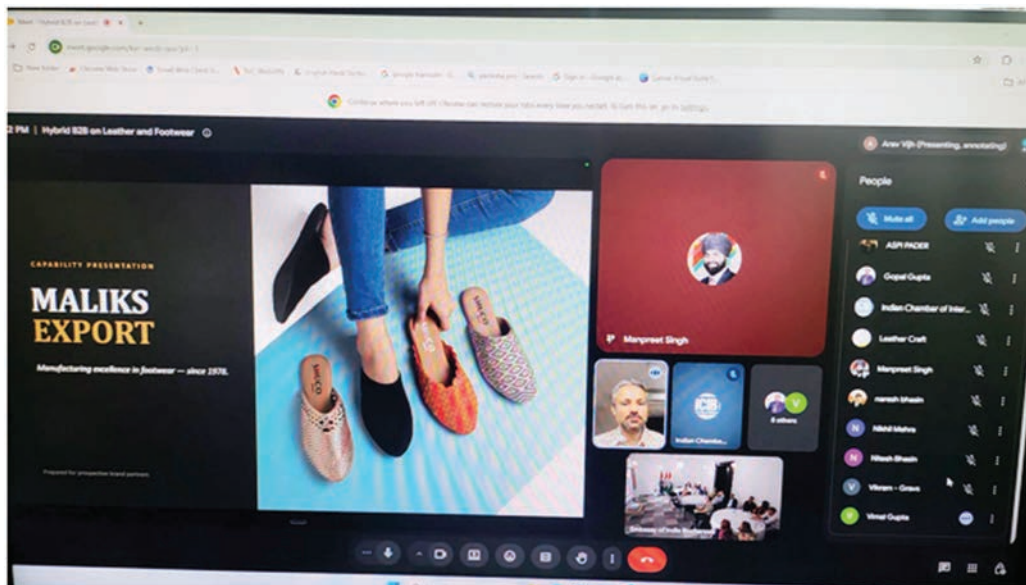
The Ambassador highlighted the strong complementarities between the capabilities of Indian industry and the requirements of the Romanian and wider European market, noting that the leather and footwear sector offers considerable scope for expanding

bilateral trade and developing mutually beneficial commercial partnerships.

He encouraged Romanian companies to explore India as a competitive and reliable sourcing and manufacturing partner, particularly given the breadth of India's leather and footwear ecosystem, which encompasses raw materials, finished leather, footwear, components, accessories and a wide range of

manufacturing capabilities. The Ambassador also underlined the importance of moving beyond traditional buyer-seller relationships towards deeper and more sustainable forms of business cooperation, including long-term sourcing arrangements, technology and manufacturing partnerships, joint ventures and other forms of industrial collaboration. He encouraged participating companies to use the B2B platform not merely for exchange of information but as a starting point for concrete commercial engagements.

The Indian side was represented by a range of companies and industry stakeholders from the leather and footwear ecosystem. Mr. Manpreet Singh, Chairman, ICIB, delivered the opening remarks from the Indian side. Presentations were subsequently made by representatives of participating Indian companies and industry organizations, including Feetcare, Maliks Export, Ram Fashion Exports Pvt. Ltd., Gupta Overseas, India Footwear Component Manufacturers Association, Leather Craft, Graves India Overseas Pvt. Ltd. and Nandi Footwear. The companies presented their respective product portfolios, manufacturing capabilities and areas of business interest, providing Romanian participants with an overview of the diversity and competitiveness of India's leather and footwear industry.



Indian companies joined virtually and showcased their products and expertise

From the Romanian side, Mr. Diaconescu Burulean Marius of Manokhi Leather shared his perspectives on the sector and the potential for enhanced engagement with Indian companies. The presentations were followed by an interactive Question & Answer and B2B interaction session, during which Indian and Romanian participants discussed potential areas of cooperation, sourcing opportunities and avenues for developing business partnerships. The interaction provided an opportunity for Romanian companies to directly engage with Indian manufacturers and exporters and explore possibilities for establishing commercial linkages.

The Embassy of India has been actively promoting sector-specific business engagements between India and Romania with a view to diversifying and deepening bilateral trade and investment relations. Such focused B2B initiatives provide an effective platform for connecting Indian industry with Romanian business stakeholders and identifying concrete opportunities for cooperation. The Embassy will continue to facilitate similar engagements across sectors with significant potential for bilateral cooperation and encourage Indian and Romanian companies to build on the discussions initiated during the meeting.

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



Group picture - Embassy Hosts Hybrid B2B on Leather and Footwear

Pak lodges protest with India over mid-sea collision

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Reacting to the mid-sea collision between warships in the Arabian Sea on Tuesday, Pakistan lodged a protest with the Chargé d'Affaires of the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, claiming that the incident occurred in Pakistan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) due to the "highly provocative and unacceptable actions" of the Indian Navy. Sources in the defence establishment explained that the EEZ of any country extends up to 200 nautical miles (370 km) from its shore. However, a country's territorial authority over the waters and the airspace above them extends only up to 12 nautical miles from the coast. Beyond that limit lie international waters, which can be freely used by all ships.

The collision between INS Kolkata and PNS Hunain, occurred 220 km east of Oman, in international waters. Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it had summoned the Indian diplomat.

Passports for children below 15 to be valid for 5 years or till age 18

Passports issued to children below 15 years of age will now be valid for five years or until they turn 18, whichever is earlier, under new regulations notified by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The Passports (Amendment) Rules, 2026, published in the Gazette of India on Thursday, amend the Passports Rules, 1980.

Under revised Rule 12(1A), a standard 36-page passport issued to a child below 15 years will remain valid for five years from the date of issue or until the child turns 18, whichever is earlier.

The notification, dated September 15, also amends Rule 8 relating to passport application fees. It states that the fee applicable to each category of passport application will be as specified in Schedule IV of the rules.

The amended rules have come into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

The Passports Rules, 1980, were originally notified through G.S.R. 691(E) on December 11, 1980. They were last amended through G.S.R. 156(E) on June 20, 2026.



India at UN calls for stronger global framework to keep sea lanes open

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): India has called for a stronger international framework to keep vital maritime routes open during crises, warning that disruption at a single sea chokepoint can trigger wider shocks to global trade, energy and food supplies.

Addressing a UN Security Council Arrria-formula meeting on 'Safe Seas, Shared Security: Protecting Freedom of Navigation in an Evolving Security Environment' in New York, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Harish Parvathaneni, said recent disruptions to major maritime routes had underscored the importance of maritime security to international peace, security and global prosperity.

"Commercial vessels must not become targets of geopolitical tensions," Parvathaneni said, asserting that freedom of navigation and overflight must be respected in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

India said navigational rights must not be subjected to coercion, threats, unlawful restrictions or arbitrary interference. It also called for coordinated arrangements to facilitate the continued movement of essential commercial and humanitarian supplies during crises.

The Indian intervention highlighted the wider economic fallout from maritime insecurity. Disruption at one chokepoint can put pressure on alternative routes, raise freight and insurance costs and disrupt energy and food supplies, with developing countries particularly vulnerable to such shocks.

Against this backdrop, India highlighted its sustained maritime security operations in the Indo-Pacific and the Gulf of Aden-Red Sea region.

As of September 14, Indian maritime security operations in the Gulf of Aden and Red Sea had ensured the safe transit of 449 merchant vessels carrying nearly 20.3 million metric tonnes of cargo and oil, valued at \$8.4 billion, according to the Indian statement.

Following the deterioration of the security situation in West Asia, the Indian Navy launched Operation Urja Suraksha. By March 13, 11 Indian Navy units had been deployed in the western Arabian Sea for the protection of trade.

India also sought greater international recognition for its Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR), describing it as a useful platform for strengthening maritime domain awareness.



New Delhi said the IFC-IOR had been included as a reporting centre in the International Maritime Organisation's Best Management Practices Maritime Security framework. It also sought the support of the states concerned for the proposed addition of IFC-IOR to IMO Maritime Safety Committee Resolution 324(89), saying this would further enhance global maritime security.

The safety of seafarers was another key focus of India's intervention. Parvathaneni said their evacuation, medical assistance, crew changes and repatriation in conflict zones required effective contingency planning and greater international cooperation.

"Seafarers must remain at the centre of our collective efforts," he said, urging countries with significant interests in shipping and seafarer safety to work together on contingency planning.

India also flagged emerging threats, including attacks involving unmanned systems, cyber risks and interference with navigation and communications.

International cooperation, capacity-building and responsible use of technology would be critical to addressing these challenges, it said.

India said the international response should go beyond restoring navigation after a crisis and instead focus on building a maritime system capable of withstanding shocks before they cascade into wider economic and humanitarian crises.

India, Parvathaneni said, remained ready to work with UN member states to strengthen maritime security, protect seafarers, uphold navigational freedoms and ensure resilient and uninterrupted international commerce.

Modi pitches India as semicon powerhouse

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 17 pitched India as a reliable base for semiconductor and data centre industries, saying a semiconductor industry in India would matter more to the world at a time when global supply chains were "being weaponised".

Modi's comments come days after he used similar phrasing at the Brics Summit in New Delhi, where he raised concerns over technology and critical minerals exports being choked off. While Modi did not name any country, China – whose leader Xi Jinping was at the summit over the weekend – has been criticised by several nations for its restrictions on exports of both rare earths and critical hi-tech equipment in recent years.

"India is the mother of democracy. If a country like India can develop a critical industry such as the semiconductor industry, then it is beneficial for the world. Its importance increases as the supply chain is being weaponised globally," Modi said, inaugurating the fifth edition of Semicon India at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre in New Delhi.

India received investment pledges of about Rs 1 lakh crore, said IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw at a media briefing, including Rs 48,000 crore from semiconductor equipment maker Applied Materials and Rs 10,000 crore from Lam research.

Modi virtually inaugurated Suchi Semicon's facility in Surat, Gujarat, and CDIL's facility in Mohali, Punjab, with both units entering commercial production.

Vaishnaw presented him with a memento holding chips from the five units now in commercial production in India: Micron, Kaynes, CG Semi, Suchi Semicon and CDIL.

The event, themed "Silicon to Systems: Building the Ecosystem", coincided with Modi's 76th birthday.

Modi said the growing computing demands of AI were creating technical challenges for the industry beyond its traditional focus on transistor size and computing efficiency. Those challenges now extend to what surrounds the processor: placing memory closer to it, connecting several chips with minimal delay, and managing heat and power consumption.

"Today if you are working on AI, challenge is not what is inside the chip, but what is around the chip," he said.

Nandan Nilekani-led panel on NEET reforms to submit first report by month-end: Centre to SC

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Centre on Friday, Sept 18, told the Supreme Court that the Nandan Nilekani-led high-powered panel constituted to suggest structural reforms in NEET has held exhaustive consultations and is likely to submit its first interim report by the end of this month. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a bench of Justices P S Narasimha and Alok Aradhe that all the suggestions had been placed before the panel, which held consultations with the members of an earlier committee led by former ISRO chairman K Radhakrishnan. The bench asked the joint secretary to the Department of Personnel and Training, who is assisting the Nilekani panel, to file an affidavit before the court on the steps taken so far.

It told Mehta that the most important thing in the matter is that the government should look into institutionalisation of the entire process to conduct the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test. "You must know that permanency of the entire system is key. There should be a permanent setup, permanent staff, permanent verticals.

Govt preparing system to ensure UPI fee doesn't hit customers: Report

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Union finance ministry is preparing a monitoring system to ensure that the burden of the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions above Rs 2000 is not passed on to consumers.

According to sources quoted in a PTI report, the ministry has already initiated discussions with payment aggregators and other stakeholders in the UPI ecosystem to sensitise them about the MDR and ensure that the burden is not passed on to consumers.

The NPCI, which operates the UPI platform, issued a circular on September 15 introducing MDR for certain UPI transactions to create a sustainable revenue framework for the digital payments ecosystem.

A 0.4 per cent MDR will apply to person-to-merchant UPI payments above Rs 2,000 from October 15. The government says that the charge will be paid by merchants, not consumers. MDR will be capped at Rs 300 for transactions of Rs 75,000 or more.

Payments between individuals, as well as the vast majority of everyday merchant payments, will remain free.



The finance ministry on Thursday dismissed allegations that US pressure influenced the decision to levy a 0.4 per cent MDR on select UPI transactions, saying the latest NPCI guidelines do not give international credit cards any advantage over RuPay.

The ministry also asserted that it does not expect the levy to trigger a shift towards cash transactions.

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) issued the clarification in response to observations in the US Trade Representative's (USTR) 2026 report on the inability of US electronic payment service providers to participate in the UPI ecosystem, including credit transactions on UPI, on a level playing field with RuPay.

"The NPCI circular of September 15, 2026, does not allow credit transactions on UPI by any other credit card other than the RuPay credit card. There is a clear policy of only allowing RuPay credit cards on UPI to enable RuPay credit cards to become the preferred choice of credit cards amongst users in India," the DFS said in a post on X.

"The allegation that MDR has been introduced under any external influence is patently false and misleading," it added.

The assertion comes amid allegations by some Opposition parties, including the Congress, that the government had succumbed to US pressure in deciding to impose a 0.4 per cent MDR on UPI transactions above Rs 2,000.

According to the US Trade Representative's 2026 National Trade Estimate Report on foreign trade barriers, the US continued to raise concerns over informal and formal policies with respect to electronic payment services that appear to favour Indian domestic suppliers over foreign suppliers, creating a non-level playing field.

From lab to national impact: Wadhwani Innovation Centre at IIT Kanpur to bridge India's research-to-market gap

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

KANPUR (TIP): With only 1-2% of India's research currently reaching the market, the Wadhwani- IIT Kanpur Innovation Centre in Life Sciences and Medtech was inaugurated today to help bridge this critical research-to-market gap. Backed by up to US\$5 million in funding over five years, the Centre will accelerate promising research from scientific discovery to commercial deployment across life sciences, biotechnology, MedTech and AI-enabled healthcare. It was inaugurated by Dr. Upendra Kumar Singh, Director General - Soldier Support System, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), New Delhi. The Centre will support high-potential research across therapeutics, regenerative medicine, drug delivery, lifestyle and neurodegenerative diseases, mental health, vaccine development, antimicrobial resistance, medical devices and diagnostics, as well as AI-enabled healthcare. Researchers will be supported from proof of concept and technology development through validation, intellectual property, regulatory pathways, industry partnerships and commercialization.

The Centre is part of the Wadhwani Innovation Network (WIN), Wadhwani Foundation's flagship innovation initiative in India, which is building a national network of Innovation Centres with leading academic and research institutions to strengthen India's research translation and commercialization capabilities. WIN receives funding from Wadhwani Charitable Foundation (WCF). The Centre will bring together researchers, clinicians, innovators, industry, entrepreneurs and domain experts, providing access to mentorship, industry engagement, technology and product roadmaps, commercialization support, and



Dr. Shreya Malik (Program Head - Life Sciences, WIN, Wadhwani Foundation), Dr. Shirshendu Mukherjee (Managing Director - WIN, Wadhwani Foundation), Prof. Ashok Kumar (Professor in charge, WIN COE - IIT Kanpur), Dr. Upendra Kumar Singh (Director General - Soldier Support System, DRDO, New Delhi), Hitesh Kumar (VP - Marketing, Wadhwani Foundation).

funding and collaboration opportunities. It will also facilitate technology transfer and the creation of research-led ventures.

Prof. Manindra Agrawal, Director, IIT Kanpur, said, "IIT Kanpur has a multidisciplinary biomedical research ecosystem spanning regenerative medicine, molecular

medicine and gene therapy, neuroscience and bioengineering, along with strong expertise in artificial intelligence and intelligent systems. The Wadhwani-IIT Kanpur Innovation Centre will help accelerate the translation of this cutting-edge research into products by enabling technology development, entrepreneurship, technology transfer and commercialization. We look forward to strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration and creating pathways for research to deliver real-world impact."

Dr. Shirshendu Mukherjee, Managing Director - Wadhwani Innovation Network, said, "India has no shortage of breakthrough science. The opportunity is to build stronger pathways that take that science from the lab to the market. Through WIN, we are connecting researchers with the expertise, industry partnerships, capital and commercialization support needed to make that transition. The Wadhwani-IIT Kanpur Innovation Centre - Life Sciences is an important step towards building this capability at scale across India."

Prof. Ashok Kumar, Professor in Charge and Prof. Santosh Misra, Co-Professor in Charge, WIN-CoE, IIT Kanpur said that "WIN-CoE will strengthen the pathway from research to real-world impact by fostering collaboration among scientists, engineers and clinical partners. The Centre will help researchers move beyond scientific discovery by addressing real-world healthcare needs and supporting technology development, validation and translation. By bringing together multidisciplinary expertise, modern tools, clinical insights and innovation capabilities, WIN-CoE aims to accelerate the development of scientifically robust, practically relevant and market-ready biomedical technologies."

India in history this Week

SEPTEMBER 18 TO SEPTEMBER 24

SEPTEMBER 18

1948 - Operation Polo ends

The Indian Army's action against the Hyderabad State ended with the surrender of the Nizam's forces. Hyderabad was subsequently integrated into the Indian Union. The operation began on September 13, 1948, and ended with the Nizam accepting the terms of surrender on September 17-18.

1857 - Delhi falls during the Revolt of 1857

British forces recaptured Delhi from the rebels during the final stages of the uprising of 1857. The recapture marked a major turning point in the British campaign against the rebellion.

SEPTEMBER 19

1960 - Indus Waters Treaty signed



India and Pakistan signed the Indus Waters Treaty in Karachi on September 19, 1960, with World Bank assistance. The treaty established a framework for sharing the waters of the Indus river system.

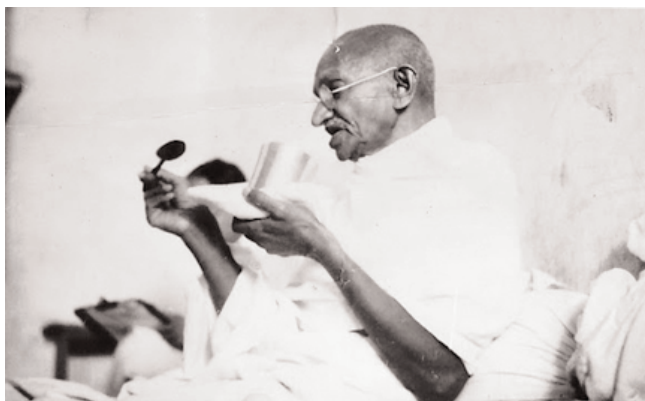
Under the agreement, the eastern rivers - Ravi, Beas and Sutlej - were allocated for India's unrestricted use, while Pakistan received the principal allocation of the western rivers - Indus, Jhelum and Chenab - subject to specified provisions for Indian use.

1893 - Swami Vivekananda at the Parliament of the World's Religions

September 1893 saw Swami Vivekananda's celebrated appearance at the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago, where his address brought Indian philosophy and Vedanta to a wider international audience.

SEPTEMBER 20

1932 - Mahatma Gandhi begins fast in Yerwada Jail



Mahatma Gandhi began a fast unto death on September 20, 1932, opposing the British government's Communal Award provision for separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. The fast intensified negotiations that culminated in the Poona Pact four days later.

1878 - The Hindu begins publication



The Hindu was first published as a weekly newspaper in Madras (now Chennai) on September 20, 1878. It was founded by a group of young journalists and lawyers, including G. Subramania Iyer.

SEPTEMBER 21

1857 - Bahadur Shah Zafar captured



Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was captured by British officer William Hodson at Humayun's Tomb, Delhi, following the British recapture of the city during the Revolt of 1857.

1933 - Annie Besant dies

Annie Besant, the theosophist, social reformer and prominent Indian Home Rule advocate, died on September 21, 1933. She had played a significant role in India's nationalist movement and served as president of the Indian National Congress in 1917.

1926 - Noor Jehan born



Legendary singer and actress Noor Jehan, one of the most influential voices of the Indian subcontinent, was born on September 21, 1926.

SEPTEMBER 22

1921 - Gandhi adopts the simple dhoti and shawl
During his stay in Madurai, Mahatma Gandhi decided on September 22, 1921, to adopt the simple dhoti and shawl as his everyday attire. The decision reflected his attempt to identify himself more closely with

India's poor and became one of the defining visual symbols of his public life.

1935 - All India Spinners' Association

The All India Spinners' Association, associated with Gandhi's campaign to promote hand-spinning and khadi, was established in 1935 as part of the wider constructive program of the freedom movement.

SEPTEMBER 23

1803 - Battle of Assaye

The Battle of Assaye was fought on September 23, 1803, during the Second Anglo-Maratha War. Forces commanded by Arthur Wellesley defeated the Maratha armies in one of the major battles of the conflict.

1965 - India-Pakistan ceasefire



A United Nations-backed ceasefire came into effect on September 23, 1965, bringing an end to the principal fighting in the India-Pakistan War of 1965. Indian forces had captured positions in several sectors, including the Lahore and Sialkot fronts, during the conflict.

1908 - Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar' born

Nationalist poet and writer Ramdhari Singh Dinkar was born on September 23, 1908. He became one of the most prominent Hindi poets of the 20th century.

1929 - Child Marriage Restraint Act

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the Sarda Act, was passed in 1929. It sought to restrict child marriage by setting minimum marriage ages.

SEPTEMBER 24

1873 - Satyashodhak Samaj founded

Social reformer Jyotirao Phule founded the Satyashodhak Samaj in Pune on September 24, 1873. The organisation sought to challenge caste-based inequality and promote social equality and education.

1932 - Poona Pact signed

Mahatma Gandhi and Dr B.R. Ambedkar reached the Poona Pact on September 24, 1932, following Gandhi's fast against separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. The agreement replaced the proposed separate electorates with reserved seats within a common electorate and became a major milestone in the history of representation and social justice in India.

2014 - Mangalyaan enters Mars orbit

India's Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) successfully entered Martian orbit on September 24, 2014. It was India's first interplanetary mission and achieved Mars orbit insertion on its first attempt.

1861 - Bhikaji Cama born

Freedom fighter and nationalist Bhikaji Cama was born on September 24, 1861.

AN EVENING WITH CHANDRIKA TANDON AIMS AT LOVE, LIGHT AND LAUGHTER IN HERALDING THE ARRIVAL OF DIWALI

BY MABEL PAIS

In preparation for the uplifting Festival of Diwali, Asia Society New York in partnership with Anu Sehgal's The Culture Tree, welcomes an immersive evening of love, light, music, and community featuring Grammy Award-winning artist Chandrika Tandon. Opening remarks will be made by New York City Council Member, the Hon. Shekar Krishnan. This will take place on Wednesday, October 7, 2026 at the Asia Society New York (725 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021).

The evening will blend live music, chanting, conversation, and spiritual reflection to create a deeply meaningful experience. Designed to help participants recenter, reconnect, and renew, the program will move from personal reflection to shared inspiration, culminating in a warm meet-and-greet that celebrates community and connection. Together, we will embrace the spirit of Diwali by cultivating inner light, hope, gratitude, and a renewed sense of purpose in a welcoming space of joy, positivity, and belonging.

EVENT DETAILS

WHAT: LOVE, LIGHT, LAUGHTER with CHANDRIKA TANDON

WHEN: 7 October, 2026 - 6:30-8 PM

WHERE: In-person, Asia Society, 725 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021

Discussion 6:30PM-7:30PM

Meet and Greet 7:30PM-8:00PM

KEYNOTE REMARKS

The Honorable Shekar Krishnan is the NYC Council Member for District 25, Jackson Heights, Elmhurst, and Woodside, Queens, some of the most diverse immigrant communities in the world. He is the first Indian-American ever elected to the City Council in NYC history and the Chair of the Council's Committee on Oversight and Investigations, holding accountable



Chandrika Tandon. -Credit: <https://asiasociety.org/new-york>

anyone and anything that takes advantage of New Yorkers.

In his previous term, Council Member Krishnan served as the Chair of the Council's Committee On Parks and Recreation, negotiating the highest budget ever for NYC Parks. In the Council, he has championed workers' rights by passing legislation to decriminalize street vending and successfully leading the largest and strongest worker protection bill for Uber and Lyft drivers in the nation.

Before his election to the City Council, Shekar was a long-time community activist in Jackson Heights and Elmhurst and a civil rights lawyer fighting housing discrimination.

SPEAKERS

CHANDRIKA TANDON

Chandrika Tandon is a globally recognized business leader, Grammy-winning artist, and humanitarian. She is a former partner at McKinsey & Company before founding Tandon Capital Associates and the Krishnamurthy Tandon Foundation. She serves as a

Trustee of New York University, and is on the board of NYU Tandon School of Engineering and NYU Langone. She is the founder of the Krishnamurthy Tandon School of Artificial Intelligence at the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and the Boyd-Tandon School of Business at Madras Christian College.

A recipient of honors including the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, election to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and recognition from the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, she has released seven albums, performed globally, and received two Grammy nominations and a win for her pioneering musical work. Her life's work reflects a commitment to elevating human happiness through music, education and economic and emotional empowerment.

ANU SEHGAL

Anu Sehgal is an award-winning children's author, Founder and CEO of The Culture Tree, and proud mother of two teen boys. She holds an MBA from Yale University and spent nearly 15 years in the corporate sector before following her passion for cultural education. Through The Culture Tree, Anu has been recognized for her groundbreaking work in elevating South Asian cultures across America, particularly in New York. She is the author of eight children's books that celebrate identity, heritage, and storytelling, which have been showcased at prestigious platforms including the New York Public Library's World Literature Festival, the Jaipur Literature Festival, and many others.

THE CULTURE TREE

The Culture Tree creates inclusive platforms that amplify South Asian voices through cultural programs, education, language classes and community gatherings. It spotlights critical conversations and celebrations — festivals, women's health, food, identity and representation — to nurture a stronger, prouder, and more visible South Asian community in America.

PLAY: "CRAZY MAMA" ON LOVE AND RESILIENCE COMES TO NYC

BY MABEL PAIS

"Crazy Mama: A True Story of Love and Madness" by Sharon Scott Williams, a powerful play about love and resilience, directed by Anson Williams and starring Linda Purl will present the Off-Broadway premiere at the Rubicon Theatre Company (Karyl Lynn Burns and Jonathan Drahos, Producing Artistic Directors) at 59E59 Theaters (59 East 59th Street between Madison & Park Avenues). Performances begin on September 16, 2026 and continue until October 18, 2026. Opening night is September 22, 2026. For schedule, see below.

Linda Purl plays 16 different characters - and Will Huse as The Blues Man. Laced with humor and pathos, "Crazy Mama" is a testament to the steely resilience of the human heart and the enduring nature of hope. Sharon races home from school a couple days after her 8th birthday to beat her teenaged brother Spikey to the last slice of birthday cake. When she enters the kitchen, she finds her mother wielding a knife. As the Sheriff escorts her mother away, the deputy tells Sharon that her mama is "not right in the head." "Crazy Mama" is a one-woman tour-de-force about a woman's decades-long dream of saving her mother from the soul-crushing grip of



Crazy Mama. -Credit: <https://59e59.org>

mental illness.

"Brilliant. The writing is so authentic and alive, full of color and idiom and wise turns of phrase. On top of that, the playwright has created all these incredible characters that come out of the mouth of one actor... Riveting!" – The Wrap

CREATIVE TEAM

The creative team is Brian Gale (lighting and projections design) and Lindsay Jones (sound design). The production stage manager is Alexandria Hess Rodriguez. Associate Producer is Stephanie Coltrin.

According to the playwright, Sharon Scott Williams, "Mental illness affects one in four people, but all-too-often

individuals and families don't speak of their experience and hide their pain. I was lucky,' says Williams. 'I had my family to help me through it, but there were times we were afraid to talk about it.' "Crazy Mama" is a story that helps lift that stigma."

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

"Crazy Mama" will play the following performance schedule:

Tuesday-Friday @ 7:30pm, Saturday @ 2:30pm & 7:30pm, Sunday @ 2:30pm.

The show runs 2 hours and 5 minutes (including intermission).

TICKETS & MORE INFORMATION

For tickets to see the play, visit the website @ <https://59e59.org/shows/show->

[detail/crazy-mama-a-true-story-of-love-and-madness/#schedule-and-tickets](https://59e59.org/detail/crazy-mama-a-true-story-of-love-and-madness/#schedule-and-tickets) or the theater box office, 12 noon - 6 pm or call 646 892 7999. For more information, visit <https://59e59.org>

The World Premiere of "Crazy Mama: A True Story of Love and Madness" was originally produced at Rubicon Theatre Company in Ventura, California March 26 - April 13, 2025.

BIOS & THEATERS

Linda Purl (Performer)

Learn more

@instagram.com/lindapurl and

@x.com/lindapurl

Will Huse (The Blues Man)

Learn more

@instagram.com/thewillhuse

Sharon Scott Williams (Playwright)

Learn more at

@instagram.com/sharonscottwilliams

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

NEW JERSEY'S ANCHOR ARTS CENTER HOSTS GEN-Z IMPACT ON VOTER RIGHTS

BY MABEL PAIS

The 2026-2027 season of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center's (NJPAC) Standing in Solidarity (<https://www.njpac.org/series/standing-in-solidarity>) series launches on September 28, 2026. This month's conversation features **GEN-Z IMPACT ON VOTER RIGHTS**.

Standing in Solidarity is NJPAC's ongoing series of monthly conversations built around issues of social justice and equity. Most of these programs include a screening of a socially-engaged documentary paired with a thought-provoking, post-screening talk by a panel of activists, academics, nonprofit leaders and others deeply engaged with the topic.

EVENT DETAILS

TOPIC: VOTE IRL (in real life) GEN-Z IMPACT ON VOTER RIGHTS
WHEN: September 28, 2026 @ 5PM
VENUE: NJPAC's Chase Room
Resource tables @ 5PM
Panel conversation @ 6PM

RSVP

RSVP is required. RSVP @ <https://njpac.org/event/ce-vote-irl/#rsvp>

The upcoming midterm elections are crucial in determining which party



Gen-Z voters. Credit : <https://njpac.org>

controls Congress, and Gen-Z voters (ages 18 – 29) could have an outsized impact IRL (in real life) on the results.

A panel of young leaders will express their political participation, the hot button issues driving some to the polls — and the barriers keeping others away. What is at stake this November, in New Jersey and across the country?

The Newark NAACP and the Divine Nine — the nine African American fraternities and sororities of the National Pan-Hellenic Council — are curating this first Standing in Solidarity program of the new season. All panelists represent the Divine Nine and their ongoing commitment to community progress.

FILM

This month's conversation is inspired by the film, "Conscience of the Congress," the untold story of the

Congressional Black Caucus. A link will be sent in advance to watch at home. Following the panel conversation, attendees will participate in facilitated small group discussions.

OPENING

In partnership with Dodge Poetry, the program will open with Brian Acosta Arya. Also known as Brian The Motel Guy, Acosta Arya is a New Jersey-bred artist, content creator and motel manager whose storytelling has attracted over 1 million followers. He is also a host of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe.

To make your voice heard, information on voter registration and polling sites, plus other resources, will be available from partner organizations starting at 5PM.

A special stroll performance led by the Divine Nine will take place at 5:30PM.

PANEL

MODERATOR

A'Dorian Murray-Thomas: The conversation will be moderated by A'Dorian Murray-Thomas, Vice President of the Essex County Board of County Commissioners and Founder and CEO of SHE Wins, Inc.

PANELISTS

Wilbert "Wil" Davis: Lawyer at DLA Piper and member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Anthony Gray: Federal Consultant and member of Mu Gamma Gamma Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

Ever Mack: Digital Research Analyst at ISD US and member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Beta Alpha Omega Chapter

Jaylen Smith: New Jersey Collegiate Representative of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY

For information on the full season, and recordings of past events, visit Standing in Solidarity (<https://www.njpac.org/series/standing-in-solidarity>).

NJPAC INVITES THE PUBLIC TO EXPLORE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN JAZZ, LEGACY, EMOTION & COLOR

BY MABEL PAIS

Everyone is invited to explore the connection between jazz, legacy, emotion and color at a special community workshop, where everyone can take part in the creation of a new mural that will be installed in the Cooperman Family Arts Education and Community Center on NJPAC's campus when it opens in 2027.

EVENT DETAILS

WHAT: CITY IN NOTES - A COMMUNITY MURAL MAKING EVENT

WHEN: Tuesday, September 29, 2026 @ 6:30PM

WHERE: Clement's Place, 15 Washington Street, Newark, NJ 07102

ARTISTS AND PUBLIC ART

How does jazz make you feel? What does it help you see?

Artist and landscape architect Haemee Han — one of 13 artists and artist collectives creating site-specific pieces to be displayed across the new NJPAC campus (<https://njpac.org/publicart>) — seeks community involvement in the design of her more-than-100-foot mural, which will be featured in the second-floor corridor of the Cooperman Center.

Han has created oversized scores of three songs by Newark jazz icons Sarah



Community Artists Workshop. -Credit : <https://njpac.org>

Vaughan, Woody Shaw and Wayne Shorter. At this event at Clement's Place, Han and Wayne Winborne, Executive Director of the Institute for Jazz Studies at Rutgers University-Newark, will be in conversation about music, memory, history and the creative process.

Then, guests will take part in a live, participatory art-making process — listening to Woody Shaw's "The Moontrane" in real time and placing stickers on the score at the moments in the song that evoke an emotion. Different sticker colors will represent different emotions, from joy to sorrow. Light bites and refreshments will be served.

For more about the public art at NJPAC initiative, visit njpac.org/publicart.

RSVP

RSVP at <https://njpac.org/event/city-in-notes-a-community-mural-making-event/#rsvp>

[in-notes-a-community-mural-making-event/#rsvp](https://njpac.org/event/city-in-notes-a-community-mural-making-event/#rsvp)

NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), a nonprofit arts organization, is a collaborative leader in Newark's cultural and civic life, a catalyst of the city's revitalization and a champion of its artistic spirit. The Arts Center produces and presents world-class performances by music, dance, spoken word poetry and comedy artists, and hosts insightful conversations with creators and changemakers, on its own stages and in venues across the region.

Through real estate development, NJPAC advances Newark's economic growth and cultural vitality. In addition, the Arts Center collaborates with local partners to deliver social impact initiatives that nurture the well-being and creativity of the communities it

serves. These offerings include arts education and career development opportunities for students and educators, programs that support community health and well-being through the arts and free creative experiences in neighborhoods across Newark and throughout the state.

NJPAC has attracted more than 13 million visitors (including more than two million children) since opening its doors in 1997. Visit <https://njpac.org> for more information.

One Center Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102
njpac.org or 888.GO.NJPAC
(888.466.5722)

FOLLOW NJPAC ONLINE:

Website: njpac.org
Twitter: @NJPAC
Instagram: @NJPAC
Hashtag: #NJPAC
Facebook: facebook.com/NJPAC
YouTube: NJPACtv

FOLLOW NJPAC'S STANDING IN SOLIDARITY SERIES ONLINE:

Website: njpac.org/takeastand
Hashtag: #NJPACTakeAStand
Youtube: Standing in Solidarity playlist

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NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY PRESENTS JERSEY CITY MUSIC & ARTS FEST



NJ Symphony Players perform at America250 Celebration -Credit : <https://njsymphony.org>

BY MABEL PAIS

The New Jersey Symphony will present its Jersey City Music & Arts Festival: eight days of music, dance, and community in Jersey City's Powerhouse Arts District, September 24–October 3, 2026.

All events are free and open to the public and will take place outdoors (weather permitting) in Provost Square Plaza, directly in front of New Jersey Symphony's future Symphony Center at 7 Provost Street, Jersey

Opera). Kids (and adults!) will enjoy activities hosted by festival partners, including an Instrument Discovery Zone, a henna station, and more.

WELLNESS DAY

Sunday, September 27, 12 pm–4 pm
Enjoy a wellness fair, including a sound bowl session led by Salvation Wellness and enhanced by the addition of the New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players.

SYMPHONY CHAMBER CONCERT

Saturday, October 3, 6:30 pm–8:30 pm
Featuring a New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players Brass Quintet performing music from around the world.

Watch a performance by the Symphony Brass Quintet - <https://youtu.be/IfpD0F9HHHU>

NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY



NJ Symphony Brass Quintet. -Credit : <https://njsymphony.org>

City, NJ 07302. Rain dates and sites will be announced as needed on the New Jersey Symphony website . Full details are available at njsymphony.org/jcfest.

For updates on events, join the notification list here: njsymphony.org/jcnews

EVENT SCHEDULE

Symphony Chamber Concert

Thursday, September 24, 6:30 pm–8:30 pm

Featuring music by Jersey City-based composer Christopher Cerrone, performed by the New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players.

MOVIE NIGHT

Friday, September 25, 7:30 pm–9:30 pm

A relaxing evening under the stars, enjoying a family-friendly film. Film to be announced.

KIDS DAY

Saturday, September 26, 10 am–2 pm

Bring the whole family for a fun-filled day with a street-fair atmosphere, featuring the story of "Peter of the Wolf," set to music by woodwind quintet, an upbeat program of music from around the world, Bollywood dancing from partner organization Kulture Kool, and arias sung by singers from Undead Arts (Zombie

MOVIE NIGHT

Tuesday, September 29, 7:30 pm–9:30 pm

A relaxing evening under the stars, enjoying a family-friendly film. Film to be announced.

RIVERVIEW JAZZ SALSA NIGHT

Wednesday, September 30, 6:30 pm–8:30 pm

This event is for those who like to salsa or simply want to hear great salsa music. Riverview Jazz presents a dance class led by Salsa Fever On2, followed by Samuel Torres' Salsa Orchestra, led by a Latin GRAMMY Award-winning percussionist and composer.

NIMBUS DANCE PERFORMANCE

Friday, October 2, 6:30 pm–8:30 pm

Dancers from Nimbus join the New Jersey Symphony Chamber Players to perform a multidisciplinary spectacular. Nimbus' "Dark Water," set to Qasim Naqvi's "God Docks at Death Harbor," was warmly received in a 2024–25 season New Jersey Symphony concert and now comes to the stage in Jersey City. The program also features works by renowned contemporary composers Valerie Coleman and Paquito D'Rivera.

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. For more information about New Jersey Symphony, visit the website at 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, Health and Wellness, Spirituality, Education, Business, and Cuisine.



Gary Oldman's 'Slow Horses' to return for eighth season

Emmy and BAFTA-winning spy series "Slow Horses", starring British veteran Gary Oldman, will return for an eighth season, streamer Apple TV has announced. The announcement comes ahead of the premiere of the show's sixth season on September 16, with a seventh season already announced.

The six-episode season will be adapted from "Clown Town", the ninth novel in author Mick Herron's "Slough House" book series, Apple TV said in a statement.

Season eight will see Jackson Lamb, played by Academy Award winner Oldman, and MI5 second-in-command Diana Taverner face off in what the streamer describes as their most explosive confrontation yet.

According to the official synopsis, when a botched attempt to blackmail the Park puts Taverner on the offensive, Lamb must unravel one of MI5's darkest secrets and put an end to it.

"'Slow Horses' continues to charm audiences all around the world and I'm delighted that Jackson Lamb and his gang of lovable misfits will be back for an eighth season," said Jay Hunt, creative director, International, Apple TV.

"Their acerbic take on the high-octane world of espionage is completely unique," she added.

"Slow Horses" follows a dysfunctional group of British intelligence agents who are relegated to Slough House, a dumping-ground department of MI5, after career-ending mistakes. Oldman stars as Lamb, the brilliant but cantankerous leader of the group. The series won three Emmy Awards, including two for Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series and one for Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series.

Oldman has received Golden Globe, Emmy and BAFTA Award nominations for his performance as Lamb.

Season eight will be adapted for television and executive produced by Ben Vanstone, with Adam Randall returning as director. "Slow Horses" is produced for Apple TV by See-Saw Films, with Jamie Laurenson, Hakan Kousetta, Douglas Urbanski, Randall, Iain Canning, Emile Sherman, Gail Mutrux, Billy Bowring, Helen Gregory, Herron and Oldman serving as executive producers.

Matthew Rhys makes Emmy history with double win for Widow's Bay, The Beast in Me

Matthew Rhys made Emmy history by becoming the first male actor to win two lead acting categories in the same year at the 78th Primetime Emmy Awards. The 51-year-old actor took home both Outstanding Lead Actor trophies he was nominated for, winning for Widow's Bay and The Beast in Me.

Rhys won Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series for his performance as Mayor Tom Loftis in Widow's Bay. He later won Outstanding Lead Actor in a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie for playing Nile Jarvis in The Beast in Me. His second win came before the halfway point of the ceremony at the Peacock Theater.

Rhys received a standing ovation after his second victory and thanked his Widow's Bay co-stars and crew, before acknowledging his family and his native Wales.

In his acceptance speech, he praised showrunner Katie Dippold for her "depraved and twisted mind." He then added, "Her genius really does live in the recesses of her disturbed brain. [This win] is also because of my hero Hiro Marai, who helmed us so beautifully and deftly."

Thanking the executives behind the series, including Apple's Jamie Erlicht and Zach Van Amburg, his agent and his sister, he said, "the great and good people of Wales, who were as much a nurturer as anyone else. We are a small but mighty nation. This is incredible."

"Obviously my parents — they just kicked me onto a stage at a very early age," he said. "My sister... thank you for all the sage words and patient listening. Finally, to the great and good people of Wales who were just as much a nurturer as anyone else, we are a small but mighty nation," he added.

In the comedy category, Rhys was competing against Riz Ahmed for Bait, Jason Bateman for Black Rabbit, Charlie Hunnam for Monster: The Ed Gein Story and Oscar Isaac for Beef. In the limited series category, he beat Yahya Abdul-



Mateen II for Wonder Man, Steve Carell for Rooster, Jason Segel for Shrinking and Martin Short for Only Murders in the Building.

With the two wins, Rhys is now a three-time Emmy winner and has received eight nominations over his career. His previous Emmy came in 2018, when he won Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series for his role as Philip Jennings in The Americans.

Speaking about his nominations last month, Rhys told People, "It's everything you dream for. And then when it happens, you still can't quite believe it." The actor had also said he would not "necessarily" prepare an acceptance speech in advance, although he had a few talking points in mind. "I was very fortunate enough to win an Emmy before, and I missed out on some people I didn't thank," he said. "So if — the very big if — I win, I will hopefully remedy that."

Preity Zinta, Suniel Shetty, Pankaj Tripathi among 18 on new censor board panel

Actors Preity Zinta, Suniel Shetty, and Pankaj Tripathi are among 18 members appointed to the newly reconstituted Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) panel for a three-year term.

The reconstituted 18-member board features prominent film industry figures, including actors Manoj Joshi, Prosenjit Chatterjee, Pallavi Joshi, and Rupali Ganguly, alongside filmmaker Priyadarshan and Grammy-winning musician Ricky Kej. Other appointees on the new panel include Vinod Anupam, Abhishek Jain, Hansraj Hans, Supriya Yarlagadda, Yatindra Mishra, Neela Madhab Panda, Nishigandha Wad, Waman Kendre, and Ramesh Patange.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting announced the fresh panel under Section 3(1) of the Cinematograph Act, 1952, read with Rule 3 of the Cinematograph (Certification) Rules, 2024. Taking effect immediately, the revamped composition arrives at a time when film classification frequently intersects with creative and public debate.

An official confirmed that the reconstitution had been pending, as several terms from the previous board — last reconstituted in 2017 with 12 members — had lapsed. While the composition of the panel has changed, the statutory duties and regulatory framework governing the censor board remain unchanged.

The prolonged struggle surrounding Satluj — the Diljit Dosanjh-led film, previously titled Punjab 95 — remains one



of the most stark illustrations of modern certification hurdles in India. Originally submitted to the censor board in 2022, the project languished in regulatory limbo for nearly three years as filmmakers faced demands for as many as 127 modifications.

Although the uncut feature briefly surfaced on the streaming platform ZEE5 in July under its revised title, Indian subscribers lost access within 48 hours when the film was abruptly pulled down. The entire episode underscores how classification disputes and extended clearance delays can alter a project's trajectory long after production wraps.



Hanuman Ansh mints Rs 300 crore worldwide; beats Bhooth Bangla, outpaces Mirzapur

Devotional film Hanuman Ansh is fast becoming the success story of the year at the Indian box office. The tiny film, with few backers and no takers for the first two weeks, has now crossed Rs 300 crore at the box office. What is surprising is that it is still the number 1 film at the Indian box office in its sixth week, outpacing many new releases.

Hanuman Ansh opened at a paltry Rs10 lakh and had earned barely Rs 1.50 crore in its first two weeks in theatres. However, after that, positive word of mouth took over, and the ticket sales shot up. Since its fourth week, Hanuman Ansh has collected over Rs 60 crore net each week at the Indian box office. On Wednesday, its 41st day in theatres, Hanuman Ansh earned a handsome Rs 6 crore net in India. This took its domestic collection to Rs 237 crore net (Rs 280 crore gross). It is now the fourth-highest-grossing film in India this year, behind only Dhurandhar 2, Border 2, and Spider-Man: Brand New Day. What is commendable about Hanuman Ansh's run is that it is out-earning Mirzapur The Movie, a more recent release, by a factor of almost 50%. Hanuman Ansh was released overseas belatedly after its worldwide distribution rights were snapped up by Hombale Films earlier this month. In the two weeks it has been running overseas, the film has grossed \$2 million so far. This took its worldwide gross to Rs 300 crore after 41 days. The small film has now entered the top 10 list of Indian films for 2026. It sits in the ninth spot as of Wednesday evening. But with a bunch of films clubbed close together between Rs 300-325 crore, Hanuman Ansh is expected to enter the top 5 this weekend, and eventually even the top 3, surpassing even Toxic and Peddi (both just over Rs 340 crore). It has already surpassed the lifetime collection of Akshay Kumar's recent hit, Bhooth Bangla, which minted over Rs 250 crore worldwide.

Written and directed by Vishal Chaturvedi, Hanuman Ansh follows a grieving young man, Lakshminarayan, who embarks on a spiritual journey in search of God after his mother's death. As he travels across North India in search of answers to life, death, and human suffering, he eventually becomes the revered saint Neem Karoli Baba.

Daayra review: Kareena Kapoor Khan, Prithviraj Sukumaran shine in a morally complex drama

It's been 33 years since Sunny Deol famously thundered on screen, "Tareekh pe tareekh milti gayi, My Lord, par insaaf nahin mila!" Today, Daayra takes that iconic line and turns it into a meticulous drama about whether law and justice are really players on the same team, or often find themselves on opposite sides. But does it pack the same punch as Sunny paaji's legendary courtroom outburst? Let's find out.

Written (co-written by Yash Keswani and Sima Agarwal) and directed by Meghna Gulzar, the story revolves around Ajooni (Kareena Kapoor Khan), who heads an SIT investigating a police encounter. It involves multiple men accused of gang-raping a young girl and then burning her to death. The encounter was carried out by DCP Raman Kumar (Prithviraj Sukumaran) and his team, who claim they all tried to flee during custody. What Ajooni uncovers during the investigation forms the crux of the story.

Daayra begins as an investigation drama, with Meghna's screenplay taking its own sweet time to allow the interrogations and procedures to play out, as Ajooni pieces together what really happened during the encounter. The measured approach lends the film a certain authenticity, although it also means the narrative takes some time to gather momentum. At times, the film appears caught between the grammar of a mainstream Hindi thriller and the restraint of a serious drama.

There is an unmistakably filmi



quality to some of the characterisations. Kareena, for instance, brings a distinct screen presence to Ajooni, although some of her lighter expressions can feel slightly at odds with the gravity of the investigation. I also find the choice of her name, Ajooni, interesting in this context. The word appears in the Ik Onkar, "Ajooni saibhang", broadly referring to one who is beyond birth and death, self-created. Whether there is a deeper intention behind the name or it is simply a character choice, the film doesn't spell it out.

The first half is deliberate rather than gripping. The subject is important, and what works in the film's favour is its willingness to let the investigation breathe. The procedural drama is given room to play out instead of being rushed

from one revelation to another. The trade off, however, is that the film sometimes lacks the urgency one would expect from such a disturbing case.

The second half picks up pace and moves towards its climax. While the conclusion may not come as a complete surprise, there are enough compelling moments along the way to keep you invested. The film's strength lies less in shock value and more in the questions it raises about institutions and accountability.

A wise choice on the makers' part is to keep the film largely free of music, barring a B Praak song that plays over the end credits. It works in the film's favour, allowing the narrative and its grim subject matter to remain at the forefront without musical interruptions.

Salman Khan's Maatrubhumi stuck over censor clearance, China angle in contention

Contrary to reports circulating online, actor Salman Khan's Maatrubhumi: May War Rest In Peace has not yet been submitted to the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and remains stalled over its narrative stance on China.

Social media posts had recently claimed that the war drama was scheduled for a censor board screening next week, sparking speculation about an imminent theatrical release. However, a Bollywood Hungama report mentioned that no such screening has been scheduled and that the film's status remains unchanged due to its geopolitical backdrop.

The film, originally announced as Battle Of Galwan, is based on the 2020 military clash between India and China. With diplomatic relations between the two nations seeing recent improvements,



the Ministry of Defence reportedly expressed reservations regarding specific content in the film. Reports earlier this year indicated that references to 'China' might be excised entirely to secure official clearance.

Speaking on the current impasse, Bollywood Hungama, while attributing a source, claimed that the producers are actively engaging with government

officials to reach a consensus. The insider noted that while the makers hope to secure clearances for a 2026 theatrical release, any delay in resolving the objections could push the film's premiere to 2027. Originally targeted for an Eid 2026 release, the war drama remains on hold. Although the makers have already unveiled the official motion poster and teaser, formal submission to the censor board will proceed only after the underlying geopolitical concerns are resolved.

The film, directed by Apoorva Lakhia, features Salman Khan in the role of Col Santosh Babu, with Chitrangada Singh also in a key role. Maatrubhumi: May War Rest In Peace also features actors Mukesh Rishi, Ankur Bhatia, Abhilash Chaudhary, Abhishree Sen, Zeyn Shaw, Javed Khan and Vipin Bhardwaj in crucial roles.



Spider-Man Brand New Day surpasses Star Wars The Force Awakens

Tom Holland's Spider-Man: Brand New Day has added another record to its impressive theatrical run.

The Marvel-Sony release has now overtaken Star Wars: The Force Awakens to become the highest-grossing film in North American box office history.

After 47 days in theatres, Spider-Man: Brand New Day has earned an estimated USD 936.773 million in North America, edging past the USD 936.6 million lifetime collection of Star Wars: The Force Awakens.

Released in late July, Spider-Man: Brand New Day has continued to draw audiences well into its theatrical run. The latest milestone sees it move ahead of the 2015 Star Wars film, which had held the North American record for years.

The current top five films at the North American box office are led by Spider-Man: Brand New Day with approximately USD 936.7 million. Star Wars: The Force Awakens follows with USD 936.6 million, while Avengers: Endgame is in third place with USD 858.3 million.

Holland's previous Spider-Man outing, Spider-Man: No Way Home, occupies the fourth position with USD 814.8 million. James Cameron's Avatar rounds out the top five with USD 785.2 million.

Following the record-breaking achievement, Lucasfilm congratulated the Spider-Man: Brand New Day team through the official Star Wars social media account.

The post read, "Impressive. Most Impressive. From a galaxy far, far away, everyone at Lucasfilm sends massive congratulations to Destin, Tom, everyone at Sony Pictures and Marvel Studios and the entire team behind Spider-Man: Brand New Day on setting a new domestic box office record and taking the crown from Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

The congratulatory message came as Spider-Man: Brand New Day officially surpassed the long-standing domestic record.

The next major target for the film is the USD 1 billion mark in North America. However, considering that the film is already 47 days into its theatrical release, reaching the milestone could depend on its performance in the coming weeks.

Sydney Sweeney defends her racy sports ad after it sparks backlash from female athletes

Actor Sydney Sweeney is facing backlash for an advertisement all over again. After the American Eagle ad controversy, the actor has now starred in an advertisement for sports trading app Novig, appearing almost naked. It was met with criticism, with many athletes and commentators calling it out for accused of sexualising women's sports. The actor has now responded to the backlash.

The ad features the Euphoria star appearing to be nude with various sports equipment. She posed naked while using items like footballs, basketballs, hockey pads, and tennis racquets to cover herself.

Amid widespread criticism for the ad, Sydney defended it on her Instagram stories. On Monday, the actor shared a nude image of herself from the ad alongside several ESPN photoshoots of famous athletes over the years posing without clothes. It included pictures of Serena Williams, Ronda Rousey, Sue Bird, Megan Rapinoe, Caroline Wozniacki, Myles Garrett, Rob Gronkowski, Karl-Anthony Towns and Jason Kelce.

The actor's response raised eyebrows too. A Reddit user posted Sydney's defence on the platform and several users lashed out on the actor. "They are professional athletes. They are not promoting gambling like Sydney," wrote



one. "She is tone deaf to criticism. It is not that you are naked too- it is WHY," pointed out another. A comment read, "One can absolutely see the difference in the intent behind the professional athletes showing their bodies and the ad campaign SS did... one looks like art and the other looks cheap. People only need an ounce of media literacy to understand the difference."

"These athletes are actually showcasing the sport through their physical fitness. It's sexy yeah but it's also a celebration of what they do. Sydney's ad is a cosplay that promotes her own brand of objectification along with gambling, and honestly makes a mockery of the field with how she just

says 'sports' over and over like we are all a bunch of braindead boys who love football and boobs," said a second user. "What is this comparison? She is not an athlete. Their media campaigns were a direct protest against those comments and gender roles/stereotypes. SS has no concept of whatever subversion is," said another.

On the work front, Sydney was last seen in Season 3 of Euphoria. The HBO show starring Zendaya and Jacob Elordi marked the return of her character Cassie. The show opened to mixed review and is available to watch on JioHotstar. She was also seen in the sports drama Christy and the thriller, The Housemaid.

Taylor Swift goes on a fun date with Tom Cruise, this time cheering for Chiefs

Taylor Swift and Tom Cruise had another little hangout, and this time there was a whole lot of football involved. The singer and the Hollywood star were seen catching up at the Kansas City Chiefs' season opener at Arrowhead Stadium on Monday. Swift was there to cheer for husband Travis Kelce, but clearly found some time for a fun chat with Cruise too.

Swift, 36, and Cruise were seen talking during the game, just weeks after they both attended Swift and Kelce's star-studded wedding. Cruise was among the guests at the couple's July ceremony and was reportedly one of the evening's highlights for several attendees.

Swift's appearance at Arrowhead was also significant for another reason. It was her first time at the stadium since she married Kelce in July. The game marked Kelce's return to the field as well, making it his first Chiefs appearance since their wedding.

Swift and Kelce went public with their relationship in September 2023 and married each other on July 3. Speaking about the wedding last week, Kelce called it "the best night of my life" and said marrying Swift was more than he could have dreamed of.

Swift's appearance at Arrowhead also ended speculation about whether she would attend the 78th Primetime Emmy



Awards in Los Angeles.

Her Disney+ special, Taylor Swift The Eras Tour | The Final Show, had picked up five nominations at the Creative Arts Emmys. The film, which captured the final concert of her record-breaking Eras Tour, was in the running for Outstanding Variety Special (Pre-Recorded), Outstanding Directing for a Variety Special, Outstanding Picture Editing for Variety Programming, Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Variety Series or Special, and Outstanding Technical Direction and Camerawork for a Special.

Bolivia, Paraguay settle final border stretch after 88 years of negotiations

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

SUCRE (TIP): Bolivia and Paraguay finalised the course of their shared border in La Paz on Wednesday after nearly nine decades of negotiations that began after a territorial war between them, Bolivia's foreign ministry said.

The two countries fought between 1932 and 1935 over the arid Chaco Boreal region in a conflict that left between 80,000 and 100,000 people dead.

Bolivia lost an area equivalent to more than half of Paraguay's current territory as a result.

Following the Chaco War, the two countries signed a peace and boundary treaty in 1938 that launched a lengthy process to demarcate their shared border, which stretches some 755 kilometres (470 miles).

"Bolivia and Paraguay have completed the delineation of their entire international boundary, a process carried out over 88 years by technical commissions from both countries," Bolivia's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Delegates from the joint Bolivian-Paraguayan boundary demarcation commission worked in La Paz over the past three days after cross-checking geographic information collected along the border by "high-precision" drones against "desk-based data."

North Korea won't give up nukes: Kim Jong-un's sister warns 'idiots'

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

PYONGYANG (TIP): The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un said Thursday that the country's nuclear-armed status was "absolute," calling those hoping for its denuclearisation "idiots." North Korea has legally enshrined its status as a nuclear weapons state, with its leadership declaring the country's atomic arsenal permanent and irreversible. US President Donald Trump said in August that Pyongyang possesses 57 "very powerful" nuclear weapons, with Seoul putting the figure at between 80 and 120. Seoul said it was paying close attention to Thursday's remarks because they come as Trump has floated the idea of a new meeting with Kim. "The DPRK's position as a nuclear weapons state is absolute which cannot reverse with anything," Kim's sister, Kim Yo Jong, said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency. Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal "makes a significant contribution to deterring the outrageous acts of international rogues", she said.

63 killed in Yemen fighting as Houthis, Saudi-backed forces clash

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

SANAA (TIP): Fighting between Yemen's Houthi rebels and government forces backed by Saudi Arabia has killed 63 people over the past 24 hours, AFP reported, citing military sources from both sides on Thursday, Sept 17.

A Yemeni government official said at least 23 government soldiers were killed in missile and drone attacks carried out by the Iran-backed Houthis in two southwestern provinces.

Meanwhile, Houthi military sources said 40 of their fighters had been killed in Saudi airstrikes and ground clashes.

The Houthis have seized Yemen's entire Red Sea coastline since last week as part of a rapid advance. The group has claimed that the Saudi Air Force has carried out hundreds of strikes in Yemen in recent days, while the Houthis have responded by launching missiles and drones at targets across the border.

On Wednesday, Sept 16, the Houthis also claimed to have shot down a Saudi F-15 fighter jet. Video released by the group overnight showed fighters at what appeared to be the charred crash site, shouting "Allahu Akbar" and displaying a section of an aircraft wing bearing Saudi insignia.

The widening conflict involving Yemen and Saudi Arabia comes amid the broader West Asia war and risks further aggravating a global energy supply shortage triggered by the US and Israeli attacks on Iran in February.

Global crude prices eased slightly on Thursday but remain well above \$100 a barrel after shooting to the highest levels



Iran-aligned Houthi fighters move next to a destroyed vehicle following an attack on Saudi-backed forces in a location given as al Jawf governorate, in Yemen. Reuters

since May. The cost of fuel for consumers has risen even more sharply, with the average retail price for diesel in the United States setting a new record on Thursday just shy of \$6.40 a gallon.

US President Donald Trump has so far rebuffed pleas from the Saudis for military support fighting the Houthis, who agreed a ceasefire with the United States last year after Washington bombed the group for two months.

"Well, hopefully we are towards the end of the war," Trump told reporters on Wednesday. He said the Iranians "want to make a deal. We'll see how that works out."

No negotiations between the United States and Iran to end the war have been held since an interim agreement reached

in June collapsed within weeks.

The US Navy is trying to guide ships through the Strait of Hormuz, the outlet to the Gulf along Iran's coast, where a fifth of global oil and liquefied natural gas passed before the war, and is also imposing a blockade of Iranian ports.

Iran says the strait is closed and will remain shut until Washington lifts the blockade. It is seeking an agreement with neighbouring Gulf states that would let it collect fees from ships passing through the strait.

War in Yemen and attacks on Saudi Arabia have jeopardised the main alternative route for Gulf oil, with the Houthis capturing the Red Sea coast and islands inside the Bab el-Mandeb, or "Gate of Tears", the strait at its mouth.

Japan eyes changing prostitution law to punish sex buyers

SEPTEMBER 11, 2026

TOKYO (TIP): Japan should overhaul its prostitution law to punish those who seek to buy sex, experts recommended on Thursday in proposals likely to lead to changes to the decades-old legislation.

Currently, street sex workers face fines or imprisonment for public solicitation, but their customers face no punishment, making Japan an outlier among developed countries.

Calling for the abolition of this asymmetry, the panel of legal experts proposed in a report that clients also be penalised for solicitation both in public and online.

It is seen as almost certain that the justice ministry will make legal amendments based on the panel's conclusions.

Acts such as negotiating paid sex in public and loitering on the street to "browse" sex workers should be considered punishable, the panel said.

Some campaigners have demanded a "Nordic model" that decriminalises selling sex while criminalising paying

for it -- adopted by countries like Sweden, Norway and France.

However, the panel did not recommend decriminalising sex work altogether or redefining prostitution to include acts beyond vaginal intercourse.

Some sellers, the panel said, "willingly" joined the sex trade and their solicitation "disrupts social order".

Risa, a member of the sex trade survivor group Toka ("Light"), said if the laws continue to target sellers, "they won't be able to report violence and other terrible experiences to police, for fear of being labelled criminals".

The concept of free will in sex work is a myth given that compounding difficulties like poverty, trauma and disability push many women into the trade, the 37-year-old told AFP, using a pseudonym.

In her 20s, "I did think I was doing it voluntarily" to survive adversities including her abusive, drunk father, a job loss and depression, Risa said.

But "I wonder how many people would still say they want to keep doing it" if they had a chance at re-education, employment and mental health treatment, she added.

"I had to act like a doll, switch off all emotions and pretend to be pleased no matter what was done to me."

When enacted in 1956, Japan's anti-prostitution laws viewed sex workers as an "evil" who seduced married men, the antithesis of the "chaste wives" that society expected women to be, feminist lawyer Yukiko Tsunoda told a recent symposium in Tokyo.

"Nobody even thought of the sex trade as violence" against women, she said.

Any legal change is overdue for Nao, a Toka member who fled abuse by her mother and lived under a bridge from age 14, turning to street prostitution to "survive the day".

As morning arrived, the "mostly middle-aged men on their way to work" would approach her and offer around 5,000 yen (\$32) for sex, she told AFP.

Turkiye proposes Russia-Ukraine deal to end Black Sea shipping attacks

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

ANKARA (TIP): Türkiye has sent a proposal to Russia and Ukraine that would end attacks on civilian ships in the Black Sea, a Turkish diplomat told AFP on Thursday, Sept 18.

The move follows a sharp uptick in attacks in the Black Sea, which has seen at least 25 Turkish-owned vessels hit since late June, industry figures show.

"We have shared a text of a memorandum, a draft text, with the Russians and the Ukrainians to come up with a solution to those strikes taking place in the Black Sea," the diplomat said.

He said the proposal was "inspired by" the grain corridor mechanism -- a 2022 deal brokered by Türkiye and the UN to grant safe passage for Ukrainian grain to be exported via the Black Sea without risk of attack.

Although Russia pulled out a year later, Ukraine set up an alternative path via a shipping route that hugs the coast of Romania and Bulgaria.

"In that mechanism, there is maybe a four- or five-mile gap where the Ukrainian ship has to leave the national territorial waters and travel in international waters, which is the risky part," he explained.

"So our offer is also inspired by this."

Russia strikes Kyiv, other cities hours after US sanctions passed

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

KYIV (TIP): Russia battered the Ukrainian capital Kyiv and other cities with missiles and drones overnight, injuring more than two dozen people, officials said on Thursday, Sept 17, hours after the US Congress approved a major sanctions bill targeting Moscow.

The US House of Representatives on Wednesday passed the sweeping sanctions and tariff legislation, championed by late Senator Lindsey Graham, designed to tighten the economic squeeze on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine. The bill has now been sent to President Donald Trump to sign into law, Reuters said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy welcomed the passage of the bill, calling it, alongside existing measures, an "extremely powerful tool" that could help force Russia to end a war now entering its fifth year.

"It is symbolic that the US House of Representatives passed the Lindsey Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act on the night of yet another Russian attack on Ukraine with ballistic and other missiles and drones," Zelenskiy said.

Moscow has escalated its air attacks in recent months on Ukraine, which runs critically low on US-designed interceptors needed to down ballistic missiles.

The overnight barrage included Oniks anti-ship cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, four cruise missiles and nearly 160 drones, Ukraine's air force said on Thursday.

It did not specify the number and whether any of the more deadly ballistic missiles were intercepted.



A handout picture taken and released by Ukrainian State Emergency Service on September 15, 2026 shows firefighters extinguishing a fire in a train locomotive after it was targeted by a Russian drone in the Volyn region, amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine. AFP

Zelenskiy said tougher sanctions were essential to force Russia to return to the negotiating table, after US-backed peace talks unraveled earlier this year.

"Sanctions must be strong so that all efforts for peace -- including our joint diplomatic efforts with the United States, Europe, and our other friends -- can succeed," he said.

Zelenskiy said damage was recorded in eight regions across Ukraine, with Moscow hitting energy infrastructure in the Sumy and Odesa regions.

Russian defense ministry said Moscow had struck vessels used by the Ukrainian military. In Kyiv, the wail of air raid alerts and boom of air defenses sounded through the night. Explosions were heard on

Thursday morning as an attack with jet-powered drones continued.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said 18 people, including two children, were wounded in the city. Most of them were in a damaged 16-storey apartment building, officials said. Damage was recorded in four city districts, including warehouse facilities, and petrol stations, which are now a frequent target of attacks.

The strike also temporarily disrupted water supply on the left bank of the Dnipro river.

Six people, including two children, were wounded in the Black Sea port of Odesa, where the attack damaged a 19-storey apartment building, residential buildings and other sites, officials said.

Pakistan, China activate boundary joint commission in Islamabad

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan and China have operationalised a joint mechanism for managing their common border, a move rejected by India, which said that the body has no legal basis to decide on arrangements related to Indian territory under illegal occupation.

The inaugural meeting of the Commission -- based on the 2013 Agreement on the Boundary Management System -- was held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Islamabad on Wednesday, according to a statement issued by the Foreign Office.

India on Wednesday, Sept 16, rejected the "so-called" boundary joint commission set up by Pakistan and China, saying that the body has no legal basis to decide on arrangements related to Indian territory under illegal occupation.

India has been consistently maintaining that Pakistan's handing over of certain territories such as Shaksgam Valley to China in 1963 was



Chinese and Pakistani officials during the inaugural meeting of the Pakistan-China Boundary Joint Commission in Islamabad. PHOTO: COURTESY OF PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN OFFICE/

illegal and unacceptable.

New Delhi has also opposed the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as part of it passes through Pakistan-

occupied Kashmir.

On Thursday, Sept 17, Foreign Office spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan rejected Indian concerns regarding the

new border mechanism with China and the bilateral border agreement of 1963.

He said that the 1963 agreement was a "valid arrangement concluded between Pakistan and China".

Khan also said that China is not only "our neighbour but an all-weather strategic corporate partner. Our ironclad ties have withstood the test of time." He also said that Jammu and Kashmir "remains an internationally recognised disputed territory whose final disposition is to be determined in accordance with the United Nations Security Council resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people..." Separately, Pakistan and China agreed to enhance cooperation in police training exchange programmes and in modern technology and equipment.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that China's AI-based technology and modern equipment can greatly help address security challenges, adding that Pakistan wants to further expand cooperation with China in internal security.

Lanka summons ex-first lady in charity graft probe

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's police summoned former first lady Shiranthi Rajapaksa on September 16 for questioning over allegations that her charity misused donations, tightening authorities' anti-corruption drive.

President Anura Kumara Disسانayake's government has revived long-dormant graft investigations involving members of the once powerful Rajapaksa family, which dominated Sri Lankan politics for nearly two decades.

The Financial Crimes Investigation Division served the summons shortly before Shiranthi, 73, boarded a flight to Singapore for medical treatment, family spokesman Manoj Gamage told reporters in Colombo.

'She was given the FCID notice minutes before she boarded the aircraft,' Gamage said, rejecting suggestions she was attempting to leave the country to evade investigators.

'She is not trying to flee the country but travelling for medical treatment.'

Police said the FCID wanted to question Shiranthi over the 10 million rupees (\$30,750) collected in donations by her Siriliya Saviya charity for a PET scanner intended for a local cancer hospital.

Investigators have told a court that the scanner had already been donated by the Chinese government, but the charity allegedly continued to solicit donations and misused the funds.

1 dish at wedding, no foreign trips – Pak's austerity push amid West Asia oil shock

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): As part of its bid to conserve energy, Pakistan has announced a new set of austerity measures, including cuts to fuel allocations for official vehicles, besides bans on the purchase of vehicles for government use, foreign travel by officials and official dinners.

"Reduction of fuel provision by 50 percent for official vehicles for three months, 5 percent reduction in the Non-Employee Related Expenditure Budget for the whole FY 2026-27, a complete ban on purchase of all durables except IT procurements and complete ban on foreign visits and travel for three months, even in the case of obligatory visits, except in the case of scholarships," read an official statement by the Pakistan PMO.

The second set of such restrictions introduced this year also prohibit the government from purchasing durable goods, with the exception of information-technology equipment.

Officials have been instructed to rely on teleconferencing for meetings where possible, part of a broader effort to reduce fuel consumption and government spending.

The government has also directed that only one dish be served at all wedding-related functions and events across the country.

Islamabad had introduced similar austerity measures in March, when the government temporarily closed schools for two weeks, cut fuel consumption across government departments, and



encouraged work-from-home in an effort to conserve fuel.

The latest measures come as Pakistan faces gas and electricity shortages. Disruptions to liquefied natural gas (LNG) supplies caused by the wider conflict in West Asia have added pressure to the country's energy system while pushing up the cost of petrol and diesel. Petrol prices in Pakistan rose by 4.10 PKR per litre Tuesday, while the price of high-speed diesel was hiked by 6.41 PKR, pushing the price of petrol to 384.34 PKR per litre and diesel to 415.83 PKR per litre.

Climate Change Minister Musadik Malik said the government was seeking to cushion consumers from part of the increase through its fuel relief scheme. A new policy, which came into effect Wednesday, provided owners of

motorcycles, rickshaws and small cars with a subsidy of 100 PKR, or about \$36 cents per litre, subject to a capped monthly quota.

Against the backdrop of disruption in the Strait of Hormuz as a result of the conflict between US-Israel and Iran, fighting between Saudi Arabia and the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen has sparked fears of disruption in the Red Sea, which could add more pressure on regional energy markets.

For Pakistan, which depends heavily on imported energy, the disruptions have created a difficult combination of higher fuel costs and growing concerns about the availability of gas and electricity. The government's latest austerity measures are intended to reduce consumption as the country navigates those pressures.

India, Bhutan welcome Rs 4000 crore Line of Credit for energy projects during EAM Jaishankar's visit

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

THIMPHU (TIP): India and Bhutan welcomed the signing of an agreement on a concessional Line of Credit of INR 4,000 crore for energy projects in Bhutan during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's official visit to the country, according to a joint press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

As per the official press release issued on Friday, Sept 18, Jaishankar paid an official visit to Bhutan from September 16 to 18 at the invitation of Bhutanese Foreign Affairs and External Trade Minister DN Dhungyel. During the visit, the two ministers reviewed all aspects of bilateral cooperation as well as regional and international issues of mutual importance and expressed satisfaction with progress in the India-Bhutan energy partnership.

The two sides recalled recent developments in energy cooperation, including the inauguration of the 1020 MW Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project and the signing of its Tariff Protocol, as well as the resumption of dam construction of the 1200 MW Punatsangchhu-I Hydroelectric Project.

They also welcomed the active engagement of Indian companies in hydropower projects in Bhutan, which the two sides said was adding dynamism to existing



Indian External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar visited Bhutan from September 16 to 18, 2026, holding high-level bilateral talks with Bhutan's Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade, Lyonpo D.N. Dhungyel.

energy cooperation. The two ministers jointly inaugurated or launched several development projects, including the 65-bedded Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital in Mongar, the Jaganathan Bridge on the Samdrup Jongkhar-Trashigang Highway and the 500 kW Lunana Hydropower Project. The two sides also welcomed the handing over of 54 electric vehicles to the

Royal Government of Bhutan and the transfer of 43 Jersey cows from India to the National Cattle Breeding Centre in Bumthang, the MEA said.

Jaishankar reaffirmed India's support for Bhutan's developmental goals and priorities, while Bhutan appreciated India's support for programmes under its 13th Five Year Plan (2024-29).

The two sides also discussed the Gelephu Mindfulness City, trade and transit, cross-border connectivity, digital payments and space cooperation.

India reaffirmed its commitment to establish an Immigration Check Post at Hatisar in Assam to facilitate movement of investors and visitors to Gelephu. The two sides also noted progress on the Gelephu-Kokrajhar and Samtse-Banarhat cross-border rail links. The ministers welcomed the operationalisation of a UPI-based facility enabling Bhutanese nationals to make digital payments in India using Bhutanese mobile applications.

They also welcomed cooperation in education, including doubling the number of Bhutanese students eligible under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations scholarship from 30 to 60 and increasing seats under the Nalanda University Scholarship Scheme from 30 to 55.

Simple evening ritual for a fresher, healthier-looking complexion

Our skin faces a daily barrage of pollution, sweat, makeup, excess oil, UV exposure and environmental stressors. While the skin does not need a special "detox" to remove toxins - the liver, kidneys and other organs already perform the body's detoxification processes - a short skin reset can be a useful way to simplify your routine and focus on cleansing, hydration and barrier care.

Instead of treating skin detox as a harsh cleansing program, think of it as a week dedicated to giving your complexion some extra care. You can do it occasionally, perhaps every few months, depending on your skin type and needs.

Start with hydration

Water is essential for overall health, and adequate hydration supports normal skin function. However, drinking excessive amounts of water does not literally "flush toxins" from the pores. During your skin-reset week, aim to drink enough water to stay comfortably hydrated and include water-rich foods such as cucumber, oranges, watermelon and soups in your diet. Cut back on excessive alcohol and very sugary drinks, which can contribute to dehydration or excess calorie intake. There is no universal requirement to drink exactly 10 glasses a day. Fluid needs vary according to body size, activity, climate, diet and health conditions.

Begin with a gentle morning routine

A skin reset should start with healthy habits rather than extreme detox drinks. Apple cider vinegar is sometimes promoted as a morning detox elixir, but there is no good evidence that it detoxifies the skin or "alkalises" the body. Your body maintains its blood pH within a tightly controlled range on its own.

If you enjoy apple cider vinegar, it should be consumed safely and appropriately diluted rather than taken straight, as its acidity can damage tooth enamel and irritate the throat or stomach. For healthier skin, focus instead on a balanced breakfast, adequate fluids, fruits and vegetables and sufficient protein.

Double cleanse - when you need it

Double cleansing can be particularly useful in the evening if you wear makeup or sunscreen or have been exposed to significant pollution. Start with an oil-based



cleanser or micellar product to loosen makeup, sunscreen and excess sebum. Follow with a gentle water-based cleanser to remove remaining residue.

But double cleansing is not essential for everyone. If your skin feels clean after one gentle cleanse, repeating the process may simply leave it dry or irritated.

Exfoliate, but don't overdo it

Removing dead skin cells can make the complexion feel smoother and can improve the appearance of dullness. But aggressive exfoliation can damage the skin barrier and trigger dryness, redness or sensitivity.

Choose a mild chemical or enzyme-based exfoliant suited to your skin type rather than a rough scrub. And don't exfoliate every day simply because it is "detox week". For sensitive or acne-prone skin, less can be more. If your skin is already irritated, skip exfoliation altogether until it settles.

Skip the steaming bowl

Facial steaming may feel relaxing, but there is little reason to believe that steam "opens" pores and removes toxins from them. Very hot steam can also cause redness, dryness or even burns.

Instead of placing your face over a bowl of boiling water, try a warm, damp washcloth for a few minutes. It can provide a soothing ritual without exposing your skin to unnecessarily high temperatures.

Olive oil: Natural boost for healthier hair

Olive oil has been a part of traditional hair-care routines for generations. Rich in fatty acids and antioxidant compounds, it can help condition dry strands, improve manageability and reduce breakage. While it is often promoted as a hair-growth remedy, its strongest benefits are related to hair conditioning and protection rather than directly stimulating new growth.

Research on oleuropein, a compound found in olives, has shown promising hair-growth effects in animal studies. However, these findings have not yet established that applying olive oil to the scalp produces the same effect in humans.

Scalp massage itself may also be a relaxing addition to a hair-care

routine, but there is limited evidence that simply increasing scalp blood circulation makes hair grow faster. For noticeable hair loss or thinning, identifying the underlying cause is more important than relying on oil treatments alone.

Dihydrotestosterone (DHT), a hormone derived from testosterone, plays an important role in androgenetic alopecia, or pattern hair loss, in genetically susceptible people. Olive oil contains oleic acid, and laboratory research has investigated the effects of various plant compounds on enzymes involved in androgen metabolism. However, there is not enough clinical evidence to conclude that applying olive oil to the scalp significantly blocks 5-alpha

reductase or lowers DHT in humans. So, while olive oil can be a useful conditioner, it should not be presented as a proven DHT-blocking treatment.

This is where olive oil can genuinely shine. Its fatty acids can coat the hair shaft, helping improve softness and reducing the rough, dry feeling associated with damaged hair.

A small amount used as a pre-shampoo treatment can help improve manageability and leave strands feeling smoother. It can be particularly useful for dry, coarse or curly hair.

Hair that is excessively dry and rough is more vulnerable to mechanical damage from brushing, styling and friction. Olive oil can provide lubrication and help minimise this friction.

FOOD CORNER

Sabudana tikki



INGREDIENTS

250 gm soaked sago, 1 boiled potato, 1/4 cup coriander leaves, 1/4 teaspoon red chilli powder, 1 cup refined oil, 2 large, chopped green chilli, sendha namak as required, 1/4 cup, crushed roasted peanuts

METHOD

- To make this scrumptious Navratri special recipe, soak sago (sabudana) in water for around 2 to 3 hours. When the sago has turned a little fluffy, drain the excess water and transfer the sago in a bowl.
- Now to prepare the tikki mixture, take a big bowl and add the boiled potatoes in it. Mash them completely using your hands. Now add crushed roasted peanuts, chopped green chillies, coriander leaves, red chilli powder and sendha namak along with the drained sago.
- Make small tikkis of this potato and sago mixture. The tikkis should not be soggy. Now take a pan and add oil in it. Heat it over moderate flame. Once the oil is sufficiently hot, carefully place the sago-potato tikkis in it and deep fry till they turn crispy and brown in colour.
- Serve these hot and crispy tikkis with peanut chutney and beaten curd. You can also enjoy this delicious snack recipe with hot piping cup of tea or coffee. These Sabudana Tikkis are perfect for Navratri fasts.

Banana burfi

INGREDIENTS

5 banana, 100 gm sugar, 1/4 cup butter, 1 teaspoon pistachios, 1/4 cup milk powder, 1 tablespoon cocoa powder, 1 teaspoon crushed lightly cashews, 50 gm ghee

METHOD

- To make this delicious Navratri special recipe, heat 1 tsp ghee in a pan over moderate flame. Add crushed pistachios and cashews to the pan. Lightly fry them till they turn golden in colour.
- Now take another heavy bottomed pan and heat it over medium flame. Add the remaining ghee and the bananas in it. Mix well. Add sugar and stir well. After a minute, add cocoa powder, milk powder and butter. Reduce the flame and gently stir till all ingredients are evenly combined.
- When the mixture starts to leave the sides of the pan and the bananas are well mashed, remove and transfer to a greased plate. Allow it cool. Before the mixture hardens completely, cut it into desired shapes and garnish with cashewnuts and pistachios.



Easy swaps to eat less ultra-processed food

Ultra-processed foods can slip into our daily diets almost unnoticed. Breakfast cereal in the morning, biscuits alongside tea, a packaged snack during a busy workday and instant noodles for dinner can quickly become routine.

There is nothing wrong with enjoying such foods occasionally. The concern arises when they become everyday staples and begin to crowd out foods such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, pulses, nuts and other minimally processed options. The good news is that cutting back does not require a complete dietary overhaul. A more sustainable approach is to look at the foods you eat most frequently and make a few simple substitutions. A culinary nutrition and holistic wellness coach suggests easy changes that can help reduce reliance on ultra-processed foods without making everyday meals complicated.

Give breakfast a simple makeover

Breakfast is an easy place to begin. Packaged cereals may save time, but you can replace them with quick meals made from basic ingredients. Oats with milk, nuts and seeds can be prepared in minutes and provide a filling combination of fibre, protein and healthy fats. Vegetable poha with peanuts is another convenient option that can be prepared quickly. You don't have to change your entire breakfast menu. Start by replacing one regular packaged item with a simpler alternative. The goal is not to make breakfast elaborate - it is to make a small change that you can comfortably repeat.

Break the tea-and-biscuit routine

For many people, tea automatically comes with biscuits. Over time, it can become more of a habit than a response to hunger. Try keeping easy alternatives available, such as roasted chana, makhana, fresh fruit or a small handful of nuts. Homemade chivda can also satisfy a craving for something crunchy and savoury.

This doesn't mean biscuits have to disappear from your diet. The idea is to reduce the frequency with which packaged snacks become the default choice.

Make instant noodles more balanced

Instant noodles are a convenient solution when there is little time or energy to cook. Instead of having them



on their own, add ingredients that provide more nutrients.

Throw in vegetables, eggs, tofu or paneer to increase the meal's nutritional value. You can use whatever is already available in your refrigerator.

The aim isn't to make people feel guilty about eating foods they enjoy. A more practical question is: what can be added to make this meal more balanced?

Swap flavored yoghurt for plain curd

Flavored yoghurt may appear to be a healthy snack, but some products contain added sugar.

Plain curd or unsweetened yoghurt can be a simple everyday alternative. Add fresh fruit for natural sweetness and nuts for crunch, or serve curd alongside your regular meal.

It is a small switch that can reduce your dependence on packaged, sweetened options without requiring a major change to your routine.

5. Eat the fruit instead of drinking it

A glass of packaged fruit juice can seem like an easy way to include fruit in your diet. But when you have the choice, eating whole fruit is generally a better everyday habit. Oranges, guavas, apples, papayas and other seasonal fruits require little preparation and provide fibre that is reduced or absent in many juices.

Whole fruit also tends to be more filling than a glass of juice, making it easier to control how much you consume.

Severe period pain not normal, could signal endometriosis, warn doctors

Doctors have said that severe or persistent period pain should not be dismissed as a normal part of menstruation, warning that it could be a sign of endometriosis, a chronic condition that can affect fertility and significantly reduce a woman's quality of life. They said growing evidence points to the role of genetic and epigenetic factors in shaping a woman's susceptibility to the condition, underlining the need for greater awareness, earlier diagnosis and timely medical evaluation.

"Symptoms of period pain are often dismissed as 'normal' because many of us lack awareness of a condition called endometriosis. It is a painful condition where tissue like the womb lining grows outside the uterus. It affects 1 in 10 women and girls, often causing severe period pain, pelvic pain, and infertility," said Dr Priti Arora Dhamija, senior consultant, Obstetrics and Gynaecology and fertility expert at Sitaram Bhartia Institute of Science and Research.

In India, most women wait 7-10 years for a diagnosis because doctors often lack simple tools to identify it early, she said, adding that the delay leads to worsening pain, missed school or work and decreased quality of life. Dr Dhamija said epigenetics has emerged over the past decade as a central mechanism in the pathogenesis of endometriosis.

"Epigenetic modifications, including DNA methylation, histone modifications and chromatin remodelling, can alter gene expression without changing the underlying DNA sequence. India's pluralistic health system and lack of referral systems creates a gap that forces women to navigate multiple providers, including traditional healers and alternative practitioners, increasing complexity and financial burden," she said.

Dr Jyotsna Suri, Head of the Department of Gynaecology and Obstetrics at Safdarjung Hospital, Delhi, said endometriosis is not simply a genetic disorder but a complex disease resulting from the interaction of genetic, hormonal, immune and environmental factors.

"Women with a close family member affected by endometriosis may have a higher risk, but genes are only one piece of the puzzle. Increasing evidence suggests that genetic susceptibility interacts with hormonal and inflammatory pathways as well as environmental factors to influence whether the disease develops and how severely it manifests," she said.

She added that epigenetic changes may also play an important role by altering how genes are expressed without changing the underlying DNA sequence.

Source: India Today

High-protein diet could be making you thirstier

Protein has become a favorite nutrient for people trying to build muscle, manage weight or stay fuller for longer. But if you have recently increased your intake of eggs, chicken, paneer, protein shakes or other high-protein foods and find yourself reaching for water more often, your diet could be part of the reason.

Protein metabolism produces nitrogen-containing waste, which the body converts into urea and eliminates through urine. Adequate fluid intake supports this process. A higher protein intake may therefore be accompanied by greater water requirements, although the effect varies depending on the overall diet and an individual's health.

Thirst can also become more noticeable when a high-protein diet replaces foods that naturally contain plenty of water, such as fruits, vegetables, soups and other minimally processed foods.

Another factor is what comes with the protein. High-protein diets are sometimes combined with reduced carbohydrate intake. Glycogen, the body's stored form of carbohydrate, is associated with water,

so changes in carbohydrate intake can alter the body's water balance and contribute to shifts in fluid needs.

There is no single amount of water that everyone on a high-protein diet needs. Fluid requirements depend on body size, physical activity, climate, diet and health conditions. A practical approach is to drink regularly throughout the day and pay attention to thirst and urine colour. Pale-yellow urine generally indicates adequate hydration, while consistently dark urine may be a sign that you need more fluids.

Water should remain the main source of hydration, while fruits, vegetables, milk, curd and other water-rich foods can contribute to overall fluid intake.

Persistent or excessive thirst should not automatically be blamed on a high-protein diet. It can also occur with dehydration, high blood sugar, certain medications and other medical conditions. If unusual thirst continues despite adequate fluid intake, especially when accompanied by frequent urination, fatigue or unexplained weight changes, speak to a healthcare professional.

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Meta One launched, gives Instagram and Meta AI users more premium perks

After introducing subscription plans across Instagram, Facebook, and WhatsApp, Meta has now launched Meta One, a service that pairs its standalone subscription apps with additional access to its AI tools. People can access it globally with a starting cost of \$7.99 per month for individual users.

Notably, the Facebook maker says the basic experience on Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp and Meta AI will continue to remain free. However, users who want more features, more AI-generated content and additional tools can now pay for a subscription. The company says Meta One currently brings together more than 50 features across its apps and Meta AI, with plans to add products such as Edits and AI glasses later.

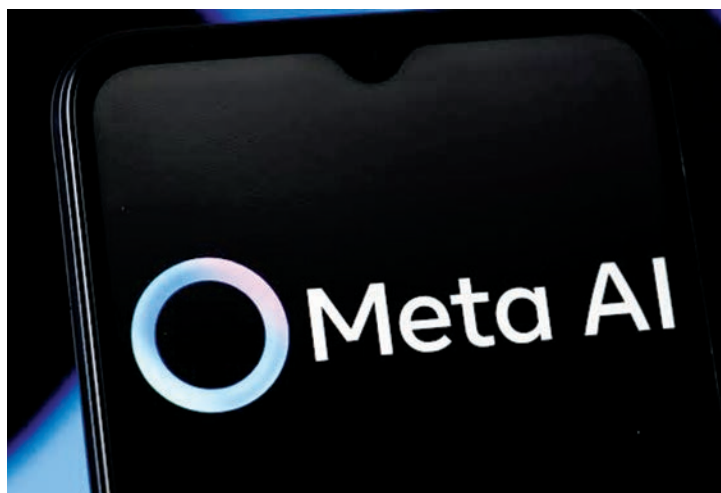
For individual users, Meta has introduced two plans called Core and Premium. The Core plan costs \$7.99 (around Rs 766) per month and combines Instagram Plus, WhatsApp Plus and Facebook Plus with additional AI usage.

This means subscribers can generate more images and videos with Meta AI and get more access to AI-powered tools such as Restyle on Instagram. Meta says the Premium plan, priced at \$19.99 (roughly Rs 1,917) per month, offers everything in Core but gives users even more room to use its AI tools.

Meta had already been offering separate paid subscriptions for Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp. Meta One essentially puts these services together and adds extra AI usage on top.

The company says more than half of the people taking part in early testing of the bundled plans used both AI and expression features. AI tools such as Restyle and voice effects on Instagram were among the features that attracted subscribers.

Meta is also targeting creators and businesses with a much wider range of plans. The Essential plan starts at \$14.99 (Rs 1,437) per month, while Advanced starts at \$49.99 (around Rs



4,794). There are also Expert and Max plans starting at \$149 (around Rs 14,290) and \$499 (around Rs 47,860) per month, respectively.

These subscriptions come with tools designed for people who use Meta platforms professionally. Depending on the plan, users can get a verified badge, impersonation protection, a bold follow button, enhanced profiles and more access to Meta Business Agent on WhatsApp.

The Advanced plan also adds features such as scheduling Stories up to 30 days in advance, adding links to organic posts and Reels, exportable analytics and deeper audience insights. Businesses can also give team members access without sharing their passwords.

Meta says the exact features, pricing and availability can vary depending on the region, app and account. The company also plans to expand Meta One with more products and AI-powered features over time.

How China is preparing for the risk of AI escaping human control

Warnings from researchers at leading U.S. AI developer Anthropic that increasingly powerful models could escape human control have drawn attention in China, where policymakers have been preparing for some of the same risks.

The U.S. and China are the two major driving forces of frontier AI development and the technology's global adoption.

Both superpowers have been at loggerheads over AI policies and industry practices, with these issues slated to feature prominently in bilateral talks later this month.

While the debate in the U.S. is focused on whether frontier AI could pose an existential threat to humanity, Chinese policymakers have generally treated AI as a powerful but governable technology whose risks can be contained through technical standards, regulation and state oversight.

"Chinese and American experts largely agree on AI risks," said Brian Tse, founder and CEO of Concordia AI, a Beijing- and Singapore-based AI safety and governance research group, adding the difference was on "how risks are framed and prioritised".

China has not proposed embedding independent monitors inside AI companies, as Anthropic has advocated. Its emerging regime instead relies on developer obligations, state-backed standards, security assessments and outside testing.

That approach is also shaped by a major difference in the two countries' AI industries. Chinese developers have increasingly promoted open-weight models. These refer to systems whose underlying parameters can be downloaded, inspected and modified. Their leading U.S. rivals such as Anthropic and OpenAI, however, do not make these specifications publicly available. Policy issued in May by China's cyberspace regulator, economic planner and industry ministry identifies "operational loss of control" as a security risk for AI agents, systems that can plan and carry out multi-step tasks more independently than conventional chatbots. The rules require developers to improve their ability to discover, intervene in, block and recover from improper agent behaviour.

The policy also calls on developers to guard against risks including data poisoning, algorithm manipulation and system vulnerabilities. It also says users should be informed about agents' autonomous decisions and retain final decision-making authority.

China has also begun drafting a mandatory national standard for AI agent safety, which Concordia's Tse said would be the world's first of its kind.

Source: Reuters

US admits deploying space weapons: Why it's the beginning of an unending arms race

For decades, space has been described as the next battlefield. On September 14, the United States took a step that could turn that warning into a new strategic reality.

US Air Force Secretary Troy Meink publicly acknowledged for the first time that the United States has deployed "on-orbit space control weapons" capable of defending the Joint Force against hostile adversary action.

The following day, US Space Force chief Gen. Douglas Schiess reinforced the disclosure, saying American Guardians already operate weapons in orbit that can defend the Joint Force against space-enabled attacks.

"Space is both a battlefield and the backbone of our Joint Force. We face determined and credible adversaries who are building and fielding counterspace systems at incredible speeds to target directly the United States's space advantage," Gen. Douglas Schiess said.



But the most important part of the announcement is what Washington did not reveal.

There is no public information about how many such weapons exist, where they are deployed, what satellites or systems they can target, or even whether they are kinetic or non-kinetic. "Space control" is a deliberately broad term.

The capability could involve electronic warfare, jamming or directed-energy systems, among other possibilities. US officials have offered no technical description that allows the weapon to be

identified with certainty.

And that ambiguity may itself be the point.

Meink said the wording was important from a deterrence perspective, while declining to provide further details. In other words, Washington wants potential adversaries to know that a capability exists without necessarily telling them exactly what it can do.

This is significant because the United States is no longer merely talking about preparing for warfare in space. It has acknowledged that a weapon system is already there.

The distinction matters. Military satellites underpin communications, navigation, missile warning, intelligence and targeting.

The US Space Force itself describes space superiority as essential to protecting American space assets and identifies orbital warfare and electromagnetic warfare among its missions.

Tata stocks fall up to 8% amid rift over Tata Sons listing, Chandra's term

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Tata Group stocks reversed their previous day's rally to trade lower on Friday, Sept 18, a day after the board of Tata Sons cleared the reappointment of N. Chandrasekaran as Tata Sons chairman for a five-year tenure and the listing of the company as mandated by the Reserve Bank of India.

In the group stocks basket, Tata Chemicals led the decline as it fell 8.08 per cent intraday, followed by Tata Investment Corporation, which declined 3.17 per cent. Tata Motors and TCS dropped 3.05 per cent and 2.75 per cent, respectively, with TCS emerging as the biggest drag on the Nifty IT index. Only a few Tata Group stocks bucked the broader trend, with Tata Capital leading the gainers, rising 1.54 per cent, while Nelco and Voltas advanced 0.88 per cent and 0.56 per cent, respectively.

The decline in the Tata Group stock follows multiple triggers relating to Tata Sons, one of which is the chairman of Tata Trust, Noel Tata, who succeeded Ratan Tata in 2024, calling the move to reappoint N. Chandrasekaran as Tata Sons chairman illegal on Thursday. In a statement posted by the trust shortly after the announcement, it said that Chandrasekaran communicated to the Tata Sons Board his own decision not to offer himself for reappointment.

"Once such a decision has been publicly communicated, it has



consequences which cannot be afterwards undone, since the Group's employees, its lenders and counterparties, the market and the majority shareholder have all proceeded on it," the statement said.

The Trust also issued a statement regarding the listing of Tata Sons, noting that Tata Trusts have not agreed to the listing of Tata Sons.

Noel N Tata, Chairman, Tata Trusts, said that the structure of Tata Group's ownership is what has allowed Tata Sons to act repeatedly in ways that a purely commercial calculus would not have supported. The majority shareholder of Tata Sons is a charitable trust that uses the dividends it receives to support hospitals, universities, research, and other initiatives that serve the public interest. It exists for public purpose and for nation-building.

Noel Tata added, "That is not sentiment. It is the operating model of

this House, and it has stood the test of time for more than a century. A listing will destroy its character and strike at the heart of this principle."

On Thursday, Noel Tata also tabled a proposal from the Shapoorji Pallonji Group (SP Group) to monetise a portion of its Tata Sons shareholding, potentially providing the group with at least ₹25,000 crore in liquidity.

Notably, the SP Group is the second-largest shareholder in India's Tata Sons at 18.4 per cent stake. The largest stakeholder in Tata Sons is Tata Trusts with a stake of 66 per cent.

G Chokkalingam of Equinomics Research noted that one need not worry too much about the leadership when it comes to Tata Group stocks. "Exogenous factors are more dominant. If you take TCS, for example, look at what is happening in the IT services industry. There is poor single-digit growth in the industry," he said.

Chokkalingam further added that leadership has a limited capability to handle these structural changes. "Similarly, if you take Tata Motors' passenger vehicle business, the European automobile industry and JLR's performance are exogenous to the leadership. So, leadership has a limited role to play."

When oil is at \$130, the rupee is weakening, and inflation is rising, the leadership cannot do much about these external factors, he explained.

Fed unlikely to signal aggressive tightening cycle; energy prices remain key risk: Axis Bank

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The US Federal Reserve is unlikely to embark on an aggressive tightening cycle, with only one additional rate hike projected, even as energy prices remain the key risk to the inflation outlook and potential new tariffs could renew price pressures, according to an Axis Bank report.

The US Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) unanimously raised policy rates by 25 basis points, citing a "timelier" return of inflation to its target. Notably, it was the first increase since 2023, as policymakers moved to address persistent inflationary pressures.

Axis Bank noted that while several inflation measures, including the closely watched Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) index, have remained above 2 per cent since 2020 and headline inflation has risen recently, the Fed's language suggests it is focusing on underlying inflation trends, including core, median and trimmed measures, which continue to move towards the target.

"Fed does not appear to be signaling an aggressive tightening cycle, with only one additional hike projected and energy prices remaining the key risk to the outlook," it said, noting that the gap with market pricing delays, but does not eliminate, the debate over the Fed's credibility.

According to Fed Chair Kevin Warsh, the decision reflected a combination of a persistently strong labour market, limited signs of cooling inflation and a worsening geopolitical environment since the July FOMC meeting.

The Fed's latest economic projections also revised both growth and inflation estimates higher. While financial conditions have tightened since March 2026, they remain supportive of growth.

"...a hike also helped reinforce the Fed's institutional credibility, especially given the chair's appointment amidst the President's opposition to higher rates..." the lender said in the report.

According to Axis Bank, the rate hike and the Fed's subsequent commentary did not point to an aggressive tightening cycle, with policymakers continuing to expect productivity gains to ease price pressures over the longer term.

The lender estimates that the Fed could skip an October hike and deliver potentially just one more increase by March 2027, compared with market expectations of 75 basis points of additional tightening.

The Fed's latest economic projections also revised both growth and inflation estimates higher.

Oil prices fall for third day on hopes of limited Saudi supply disruptions

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): Oil prices fell for a third day on Friday, Sept 18, as easing concerns over Saudi supply disruptions outweighed anxiety about a widening the Middle East conflict amid fresh fighting between Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Houthis.

Brent crude futures fell 79 cents, or 0.75%, to \$104 a barrel by 0319 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate futures fell 70 cents, or 0.69%, to \$101.20 a barrel. Both benchmarks closed down about 1% on Thursday, Sept 17.

Brent prices are on track for their first weekly loss in three, down 0.5%, while WTI is set to gain 1.2%.

Markets largely shrugged off concerns about new threats to supplies even as Saudi Arabia and Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis exchanged fresh strikes across their border on Thursday, expanding the Middle East war front.

Earlier this week, prices climbed to close to four-month highs as sources said crude loadings at Saudi Arabia's Red Sea export hub of Yanbu had been suspended and Riyadh cancelled some



deliveries to Europe after its East-West pipeline was damaged in an attack last week.

However, prices have cooled off on reports Saudi Arabia was seeking to return about half the capacity of its East-West oil pipeline within days and the nation was offering more crude cargoes to Asian refiners through ship-to-ship transfers off Oman's port of Sohar.

"Recent efforts to restore Saudi export capacity have reduced some of the immediate supply anxiety," said Priyanka Sachdeva, head of market insights at Phillip Nova.

Sources that have spoken to Reuters have given varying estimates of how

long it will take to reopen the pipeline and return crude flows to normal.

Oil prices, however, are still up over \$100 per barrel as the markets are waiting for evidence of a clear supply improvement, analysts said.

"The key question is whether physical flows can normalise and what could be the timeline. If we see a sustained improvement in Hormuz traffic, some of the geopolitical premium can unwind further," Sachdeva said.

However, transporting oil through the region remains risky.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards Navy said a Togo-flagged oil tanker was struck while attempting to make an "illegal passage" through the Strait of Hormuz on Thursday, Iranian state media said early on Friday.

The US and Iran have held no peace talks since an interim agreement reached in June collapsed within weeks. The war will come up for discussion at the United Nations General Assembly next week, and an Iranian delegation will be able to attend, according to the US State Department.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

ARIES



Ganesha says that this week, significant progress will be expected in handling capital investment and references related to abroad. Due to this, your status will remain in the related fields. There will be golden opportunities this week to upgrade the aspects related to livelihood. If you are looking to make capital investments, then the movement of the stars will continue to give positive results. But there will be chances of sudden expenditure in money matters. In the first part of this week, although there may be some diseases and pain in the health, in the second part again the movement of the stars will be pleasant and spectacular. In the last days of this week, there will be opportunities for steady progress in terms of real estate. However, the opposing side can plot something to disturb. There will be normal level results in love affairs. But avoid tension in small things.

TAURUS



Ganesha says this week there will be pleasant opportunities to increase desired work and business. As a result, there will be opportunities for continuous progress in the respective fields. This week, the awareness of karma and awareness towards it will take everyone closer to those goals. From where there will be opportunities to move forward continuously. That means your reputation will continue to increase. There will be a dividend in capital investment. In love relations, there will be moments of love between partners. This week, money will remain profitable from somewhere. As a result, there will be opportunities for continuous progress in related fields. In the middle of the week, there will be a possibility of more expenditure on money matters. As a result, the level of problems will increase. This week's stars will be giving some weaknesses in terms of health. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good. There will be moments of laughter and happiness in the courtyard of married life. So keep up the efforts.

GEMINI



Ganesha says this week there will be respect and prestige in the related political and social life. If engaged in upgrading work and business. So the movement of the stars will continue to point toward pleasant results. There will be profit in capital investment. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. If you are looking for employment in private and

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - SEP 21, 2026 TO SEP 27, 2026

BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

government undertakings, then the movement of stars will give important results. Very possible, can be nominated for promotion. In the middle part of this week, however, there will be chances of significant progress in earning and raising money. There will be moments of love in love relationships. But in the last days of this week, you will have to travel and travel somewhere. However, during this time, softness in health can emerge. Therefore, pay full attention to food and drink. Otherwise, you will be worried.

CANCER



Ganesha says this week, according to work and business, will be engaged in making contact with the concerned people and taking them forward. If you are looking to invest capital. So, the movement of the stars will continue to give the gift of happy results. Dividends will remain increased in capital investment. That means you will be able to weave the dreams of the future. If you are looking to invest capital. So the movement of the stars will continue to give important results. In the middle part of this week, there will be chances of promotion in the private and government sectors. That is, this week you will be included in the category of a special person. Today will be a pleasant and wonderful day in terms of health. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. This week, being inspired by someone, you will be able to complete the work in the related areas. Overall, this week's stars will be pleasant.

LEO



Ganesha says that in view of the challenges coming in the related political and social life this week, some special decisions can be taken this week. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. There will be profit in capital investment. But the opposition parties may try to create some trouble. Therefore, it will be good if you proceed with caution in the respective areas at your level. Capital investments and dividends abroad will continue to increase. Although there will be a possibility of a sudden increase in money matters. There will be mixed results this week in love affairs. From the beginning of this week, there will be a tough race to complete the work related to livelihood. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. In the middle part of this week, the work of any religion and public interest can be finalized. There will be chances of promotion in the last days of this week. Therefore, do not weaken your understanding at your level.

VIRGO



Ganesha says this week's stars will be the ones to give moments of laughter and happiness in the courtyard of married life. As a result, you will be able to move forward like a responsible householder. There

will be a dividend in capital investment. But in the context of immovable property, you may have to run continuously. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good. There will be opportunities for continuous progress in the work related to livelihood. Although there will be pleasant aspects of raising work and business. Due to this, the body and mind will be happy. There will be opportunities to imbibe the mantra of self-confidence in the middle part of this week. As a result, there will be opportunities for continuous progress in related fields. This week, like other businessmen, you will be ready to do something special. Today will be somewhat weak in terms of health. So pay attention to food and drink. So it will be good.

LIBRA



Ganesha says this week's stars will help fulfil the responsibilities related to the family. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts at your level. So it will be good. This week, continuous efforts will be needed to deal with the aspects related to livelihood. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good. That is, this week you will be able to achieve any big achievement through your hard work. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. In love relations, there will be moments of love between partners. In the middle of the week, there will be moments of laughter and happiness in married life. If you are eligible for marriage, a suitable life partner will make efforts to get close to you. In the last days of the week, the movement of the stars will suddenly increase the money expenditure. During this time, an opposing party can get dragged into court cases.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says this week, we will continue to move towards important achievements in the areas of work and business. This week, there will be chances of monetary gain from somewhere. Therefore, pay full attention to your food and drink. So it will be good. If you are engaged in any competitive exam and increasing your linguistic knowledge. So there will be opportunities for desired progress. There will be chances of desired progress in dealing with aspects related to livelihood. That is, this week will be regarded as the biggest week and businessmen in the region. There will be moments of laughter and happiness in the courtyard of household life. There will be opportunities for desired monetary gains this week. It will be full of important achievements in social, political, and economic fields. Efforts to earn and raise money will be expected to make significant progress. That means this week will be full of achievements. But due to the emergence of some weakness in health, you will remain worried.

SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says this week, the movement of the stars will be about giving away material comforts. At the same time, the social and political situation will remain strong. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. This week, there will be moments of love between parents and siblings. But due to the emergence of some weakness in health, you will be worried. Therefore, pay full attention to food and drink. So it will be good. In the middle of this week, there will be moments of love between partners in love affairs. There will be chances of continuous progress regarding the child's side. Due to this, the process of making them intelligent and fearless will be fruitful. In the last days of this week, again, the movement of stars will give pleasant and wonderful results. However, there will be constant running around in court cases. During this time, the opposing side can dominate. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says that this week there will be chances of significant progress in personal and business life. As a result, some big plans can be started under your leadership. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. This week, you can start some important plans and work towards the goals of a prosperous life. So keep up the efforts. Today's stars will be pleasant and wonderful in terms of raising your physical abilities. However, again in the middle of the week, the movement of the stars will help you exercise to complete the upcoming tasks. But due to deep tension in some things among the relatives, you will be troubled. In the last days of this week, there will be the desired kind of progress in earning and raising money. There will be progress in completing the work related to studies and teaching.

AQUARIUS



Ganesha says that this week, significant progress will be expected in earning and raising money according to the needs of production and sales. Significant progress may be expected in the export of related products and in promoting business in far-flung areas. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. So it will be good. In the middle of this week, there will be constant running around regarding real estate. If you are engaged in buying expensive clothes, then you will be successful. So don't weaken the efforts. Although this week's stars will be somewhat weak in terms of health. But pay full attention to food and drink. So it will be good. This means attention has to be paid to increasing the inner power. In the last days of the week, again, the movement of stars will be pleasant in terms of collecting material comforts. So don't hesitate to continue the efforts.

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BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : SEPTEMBER 21 TO SEPTEMBER 27 BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

SEPTEMBER 21

Ganesha says today you have many opportunities to improve your financial condition. Traveling abroad or making transactions can be beneficial. Property-related disputes can be resolved. Children may bring good news for you, demanding more attention. Take good care of yourself. At the end of the year, you are planning a pilgrimage that can give you relaxation and peace of mind.

SEPTEMBER 22

Ganesha says you are a great host and enjoy meeting people, but sometimes you need to curb your tendency to be stubborn and extravagant. Foreign travel or transactions can be very beneficial. Some people find a healthy romantic period during the wedding process. You can give priority to real estate transactions, construction projects, and repairs. Any type of confrontation or situation that creates tension and stress should be avoided.

SEPTEMBER 23

Ganesha says that although you are incredibly talented and highly respected by your friends and colleagues, you need to check your tendency to be rigid, extravagant, and sometimes jealous. People with piles and high blood pressure need to be extra careful about their health. The marital front seems smooth despite occasional disputes and estrangement. You can gain popularity among your friends and the social environment because of your creative thinking.

SEPTEMBER 24

Ganesha says you have a great memory and amazing technical skills, but you need to work on your tendency to be irritable and vindictive at times. Today, many changes can be seen in the company in which you work. You can get a lot of benefits from these, but there can be a change in your routine. Offers can be lucrative for businessmen looking to make quick cash. Women who are pregnant should pay more attention to their health. Paying attention to your

diet and prescription medications is important.

SEPTEMBER 25

Ganesha says you should exercise financial restraint today and avoid spending money on unnecessary luxuries. The closeness between you two can increase, and you can respect each other more. For most of you, a distant trip seems most likely towards the end of the year. You should not be disappointed by the high expectations of your family members. Also, you can spend some special and romantic moments with your partner.

SEPTEMBER 26

Ganesha says you enjoy surrounding yourself with beautiful things. Even if you are not an artist, you still like to collect objects that have artistic value. This year, there may be occasions of improper communication with your employer. Check thoroughly before handing over your work to your superiors. Although many factors may not be in your favor, the support and



assistance of friends and family members can give you new energy and make things more comfortable than otherwise. It couldn't be an easier time.

SEPTEMBER 27

Ganesha says you put in a lot of effort, and your dedication and efforts are always appreciated, but you need to curb your tendency to be indecisive, stubborn, and sometimes lazy. This year, your employer and you may become close relatives. As a result, you can play an important role as an ambassador for the company. You can be the center of attraction at any social gathering. You can meet new people and develop important relationships. Even if you seem to be in good health, it is still recommended that you take preventive medications.

CONTD FROM PAGE 34



PISCES

Ganesha says this week, there will be pleasant opportunities to increase material comforts. If you are engaged in elevating the aspects related to household life. So, the movement of the stars will continue to give you the desired destination. As a result, there will be opportunities for continuous progress in the fields of related sports, films, arts, medicine, and research. If you want to travel and travel somewhere. So the movement of the stars will continue to give pleasant results. There will be moments of laughter and happiness in the courtyard of married life. If you are eligible for marriage, then the movement of stars will give pleasant and wonderful results. However, due to inefficiencies in the middle part of the week, some will remain troubled. Therefore, do useful yoga asanas along with food and drink. There can be disputes in terms of transactions. But again, in the last days of the week, the movement of stars will give pleasant results. So keep up the efforts.

AUTHOR BIO

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

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Sikh History This Week

SEPTEMBER 18 TO SEPTEMBER 24

SEPTEMBER 18

1688 - Battle of Bhangani



The Battle of Bhangani was fought near Paonta Sahib on September 18, 1688. Guru Gobind Singh Sahib's forces defeated a coalition of neighbouring hill rulers. The battle was one of the important early military encounters of the Guru's life. The SGPC dates the battle to 18 Assu 1745 Bikrami/September 18, 1688.

1924 - Jaito Morcha



The 13th jatha of 500 Akalis, led by Shaheed Lakha Singh Jahan Shah, departed from Amritsar for Jaito during the Jaito Morcha, the Akali struggle connected with the restoration of Sikh religious and political rights.

2026 - 450th Joti Jot commemorations of Guru Amar Das



The SGPC held the main commemorative programme at Gurdwara Baoli Sahib, Goindwal Sahib, as part of the 450th anniversary observances connected with Guru Amar Das Sahib's Joti Jot.

SEPTEMBER 19

1893 - Birth anniversary of Bhai Vir Singh



Bhai Vir Singh, one of the most influential figures of modern Punjabi literature and Sikh intellectual thought, was born on September 19, 1872-not 1893. His literary works played an important role in the Sikh renaissance and the Singh Sabha movement.

SEPTEMBER 20

1891 - Birth of Sant Attar Singh Mastuana



Sant Attar Singh, an influential Sikh saint associated with the Namdhari/Sant tradition and the promotion of Sikh education and religious awareness, was born in 1866. His work later became associated with Mastuana Sahib and educational institutions.

Historical focus - Sikh education and reform



The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the Sikh community's educational and religious revival, particularly through institutions associated with the Singh Sabha movement.

SEPTEMBER 21

1849 - Post-annexation Sikh period

The period following the British annexation of

Punjab in 1849 saw major changes in Sikh political, religious and social institutions. The second half of the 19th century eventually witnessed the emergence of the Singh Sabha movement and efforts to reform Sikh religious practice and education.

SEPTEMBER 22

1905 - Sikh educational and reform movement

The early 20th century was an important period for the expansion of Sikh educational institutions and reform organisations, following the Singh Sabha movement's efforts to promote Sikh identity, education and religious literature.

SEPTEMBER 23

1924 - Jaito Morcha continues

The Jaito Morcha remained one of the major episodes in the Akali movement of the 1920s. Jathas of volunteers continued travelling towards Jaito despite arrests and repression.

1924-25 - Akali mobilisation

The movement demonstrated the growing role of organised Sikh volunteer groups in the struggle over management of gurdwaras and Sikh religious institutions.

SEPTEMBER 24

1574 - Gurgaddi of Guru Ram Das Sahib

September 24 is an important date in the 2026 Nanakshahi calendar, marking the Gurgaddi Divas of Guru Ram Das Sahib, the fourth Sikh Guru.

Guru Amar Das Sahib appointed Bhai Jetha, later known as Guru Ram Das Sahib, as his successor. According to the SGPC, Guru Ram Das Sahib was installed as the Fourth Nanak on September 1, 1574 in the Gregorian chronology given by the SGPC; the 2026 Nanakshahi calendar commemorates his Gurgaddi Divas on September 24.

Guru Ram Das Sahib is closely associated with the establishment and development of Ramdaspur, later Amritsar. He also composed 638 hymns, including the four Laavan, which form the scriptural basis of the Sikh marriage ceremony, Anand Karaj.



Radha Ashtami: when Radha Rani came to Braj

Radha Ashtami is celebrated as the sacred birth anniversary of Radha, the beloved companion and eternal devotee of Lord Krishna. Observed on the eighth day, or Ashtami, of the bright fortnight of the Hindu month of Bhadrapada, the festival holds a special place in the Vaishnava tradition, particularly in Braj, Mathura, Vrindavan and Barsana. This year, Radha Ashtami will be celebrated on September 18.

Every year, as the monsoon season begins to give way to the early signs of autumn, the sacred land of Braj comes alive with devotion, music and colour. Temples are decorated with flowers, devotional songs fill the air and devotees gather to celebrate Radha Ashtami, the festival commemorating the appearance of Radha, the divine beloved of Lord Krishna.

Observed on Shukla Paksha Ashtami, the eighth day of the waxing fortnight in the month of Bhadrapada, Radha Ashtami is particularly important in Barsana, traditionally regarded as Radha's birthplace, as well as Mathura and Vrindavan. For devotees, however, the festival is much more than a celebration of a divine birth. It represents the spiritual ideal of selfless love, surrender and devotion.

The divine counterpart of Krishna

In Vaishnava traditions, Radha is revered as the embodiment of the highest form of devotion, or bhakti. While Krishna is worshipped as the Supreme Divine, Radha represents the soul's complete love and surrender towards the Divine.

The relationship between Radha and Krishna has inspired generations of poets, saints, musicians, painters and spiritual teachers. Their love is generally understood not merely as an earthly romance but as a metaphor for the relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme.

Radha's devotion is described as unconditional. She seeks nothing for herself; her joy lies in Krishna's happiness. It is this quality that has made Radha an enduring symbol of divine love.

Origin and traditional account

The story of Radha's birth is preserved primarily through later Vaishnava devotional traditions and texts rather than through a single uniform account found across all Hindu scriptures.

According to popular Braj tradition, Radha appeared on Bhadrapada Shukla Ashtami in Barsana. She was born to Vrishabhanu and Kirtida. Her father is traditionally described as a respected leader of the Braj community, while Kirtida is revered as her mother.

The traditional story says that when Radha was born, extraordinary joy spread through the household and the surrounding region. People came to offer their blessings, and the occasion was regarded as a divine event.

One popular devotional tradition says that Radha did not open her eyes immediately after her birth. When the infant Krishna was brought before her, she opened her eyes and gazed upon him. The episode has become one of the beloved stories associated with Radha's



childhood and is celebrated symbolically by devotees.

Different traditions narrate details of Radha's birth and childhood differently. The enduring message, however, remains the same: Radha and Krishna are understood as eternally connected manifestations of divine love.

Radha and Krishna in Braj

The landscape of Braj occupies a central place in the Radha-Krishna tradition. Places such as Barsana, Vrindavan, Nandgaon, Govardhan and Gokul are associated with episodes from their divine childhood and youth.

According to devotional traditions, Radha and Krishna spent their childhood and youth surrounded by the natural beauty of Braj. The Yamuna, forests, groves and village paths became part of the sacred geography associated with their stories.

The Rasa Lila, Krishna's divine dance with the gopis, occupies an especially important place in this tradition. Radha is regarded as the foremost among Krishna's devotees and as the supreme expression of loving devotion.

For devotees, these stories are not simply accounts of a distant past. They are spiritual narratives through which qualities such as surrender, love, humility and longing for the Divine are contemplated.

Why Radha Ashtami is significant

Radha Ashtami has a special place in bhakti traditions because Radha represents pure devotion without expectation.

The festival teaches that devotion is not simply about seeking blessings or

material rewards. Radha's love for Krishna is traditionally portrayed as unconditional and completely selfless. Her spiritual significance therefore extends beyond the Radha-Krishna story itself.

For many devotees, Radha symbolises the soul yearning for union with the Divine. Krishna represents the Supreme Reality, while Radha's devotion represents the complete surrender of the individual self.

This interpretation has been particularly influential in the devotional traditions of North India.

The sacred connection with Bhadrapada

Radha Ashtami falls approximately two weeks after Krishna Janmashtami, although the exact Gregorian date changes every year because the Hindu lunar calendar determines the festival.

The proximity of the two festivals gives the season a special devotional character. Janmashtami celebrates Krishna's birth, while Radha Ashtami celebrates Radha's appearance.

Together, the festivals highlight the inseparable devotional relationship between Radha and Krishna.

Rituals and observances

Devotees observe Radha Ashtami through fasting, prayer, temple visits, devotional singing and special worship.

Many devotees begin the day with a bath and wear clean or traditional clothes before preparing for puja. Some observe a fast for the day, while others follow a simpler form of dietary restraint. Fasting practices vary according to family traditions and individual religious observance.

At temples, Radha's deity is ceremonially bathed in abhisheka with substances such as milk, yoghurt, honey and other traditional offerings. The deity is then dressed in beautiful garments and adorned with jewellery and flowers.

A special shringar, or ceremonial adornment, is often an important part of the celebration. Devotees offer flowers, fruits, sweets and other traditional offerings while reciting prayers and singing devotional songs.

Barsana: where Radha Ashtami comes alive

If there is one place where Radha Ashtami acquires a particularly powerful cultural and devotional expression, it is Barsana in Uttar Pradesh.

Barsana is traditionally identified as Radha's birthplace and is home to the famous Shri Radha Rani Temple, popularly known as Ladli Ji Temple. During Radha Ashtami, thousands of devotees visit the town.

The temple and surrounding streets are decorated with flowers. Devotional music, chants and religious ceremonies continue through the celebrations.

The festival draws pilgrims from different parts of India who come to seek the blessings of Radha Rani.

Celebrations in Vrindavan and Mathura

Vrindavan and Mathura also witness elaborate Radha Ashtami celebrations. Temples dedicated to Radha and Krishna organise special pujas, abhishekas, shringar ceremonies and cultural programmes.

Devotees gather for kirtan, bhajan singing and aarti. Temple courtyards are filled with flowers, devotional music and the sound of sacred chants.



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Perched along Kerala's southern coast, Varkala is a destination where dramatic cliffs, golden beaches, sacred temples and tranquil backwaters come together in an unusually beautiful landscape. Unlike much of Kerala's relatively flat coastline, Varkala rises dramatically above the Arabian Sea, its famous Northern Cliff offering sweeping views of the water below. But Varkala is more than a beach destination. It is a place where spirituality and leisure coexist effortlessly. Temple bells, yoga sessions, Ayurvedic therapies, seafood shacks, cafés and colourful little shops give the town a distinctive character. Its relaxed atmosphere has long attracted backpackers, wellness seekers and travellers looking for a slower pace.

Varkala has some of the best pristine beaches, hills, lakes, forts, lighthouses, natural fisheries and springs - all of this together makes this town a little paradise. You will also find a lot of shops with signboards in Hebrew selling Yoga mats, oxidised silver jewellery and harem pants made of cotton. Ayurvedic spas, affordable resorts, hostels, clean beaches make it a must-visit city of Kerala.

Water Sports in Varkala

Varkala is the only place in Kerala where the hills come close to the sea. The uniqueness of the place is the merging of cliffs with the Arabian Sea. Varkala Beach is a popular beach where you can enjoy various water sports activities such as para-sailing and paragliding.

The Geological Survey of India calls it as the Varkala Formation. The Discovery Channel has named Varkala as one of the top ten seasonal beaches.

Several water sports operators are to be found along the beaches, and travellers can easily do a lot of water activities with good fun. The Kapil Lake, situated close to the beach, is another famous destination to enjoy moments of peace. The Chilakkoor Beach which is close to the Varkala town is a perfect destination to view the sunset. Though the beach is not developed commercially, it is an ideal place for leisurely evening walks.

Varkala Beach

Set amid a beautiful setting about 10 km away from the calm and quiet hamlet of Varkala in Kerala, Varkala Beach, also known as Papanasam Beach, is a beautiful stretch of sand renowned for its solitude unlike other commercial beaches of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The backdrop Arabian Sea against the cliffs of Kerala is a unique one since these sedimentary formation peaks are not found anywhere in the otherwise flat coastline of Kerala.

The beach itself is divided into two parts, the southern area of the beach lying at the end of the road leading from Janardhana Swamy Temple regarded as sacred by Hindus. However, if you are a tourist, the north part of the beach right at the bottom of the cliff is worth going renowned for its natural mineral spring.

The water of Varkala Beach is regarded to own medicinal and curative properties. A dip in the holy water is said

Varkala: Where cliffs meet the Arabian Sea



to cleanse the body of impurities and all sins and thus the name Papanasam Beach meaning 'Destroyer of Sins'.

Sunsets at the Varkala Beach are especially pristine and call for a serene walk along the beach. Also if you are a seafood lover, then the place is a paradise for you. The eating joints nearby offer some of India's best moth watering and

affordable food.

Edava Beach

Untouched and unspoiled by tourist activities, the Edava beaches are the virgin stretches circling a blue lagoon where sea and backwaters run parallel divided by a more-than-one km of straight road. There is also an estuary

that connects the sea with the backwaters here.

Mangrove Forest Kayaking

Mangrove forest in Nedungolam, Paravur, in the district of Kollam, is located at a distance of 18kms from Varkala. Perfect for a half-day trip, one can go on 4km kayaking during morning or evening. Sailing through these canals of Nedungolam, especially the mangrove forest, is a must-try experience.

Thiruvambadi Beach

Lying 1 km off Thiruvandabi road, this black sand beach adjacent to the North cliff is an ideal picnic spot amidst lush coconut groves to relax and unwind.

Anjengo Fort

Anjengo Fort, situated 12 km off Varkala at Anjengo, is believed to have been built in 17th century. Presently the fort is protected by the National Heritage monuments.

The cemetery in the fort shelters the deceased occupants of the fort. The popular Muthalapuzhi Lake is situated very close to the Fort. Autos or cabs can be taken to reach the fort.

Sivagiri Mutt

Located at Varkala in Thiruvananthapuram district of Kerala is the one of the popular ashrams of Shri Narayana Guru, Sivagiri Mutt. This ashram celebrates Guru Deva Jayanti (in August) and the Guru Deva Samadhi (in September) every year. Janardhana Swami Temple and Varkala Beach are some nearby attractions which one should never miss during their visit to Sivagiri Mutt. Sree Narayana Guru (1855-1928), a saint, social reformer, philosopher and a leader of Ezhava community, made Varkala his headquarters. Sivagiri mutt, instituted by Sree Narayana Guru, is another major pilgrim centre here. The 'Sivagiri Pilgrimage' is usually conducted between 30th December and 1st January every year. Even decades after the Guru breathed his last breathe here in 1928; his Samadhi (resting place) continues to be thronged by thousands of pilgrims. The Sivagiri Mutt is also the headquarters of the Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Sangham, a religious organization established by the Guru to propagate his concept of 'One Caste, One Religion, One God'.

Varkala Cliff

Varkala CLIFF is a geologically important site in the region. The cliff is formed by laterite and overlooks the Varkala beach. It has been declared as a Geological monument by the Geological Survey of India but the stunning view of the golden beach and the playful waves that it offers is worth a visit for beach lovers and photographers.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

US-Canada trade war heats up as Trump signs memorandum to exclude Canadian products from federal procurement

Canadian-origin items unavailable for purchase through the federal civil procurement system.

"The Memorandum also directs the United States Trade Representative to monitor Canada's continued treatment of U.S. origin goods in Canadian government procurement," the White House said in a fact sheet.

The latest action marks another escalation in a broader trade dispute between the two North American neighbors, with procurement access emerging as another point of contention alongside tariffs and market access.

The White House accused Canada of maintaining preferential treatment for domestic producers while restricting opportunities for American companies.

"Despite Canada's procurement commitments to the United States, Canadian provinces have disadvantaged American small businesses and companies by, among other things, establishing preferences for Canadian products and content under the 'Buy Canadian' policy," the fact sheet said.

The administration also claimed that Canadian companies have preferential access to more than USD 280 billion of the US government procurement system, while American companies "no longer receive equal treatment in the Canadian government procurement system."

Trump's latest move comes amid continued tensions over the terms of trade between the two countries and the future of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

The White House said the administration had not agreed to renew the USMCA in its current form, arguing that the agreement does not provide sufficient benefits to US manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, workers, service suppliers and businesses.

"The United States, under President Trump's leadership, did not agree to renew the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) in its current form, because the deal is not sufficiently beneficial for U.S. manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, workers, service suppliers, and businesses of all sizes," the White House said.

The administration has increasingly relied on tariffs and other trade measures as part of its broader "America First Trade Policy", which it says is intended to protect US workers and businesses and expand market access for American exports.

According to the White House, Trump has also used negotiations with trading partners and tariffs to encourage investment and manufacturing in the United States and diversify supply chains.

The dispute has also extended to specific sectors.

The procurement exclusion marks the latest in a series of punitive economic measures taken by Washington against Ottawa.

On September 8, 2026, Trump enacted targeted trade actions by banning and increasing tariffs on specific items.

That decision was aimed at addressing "Canada's continued discrimination against American exporters and to offset the disadvantage or burden on U.S. commerce from Canada's discriminatory treatment against U.S. exports of alcoholic beverages, dairy, and motor vehicles."

The trade dispute intensified in recent weeks after the two countries failed to reach a new trade agreement in August.

On August 22, the US imposed 50 per cent tariffs on a broad range of Canadian goods, following through on an earlier threat.

Canada responded with retaliatory tariffs covering nearly 700 categories of US products, which took effect on September 8.

The White House linked Ottawa's measures directly to broader trade renegotiations, framing the latest procurement measure as part of its broader effort to secure reciprocal treatment for US companies.

"President Trump is continuing to deliver on his promise to keep American workers, farmers, and

businesses first by ending other countries' unfair and unreasonable trade practices against the United States," the statement read.

The latest memorandum adds government purchasing to the list of areas where Washington is seeking changes in Canada's treatment of US goods. (Source: ANI)

Freezing Trinamool Congress name, symbol CEC's 'birthday gift' to PM Modi: Congress

aiding those very forces that overturn the people's verdict.

"First Shiv Sena, then NCP, and now Trinamool Congress. Every time, the same pattern - BJP and the Election Commission join forces to split a party. Then its election symbol is snatched away," Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X.

When an entire party can be stolen, it's hardly surprising that the votes of crores of Indians can be stolen too, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha said.

"Vote chori. Government chori. Now party chori - these have become symbols of our democratic decline," Gandhi said.

"The ECI's constitutional responsibility is to protect the mandate but instead, it's aiding those very forces that overturn the people's verdict," he said.

"This fight isn't just Mamata Banerjee's. It's the fight of every political party, every voter who wants free and fair elections," Gandhi said.

The Congress on Thursday condemned the Election Commission's decision of directing rival All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) factions not to use the party name and the "flowers and grass symbol" during the West Bengal bypolls, alleging that it was abdication of constitutional responsibility by the poll body.

The Congress had further said that freezing the AITC name and symbol is CEC Gyanesh Kumar's "late night birthday gift" to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Election Commission has directed rival factions of the AITC not to use the party name and symbol during the bypolls and asked them to submit their preferred names and symbols by Friday morning.

In its interim order issued on Thursday night, the Commission, after hearing leaders of the two factions led by Mamata Banerjee and Arup Roy, said the matter requires substantive determination by the poll body under provisions of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.

In its interim order, the EC said, "On due consideration of the totality of information available on record...the Commission is of the opinion that there are two rival groups in the All India Trinamool Congress, one led by Ms Mamata Banerjee and the other led by Shri Arup Roy."

"Each group is now claiming to be the party, and, therefore, the matter requires substantive determination by the Commission under Para 15 of the Election Symbols (Reservation & Allotment) Order, 1968," it said.

Accordingly, the Commission said, that to place both the rival groups on an even keel and to protect their rights and interests and going by the past precedent, the Commission gave its interim order to cover the purpose of the current by-elections and to continue till the final determination of the dispute.

"Neither of the two groups led by Shri Arup Roy (Petitioner) and the other led by Ms Mamata Banerjee (Respondent) shall be permitted to use the name of the party 'All India Trinamool Congress'.

"Neither of the two groups shall also be permitted to use the symbol 'Flowers and Grass', reserved for 'All India Trinamool Congress'," the Commission said.

India flags bilateral fallout, vows to protect trade interests as US passes Russia, Iran sanction bill

also for the international energy market.

The sharp reaction came as the US Congress passed the Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026 empowering President Donald Trump to impose



tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries buying Russian oil and gas, potentially putting Indian exports under renewed pressure.

The Ministry of External Affairs said it is monitoring further developments but made clear that India's energy policy would continue to be guided by the need to ensure energy security for its 1.4 billion people.

"India remains firmly committed to ensuring energy security for its 1.4 billion people. It will continue to do so through diversified sourcing and on the basis of evolving market dynamics," the Government said.

The legislation, passed by the US House of Representatives by 262-159 after clearing the Senate by 86-11 last month, now goes to Trump.

It gives the US President authority to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on goods from countries that meet specified conditions relating to purchases of Russian crude oil and natural gas. India and China are among the major buyers potentially exposed to the provision.

India also made clear that it would take steps to protect its economic interests from the impact of the developments.

"The Indian side has also made clear its determination to take all necessary measures to protect its trade and economic interests," the Government said.

It added that the government would work closely with Indian trade and industry bodies to deal with the implications of the developments.

The legislation seeks to increase economic pressure on Russia over the Ukraine war and includes measures targeting Russian officials, financial institutions, the energy sector and vessels linked to the movement of Russian oil. It also expands sanctions relating to Iran.

For India, the most consequential provision is the authority to impose tariffs on major purchasers of Russian energy.

The legislation does not automatically impose a 100 per cent tariff on Indian goods; rather, it gives the Trump administration the authority to impose such duties if the specified conditions are met.

The development comes at a sensitive juncture in India-US ties, with Washington having previously used tariffs to pressure New Delhi over its purchases of Russian oil.

India's latest response puts energy security at the center of its position while signaling that it is prepared to protect its wider trade and economic interests as Washington moves towards implementing the new sanctions framework.

The Government said it would continue to monitor further developments on the legislation. (TNS/ Ujjal Jalali)

History This Week

SEP 18 - SEP 24

SEPTEMBER 18

September 18, 1810 - Chile declared its independence from Spain after 269 years as a colony.

September 18, 1947 - The U.S. Air Force was established as a separate military service.



Birthday - Movie actress Greta Garbo (1905-1990) was born in Stockholm, Sweden (as Greta Lovisa Gustafsson). She retired and became a recluse after making 27 films, spanning the silent era through the beginning of sound movies.

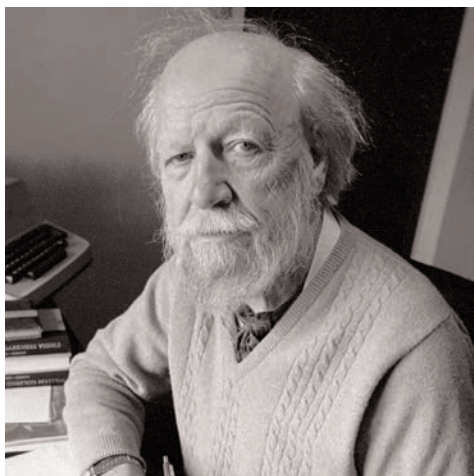
SEPTEMBER 19

September 19, 1676 - Jamestown, Virginia, was attacked and burned during a rebellion led by Nathaniel Bacon against the Royal Governor, Sir William Berkeley.

September 19, 1893 - New Zealand became the first country to grant women the right to vote.

September 19-20, 1985 - Earthquakes in Mexico City killed an estimated 5,000 to 20,000 persons and left more than 100,000 homeless, causing \$4 billion in damage. The quakes registered 8.1 and 7.5 on the Richter scale.

September 19, 1994 - U.S. troops invaded Haiti, with the stated goal of restoring democracy.



Birthday - British author William Golding (1911-1993) was born in Cornwall, England. Best known for Lord of the Flies, he received a Nobel Prize in 1983.

SEPTEMBER 20

September 20, 1873 - The New York Stock Exchange was forced to close for the first time in its history as a result of a banking crisis during the financial Panic of 1873.

September 20, 1973 - The much-hyped "Battle of the Sexes" took place in the Houston Astrodome as tennis player and women's rights activist, Billie Jean King, defeated self-styled male chauvinist Bobby Riggs in three straight sets. Riggs, a retired tennis champion, had been critical of the quality of women's tennis.



September 20, 1989 - F.W. de Klerk was sworn in as president of South Africa. He began an era of reform aimed at ending apartheid and was succeeded by Nelson Mandela.

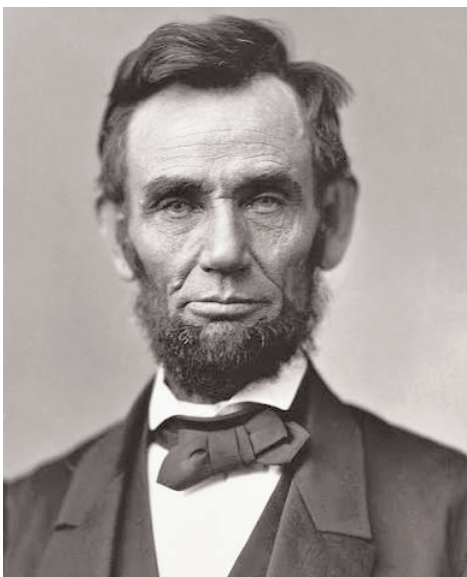
SEPTEMBER 21

September 21, 1949 - The People's Republic of China was proclaimed by its Communist leaders.

SEPTEMBER 22

September 22, 1776 - During the American Revolution, Nathan Hale was executed without a trial after he was caught spying on British troops on Long Island, his last words, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

September 22, 1828 - Shaka, chief of the Zulus and founder of the Zulu empire, was killed by his two half-brothers.

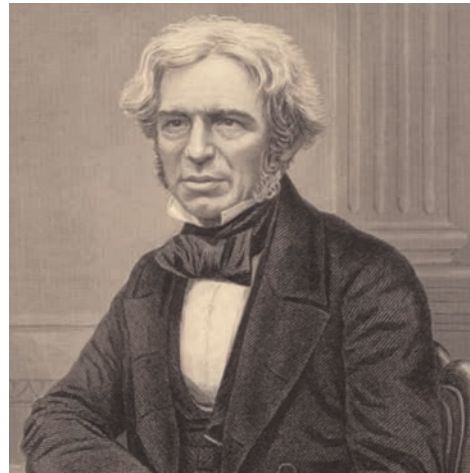


September 22, 1862 - President Abraham Lincoln issued a preliminary Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves in territories held by Confederates as of January 1, 1863.

September 22, 1862 - Otto von Bismarck became premier of Prussia. He forged a loose confederation of German states into a powerful nation, with Wilhelm I becoming Kaiser of the new German Empire.

September 22, 1996 - Australian Bob Dent, a cancer victim, became the first person to commit legally assisted

suicide, via a lethal injection, under a voluntary euthanasia law.



Birthday - British scientist Michael Faraday (1791-1867) was born in Surrey, England. His discovery of electromagnetic induction proved that moving a magnet through a coil of wire produces a current, resulting in the development of electric generators.

SEPTEMBER 23

September 23rd - Autumn (Sept. 23-Dec. 21) begins in the Northern Hemisphere with the autumnal equinox, at 1:37 a.m. EDT. In the Southern Hemisphere today is the beginning of spring.

September 23, 1952 - Vice-presidential candidate Richard Nixon delivered his Checkers Speech on television and radio to address accusations of financial misdeeds.

September 23, 1991 - Armenia declared its independence from the Soviet Union.



Birthday - American journalist and influential commentator, Walter Lippmann (1889-1974) was born in New York. "Without criticism and reliable and intelligent reporting, the government cannot govern," he once stated.



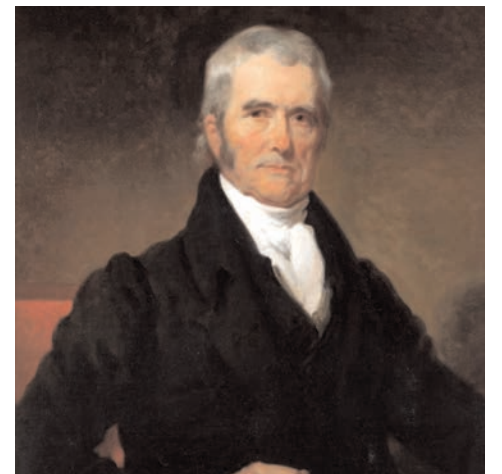
Birthday - Friedrich von Paulus (1890-1957) was born in Breitenau, Germany. In 1942, Adolf Hitler chose Paulus, a desk

officer, to lead the German 6th Army in an all-out attack against Stalingrad, deep inside Russia. Although his troops captured most of Stalingrad, they became trapped within the city. On January 31, 1943, the day Hitler made him a field marshal, Paulus surrendered to the Russians, marking the first big defeat of Hitler's armies. After the war, Paulus appeared as a witness for the Russian prosecution at the Nuremberg war crime trials.

SEPTEMBER 24

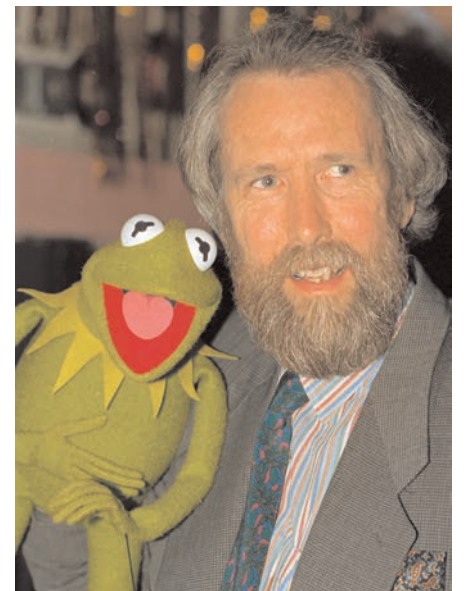
September 24, 1957 - President Dwight Eisenhower ordered the National Guard to enforce racial integration of schools in Little Rock, Arkansas.

September 24, 1980 - War erupted between Iran and Iraq as Iraqi troops crossed the border and encircled Abadan, then set fire to the world's largest oil refinery.



Birthday - John Marshall (1755-1835) was born in Germantown, Virginia. He was appointed by President John Adams to the position of Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court in January 1801. He became known as "The Great Chief Justice," largely responsible for expanding the role of the Supreme Court through such cases as Marbury vs. Madison and McCulloch vs. Maryland.

Birthday - American writer F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) was born in St. Paul, Minnesota (as Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald). Best known for This Side of Paradise, The Great Gatsby and Tender is the Night.



Birthday - Puppeteer Jim Henson (1936-1990) was born in Greenville, Mississippi. He created the Muppets, including Kermit the Frog, and Bert and Ernie, entertaining and educating generations of children via the daily TV show Sesame Street.

दूतावास में हिंदी दिवस पूरे उत्साह एवं उमंग के साथ मनाया

बुखारेस्ट, रोमानिया

तारीख : 14 सितंबर 2026

भारत के दूतावास, बुखारेस्ट द्वारा रविवार, 13 सितंबर 2026 को दूतावास परिसर में हिंदी दिवस का आयोजन किया गया। इस कार्यक्रम का उद्देश्य हिंदी भाषा के महत्व को रेखांकित करना तथा भारत की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक और भाषायी विरासत के प्रति जागरूकता एवं सम्मान को बढ़ावा देना था।

कार्यक्रम का आयोजन हिंदी भाषा के महत्व को उजागर करने तथा विभिन्न सहभागितापूर्ण एवं सांस्कृतिक गतिविधियों के माध्यम से हिंदी के प्रति रुचि को प्रोत्साहित करने के उद्देश्य से किया गया। इस अवसर पर दूतावास के अधिकारियों एवं उनके परिवार के सदस्यों ने उत्साहपूर्वक भाग लिया। कार्यक्रम ने सभी प्रतिभागियों को एक साथ आकर हिंदी भाषा की समृद्धि तथा भारतीय संस्कृति और परंपराओं के साथ इसके गहरे संबंध को मनाने का अवसर प्रदान किया।

हिंदी दिवस समारोह के अंतर्गत हिंदी लेखन प्रतियोगिता का आयोजन किया गया। प्रतिभागियों को हिंदी में अपने विचारों एवं भावनाओं को रचनात्मक ढंग से अभिव्यक्त करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया गया। प्रतियोगिता में उत्साहपूर्वक भागीदारी हुई तथा प्रतिभागियों ने अपनी भाषा दक्षता और रचनात्मक प्रतिभा का प्रदर्शन किया।

कार्यक्रम में कविता एवं काव्य-पाठ का भी आयोजन किया गया, जिसमें प्रतिभागियों ने हिंदी की विभिन्न कविताओं



राजदूत डॉ. मनोज कुमार मोहापात्रा ने इस अवसर पर अपने विचार व्यक्त करते हुए

एवं साहित्यिक रचनाओं का पाठ किया। काव्य-पाठ ने कार्यक्रम में साहित्यिक एवं सांस्कृतिक रंग जोड़ा तथा हिंदी साहित्य के प्रति प्रतिभागियों की रुचि और उत्साह को प्रदर्शित किया।

जन-से-जन संबंधों को और सुदृढ़ करने में हिंदी की भूमिका को रेखांकित करने का अवसर प्रदान किया। विभिन्न गतिविधियों में हुई उत्साहपूर्ण भागीदारी ने दूतावास समुदाय में

हिंदी दिवस के अवसर पर प्रतिभागियों ने उत्साहपूर्वक भाग लिया



कार्यक्रम में बड़ी संख्या में प्रतिभागियों की सहभागिता रही, जिससे समारोह का वातावरण उत्साहपूर्ण एवं जीवंत बना रहा।

इस अवसर पर राजदूत डॉ. मनोज कुमार मोहापात्रा ने उपस्थित जनसमूह को संबोधित किया। अपने संबोधन में उन्होंने हिंदी के महत्व को भारत की सांस्कृतिक एवं भाषायी विरासत के एक महत्वपूर्ण माध्यम के रूप में रेखांकित किया। उन्होंने विदेशों में हिंदी के निरंतर प्रचार-प्रसार एवं उपयोग को प्रोत्साहित किया तथा भारत की सांस्कृतिक विरासत को व्यापक स्तर पर पहुँचाने में हिंदी की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका पर प्रकाश डाला।

हिंदी दिवस समारोह ने भारत की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक परंपराओं के प्रति जागरूकता बढ़ाने तथा सांस्कृतिक एवं

हिंदी भाषा एवं भारतीय संस्कृति के प्रति निरंतर रुचि को भी प्रदर्शित किया।

कार्यक्रम का समापन सभी अधिकारियों एवं उनके परिवार के सदस्यों की सक्रिय सहभागिता के लिए आभार व्यक्त करते हुए हुआ। सभी प्रतिभागियों के सहयोग एवं उत्साह ने हिंदी दिवस समारोह को सार्थक एवं सफल बनाने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया।

हिंदी दिवस समारोह एवं इस अवसर पर आयोजित विभिन्न गतिविधियों के फोटोग्राफ दूतावास के सोशल मीडिया माध्यमों पर व्यापक प्रचार-प्रसार एवं जनसंपर्क के उद्देश्य से साझा किए गए।

Jos Buttler becomes first batter to reach 15,000 T20 runs

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

CARDIFF (TIP): England wicketkeeper-batter Jos Buttler etched his name in the record books, becoming the first batter in T20 cricket to reach the landmark of 15,000 T20 runs.

He also surpassed West Indies legend Kieron Pollard to become the highest run-scorer in T20 cricket. He achieved this feat during England's second T20I against Sri Lanka on Thursday, Sept 17.

He has done so in 528 matches at an average of 35.46 and a strike rate of 147.46. Buttler has amassed his T20 runs across a wide range of teams and competitions, representing England, Lancashire, Manchester Originals, Manchester Super Giants, Gujarat Titans, Somerset, Paarl Royals, Mumbai Indians, Sydney Thunder, Comilla Victorians, Durban's Super Giants, Melbourne Renegades and England Lions. Buttler now has 15,000 runs in 528 matches at an average of 35.46, including nine centuries and 107 fifties. He moved past West Indies great Kieron Pollard, who has 14,999 runs in 754 matches at an average of 31.71.

Buttler reached the landmark with a single off Eshan Malinga in the fifth over of England's run chase.

Coming to the match, England beat Sri Lanka by six wickets in the second T20I at Sophia Gardens on Thursday to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. After restricting Sri Lanka to 145/9 in 20 overs, England chased down the target in just 12.1 overs, finishing on 146/4. The victory extended England's winning streak over Sri Lanka in T20Is to 14 matches.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NAGOYA (TIP): Athletes from across countries, including India, have been subjected to a nightmarish experience in Japan after they reached Nagoya in the Aichi Prefecture for the Asian Games, which officially begins on Saturday, Sept 19.

It's a complete logistical mess in Nagoya and the athletes are bearing the brunt of it. From accommodation to transport to food, nothing is in order in Nagoya.

Some Indian athletes complained that rooms meant for two are being shared by three at the much-criticised Costa Serena cruise ship, which is being used to accommodate athletes.

The organisational chaos could be understood from the fact that even the home nation's athletes were reportedly looking for alternative arrangements after cases of male and female players being allocated shared rooms emerged.

Videos of Varun Sanyal, an MMA fighter who will be representing India at the Aichi-Nagoya Games, narrating his experience were widely shared on social media before some of them were taken down.

Varun, who is the son of Sanjeev Sanyal, a prominent economist and a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the

Abhishek Sharma hits record T20 ton as India beat Afghanistan by 127 runs

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Opener Abhishek Sharma hit a record T20 century off 30 balls to set up a crushing 127-run win for India in the third match against Afghanistan and sweep the series 3-0.

Left-handed Abhishek's ton on Thursday, Sept 17, was the fastest in a T20 international between full Test-playing nations as he guided India to 221-7 at New Delhi's Arun Jaitley Stadium.

Afghanistan, who were the official hosts for the series, checked the opposition surge after Abhishek departed for 108 off 34 balls and India lost their way from 142-1 in 10 overs.

But the Afghan batters once again disappointed and were bowled out for 94 in 14.1 overs.

Afghanistan had posted 156-8 and 159-8 while batting first in the first two matches.

Left-arm spinner Axar Patel struck twice in his first over to send back Rahmanullah Gurbaz, for 15 and Sediqullah Atal, for one. Afghanistan could never recover from the losses.

Seam bowler Nitish Kumar Reddy also took two wickets in one over to return figures of 3-25.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi wrapped up the Afghanistan innings with his third strike of the match.

Abhishek stood out with his third T20 century as he surpassed Zimbabwean Sikandar Raza's ton off 33 balls against Gambia in 2024 and Finn Allen's effort from the same number of deliveries in New Zealand's T20 World Cup semi-final win over South Africa earlier this year in India.



India's Abhishek Sharma celebrates after scoring a century during the third T20 international cricket match against Afghanistan on Thursday [Arun Sankar/AFP]

The only two faster T20I hundreds came in matches between the lower-tiered associate members of the ICC.

Sahil Chauhan of Estonia holds the overall record of 27 balls after his century against Cyprus two years ago, while Muhammad Fahad needed just 29 balls for his ton for Turkey against Bulgaria in 2025. Abhishek tore into the Afghanistan bowling attack after India were invited to bat first.

The swashbuckling opener hit a six to reach 99. He completed the hundred with a single and sat in meditation pose to celebrate.

He finally fell for 108 off 34 balls to leg-spinner Rashid Khan. The 26-year-old's knock was laced with nine fours and 11 sixes.

His opening stand of 142 with Sanju Samson, who hit 50, put India on course for a big total but the Afghan bowlers hit back with regular wickets.

Tilak Varma was run out for two by Rashid and Samson departed after his second successive half-century as he fell to pace bowler Azmatullah Omarzai.

Omarzai struck another blow helped by a stunning catch by Rashid in the deep to send back Shivam Dube for 14.

Organisational mess welcomes Asian Games athletes as Nagoya faces accommodation chaos

Prime Minister (EAC-PM) of India, said his name could not be found in the accommodation system despite having a valid Asian Games ID card. He also spoke of the lack of food at the facilities.

Some of the Indian athletes, particularly rowers, were also made to wait for more than 12 hours on Wednesday before they finally got their rooms on the cruise ship just before midnight.

Indian contingent's Chef de Mission Sahdev Yadav, speaking to PTI, admitted that there was "mismanagement" on the part of the organisers.

One wonders if it is the inexperience of the organising committee which has led to such chaos, or is it simply a lackadaisical approach, an unwillingness, which has resulted in such a mess?

The 30-year-old Varun raised a valid point. "If this happened in India, oh my God, the media would be going crazy, not just in India, but globally. We would've been the butt of the joke," he said.



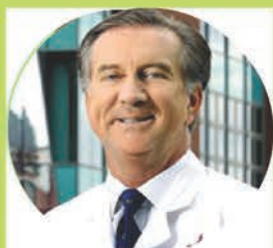
Thailand's sepak takraw team sleep on the floor after arriving in Nagoya for the Asian Games, in a picture shared on X.



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Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



New Goutami Institute to be constructed 2024



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