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Trump, Xi conclude Washington summit with extended trade truce, pledge to maintain dialogue



President Donald Trump meets Chinese President Xi Jinping in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, September 24, 2026, during talks covering trade, technology, Taiwan and international security issues. -Photo: REUTERS/Evan Vucci

I.S. SALUJA
SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping concluded Xi's three-day state visit to Washington on Friday, September 25, with the two leaders pledging to maintain dialogue between the world's two largest economies and agreeing to extend their existing trade truce, but announcing few major breakthroughs on the difficult issues dividing the United States and China.

Xi's visit, his first state visit to the United States in 11 years, included talks at the White House, a state dinner hosted by President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump, and a visit by the two leaders to the National Archives. Trump described the discussions as productive, while Xi emphasized the importance of preventing competition between the two countries from developing into confrontation.

Trade was among the principal subjects of the talks. The two governments agreed to extend for two months a trade truce that had been due to expire in November, giving

CONTD ON PAGE 40

Pressure mounts on CEC as nationwide protests, EC dissent reports and court plea deepen controversy

CONGRESS DEMANDS GYANESH KUMAR'S RESIGNATION AND ARREST; REPORTED OBJECTIONS BY TWO ELECTION COMMISSIONERS FUEL ROW; NDA ALLIES SEEK ANSWERS; SUPREME COURT PETITION CHALLENGES ALLEGEDLY UNILATERAL DECISIONS



Uttarakhand police personnel stop Congress workers from marching towards Uttarakhand Secretariat during a protest against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, demanding his resignation and immediate arrest, in Dehradun, Friday, Sept. 25, 2026. -Photo: PTI

I.S. SALUJA
SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
NEW DELHI (TIP)

Pressure on Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the Election Commission of India intensified Friday, September 25, as the Congress staged nationwide demonstrations demanding his resignation and arrest, while reports of repeated objections from the other two Election Commissioners, questions from some members of the ruling National Democratic Alliance, and a petition before the Supreme Court widened the controversy over the functioning of the constitutional poll body.

CONTD ON PAGE 40

IRS Probing \$100 Billion in Potential COVID-19 Loan Fraud

THE LOANS WERE SUPPOSED TO FINANCIALLY ASSIST BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY THE PANDEMIC.

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

Roughly \$100 billion in loans given for COVID-19 programs have been identified as suspected fraud by tax authorities.

Earlier this year, the Small Business Administration (SBA) referred more than \$200 billion in suspected COVID loan fraud to the IRS.

The tax agency then compared the information that the borrowers submitted to the SBA when applying for the loans with the information they



declared to the IRS.

Analysis identified discrepancies associated with approximately \$100 billion in loans, the SBA said in a Sept. 23 statement.

CONTD ON PAGE 40

Starbucks to Close 250 Stores Across North America



A Starbucks coffee shop in Manhattan

While most of the company's 18,000 stores were profitable, a small percentage of locations were not, the company's COO said.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

Starbucks will shut down 250 of its locations across North America due to poor performance, according to a Thursday, September 24 announcement from the coffee chain's chief

CONTD ON PAGE 40



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COMMENT

An NRI Commission for Telangana-But Let It Deliver

The proposal by Government Whip and MLC Dr. Addanki Dayakar and TPCC Vice President Hanumandla Jhansi Reddy for the establishment of a dedicated NRI Commission in Telangana deserves appreciation and serious consideration by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

The two leaders have correctly recognized both sides of Telangana's relationship with its people overseas. The State has an obligation to assist its sons and daughters when they encounter difficulties at home; equally, Telangana should create avenues through which their knowledge, experience, investment, technology and goodwill can become part of the State's development story.

The raison d'être of the proposed Commission is therefore compelling.

Telanganites living in the United States, Gulf countries, Canada, Europe, Australia and elsewhere frequently remain closely connected with their families, properties and communities back home. Yet distance can turn even an ordinary administrative problem into an ordeal. Property disputes, land grabbing, fraudulent transactions, documentation difficulties, family emergencies and legal matters can become especially difficult when the person concerned is thousands of miles away.

A genuine single-window institution capable of receiving a complaint, identifying the responsible government agency, following the case and ensuring a timely response would therefore be valuable.

But there is a lesson Telangana should learn before creating such a body: it is not enough to establish an NRI Commission; Telangana must establish an NRI Commission that works.

India is not without experience in creating institutions for its diaspora. Kerala, whose enormous expatriate population has profoundly influenced its economy and society, established the Department of Non-Resident Keralites Affairs-NORKA-in 1996, the first such state department in India. It subsequently enacted the Non-Resident Indians' (Keralites) Commission Act, 2015 and constituted a statutory commission to protect the welfare of expatriate Keralites and their families.

Gujarat has created the Non-Resident Gujaratis' Foundation and an NRI Division. Significantly, the official objectives of the Gujarat mechanism include maintaining communication with overseas Gujaratis, creating a database, tapping their technological, managerial and financial resources for development, addressing welfare concerns and helping during crises.

The language is remarkably similar to the objectives now being advanced for Telangana.

And that tells us something important: the idea is not the problem. Implementation is.

The Government of India itself recognized decades ago the enormous potential of its worldwide diaspora. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was launched in 2003, with January 9 chosen to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from



TPCC vice-president and Palakurthi constituency in-charge Hanumandla Jhansi Rajender Reddy with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy in Hyderabad on Friday, September 18. Government Whip and Member of the Legislative Council Dr. Addanki Dayakar is seen on the extreme right.

South Africa on that date in 1915. Its purpose was admirable-to connect India with its overseas community and bring its knowledge, expertise and skills onto a common platform.

The initiative was enthusiastically received. Overseas Indians travelled from around the world to participate, meet India's leaders, discuss issues affecting their communities and explore ways of contributing to their ancestral homeland. Since 2015, the main Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention has been organized every alternate year; the 18th convention was held in Bhubaneswar in January 2025.

Nor has diaspora engagement been confined to ceremonial gatherings. India has developed the Overseas Citizenship of India scheme, the Know India Programme for diaspora youth, scholarship initiatives, the Indian Community Welfare Fund, welfare and grievance mechanisms, and the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award, the country's highest honor for overseas Indians.

These are meaningful initiatives, and their achievements should be acknowledged.

Yet there is another side to the story.

Among many overseas Indians there is a perception that the extraordinary enthusiasm generated by diaspora conferences and declarations does not always translate into an equally satisfactory experience when an individual NRI confronts the machinery of government. A conference hall filled with speeches about the greatness of the diaspora is one thing; getting a land record corrected, a complaint investigated or a fraudulent property transaction stopped can be quite another.

This is where bureaucracy, delay, multiple jurisdictions and, at times, allegations of corruption can destroy confidence.

We should be careful not to dismiss all existing NRI institutions as failures. Some have provided valuable assistance, and government mechanisms have helped large numbers of Indians abroad. But neither should governments ignore the dissatisfaction of those who find that an impressive institutional architecture does not necessarily produce a prompt solution to an ordinary person's problem.

An NRI does not need another welcoming

speech when his property has been grabbed. He needs somebody to act.

That should be the guiding principle if Telangana establishes its Commission.

Every complaint should receive a number that can be tracked online. Every case should be assigned to a responsible officer. Reasonable deadlines should be prescribed for action and response. If a matter belongs to another department, the Commission-not the NRI sitting in New York, Dubai or London-should undertake the task of coordinating with that department.

The Commission should publish periodic data: complaints received, cases resolved, cases pending and average resolution time. Serious complaints involving land or property fraud should have access to designated legal and police coordination. There should also be safeguards against political influence, favoritism and corruption.

Above all, NRIs themselves must have a voice in the institution created in their name.

The Commission should regularly consult Telangana organizations overseas, professionals, entrepreneurs, workers in the Gulf, academics and community representatives. The problems of a technology entrepreneur in California may be very different from those of a Telangana worker in the Gulf. A credible institution must understand both.

And the Commission should not merely be a complaints office.

This is where Dr. Dayakar and Jhansi Reddy's proposal has considerable promise. Telangana's diaspora represents intellectual capital, professional expertise, investment capacity and international networks. The State should ask not only: What problems can we solve for you? but also: What can we build together?

Universities can be connected with researchers abroad. Hospitals can benefit from medical partnerships. Young entrepreneurs can find mentors among successful Telanganites overseas. Villages can benefit from carefully structured philanthropic projects. Technology, investment and international business connections can flow in both directions.

That is how a diaspora becomes a partner in development rather than merely a source of remittances.

We therefore commend Dr. Addanki Dayakar and Hanumandla Jhansi Reddy for taking this initiative and urge Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to give the proposal serious consideration.

But we would add one request to the two leaders themselves: do not consider your mission accomplished when the government announces the Commission. Consider it accomplished when the Commission begins delivering results.

Telangana does not need another office, another bureaucracy or another ceremonial platform. It needs a bridge-accessible, transparent, accountable and effective-between Telangana and its people across the world.

Create the NRI Commission. But create one that an ordinary Telanganite abroad can trust. That would be the true measure of its success.

**BY INDRAJIT
SALUJA**

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Dr. Shashi Shah honors his son with a touching musical tribute



At the Whispers of the Soul release (from left): co-producer, V. Ramanan, singers Jahnvi Murali and Anirudh Srinivasraghavan, L. Shankar, Dr Shashi Shah, V. Selvaganesh, MCs Dr Stuti Shah Agrawal and Anshul Agrawal.

BY PARVEEN CHOPRA
SEPTEMBER 12, 2026
MANHASSET, NY (TIP)

To celebrate the memory of his music enthusiast son named Rishi, senior urologist Dr Shashi Shah hosted a musical evening where two new songs from the album Whispers of the Soul, co-produced by him, were released and legendary violinist L. Shankar performed.

Over 125 invited guests were touched by the heartfelt program on the lawn of the Bay-facing house of Dr Shah in Manhasset on September 11, Rishi Shah's 52nd birthday.

Sharing the backstory of Whispers of the Soul, Dr Shah, a connoisseur of good music himself, said that Grammy winning musician and composer V. Selvaganesh had approached him after a dream last year in which Rishi, his close

friend and collaborator, urged him to create music using poetry connected to the Shah family. That is how three ghazals penned by Dr Shah's brother, the noted poet and author Pramod Shah 'Nafees' came to be chosen for the album. Of the two soulful singles released, Unki Muhabbat, sung by Hindustani music vocalist Anirudh Srinivasraghavan, is a reflective exploration of love, longing, and devotion. Nayi Rasm, performed by Carnatic exponent Jahnvi Murali, envisions a renewed world characterized by acceptance, harmony, and fresh beginning. Anirudh and Jahnvi delighted the audience by melodiously singing the two numbers from the stage.



Dr Shashi Shah and V. Selvaganesh shared the backstory behind the creation of their album.

Selva, who has performed with the famous fusion group Shakti that

included L. Shankar and Zakir Hussain, said, "For me, Whispers of the Soul is more than an album. It is a tribute to Rishi and to the extraordinary way his memory brought people, poetry and music together."



Rishi Shah had founded Rave magazine, considered the Rolling Stone of India

Rishi, who had a passion for music, founded Rave magazine in 2001 in India, aiming to put the country's vibrant and evolving music scene on the global map, giving emerging artists a powerful platform and connecting audiences around the world.

The program in Rishi's memory ended amid applause for 76-year-old Shankar, who performed, accompanied by percussionists Selvaganesh and his son Swaminathan Selvaganesh.

(Parveen Chopra is founder-editor of ALotusintheMud.com)

Embattled New Jersey Lt. Governor Resigns After Ethics Inquiry

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026
TRENTON, NJ (TIP)

Lt. Gov. Dale G. Caldwell of New Jersey resigned on Friday, September 25, a day after investigators concluded he had used sexually charged language and had exploited his position to try to secure a promotion for a girlfriend and dates for himself, says a New York Times report.

Dr. Caldwell, a Democrat, had been in the role for only eight months. And he and his lawyer, Thomas Calcagni, had pushed back strenuously against the findings in a report commissioned by his boss, Gov. Mikie Sherrill. Investigators who interviewed 17 people concluded that Dr. Caldwell's behavior constituted sexual harassment and violated workplace standards.

"I'm not resigning because of the report," Dr. Caldwell, 66, said in an interview. "It's false. I'm resigning because I don't want to be a distraction to the administration."

"I'm supportive of the Sherrill administration," he added. "I want her to be as successful as possible."

Ms. Sherrill, a first-term Democrat, had called for Dr. Caldwell's resignation on Thursday.

In a news conference held Friday to announce the resignation, Ms. Sherrill cited a pattern of behavior by Dr. Caldwell, unsuccessful attempts to get him to adhere more closely to the state's ethics guidelines and "substantiated claims of sexual harassment."

She said her decision to seek the lieutenant governor's resignation should signal that behavior condoned in the past would no longer be ignored.

"What was so important to me was to

make sure that if there are substantiated claims of sexual harassment and ethics violations, that I, as the leader of the government, handle that," Ms. Sherrill said Friday.

"There has been a culture in Trenton, probably since the birth of our nation, to sweep this under the rug," she said.

"When I say there is a culture change taking place, I mean it," she added. "This is part of it."

The investigation began after an anonymous letter, sent in May, accused Dr. Caldwell of being "particularly shameless in handing out his state business cards and asking women out on dates." The letter, from a "Concerned NJ Resident," also detailed three times when Dr. Caldwell, who is divorced, had brought nonpaying guests to events.

"The woman he brought with him demanded to be seated at the head table even though she arrived unexpected and without a ticket" to an April women's leadership luncheon in West Orange, N.J., the letter stated. "This incident was disruptive to the event."

Lawyers for a firm the Sherrill administration hired to investigate the claims also found that Dr. Caldwell, a former president of Centenary University, had used sexually charged language with a female aide in his state vehicle. He had also recommended that a woman he was dating be promoted, according to the report, but did not disclose that the two were in an on-again, off-again romantic relationship.

"No one was pushing anybody," Dr. Caldwell said Friday, noting that, in an email about the promotion, he also stated: "Please share her information as

you see fit."

"I was told they wanted good people," he said. "I said, 'Here's a good person.'"

Ms. Sherrill seemed particularly troubled that at least some of the incidents took place after Dr. Caldwell had been retrained on the state's ethics guidelines.

"The ethical lapses persisted despite multiple warnings and trainings," she said when she released the 61-page report.

"I've seen firsthand how a hostile culture can undermine everyone's ability to succeed," she added. "It's insidious and ruptures the trust within an organization."

Dr. Caldwell and his lawyer had suggested that the claims were overblown. Late Thursday, in a strongly worded, two-page rebuttal to the report's finding, his lawyer, Mr. Calcagni, intimated that the staff member who recounted the incident in Dr. Caldwell's car had ulterior reasons for reporting the incident. She had told investigators that Dr. Caldwell, after being rebuffed for a date with her friend, had complained that ambitious women were misguided in their search for "young sperm."

Dr. Caldwell denies ever making the statement.

"The accuser's motives were never tested," Mr. Calcagni wrote, "and the lieutenant governor's and other eyewitnesses' accounts were discounted if not entirely disregarded."

In May, in a written response to the anonymous letter, Dr. Caldwell, who is Black, had suggested that race and gender were at play. "Unfortunately, in this current political environment, false



Dale G. Caldwell, a Methodist minister and former university president, quit one day after the release of a report that found he had crossed ethical lines.

accusations, especially against people of color, seem to be commonplace," he wrote.

Neither he nor his lawyer restated that claim this week, and a coalition of prominent Black New Jersey leaders on Friday issued a statement saying they respected the "difficult decision" that Ms. Sherrill made in asking for Dr. Caldwell's resignation. "Accountability matters, and when difficult circumstances arise, leadership sometimes requires making difficult decisions," read the letter, which was signed by 11 leaders, including Representative Bonnie Watson Coleman and LeRoy J. Jones Jr., a lobbyist and the leader of the state's Democratic Party.

They also commended Dr. Caldwell. "He has put the interests of the people of New Jersey and the work of our state ahead of himself," they wrote.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Indian-origin trio completes 3,168 mi (5,100 km) Cycle across America Expedition in 52 days without a support vehicle

ANURADHA PALNITKAR BECOMES THE FIRST INDIAN-ORIGIN WOMAN TO COMPLETE AN UNSUPPORTED TRANSCONTINENTAL US RIDE ON AN UNPOWERED BICYCLE

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
WASHINGTON DC, (TIP)

An Indian origin trio of Jai Rawat (57), Anuradha Palnitkar (54) and Samir Palnitkar (58) completed a 3,168 (5,100 km) Cycle across America expedition in 52 days with over 100,000 feet of climbing. This ride was completed on unpowered bicycles without any support vehicle accompanying them, according to a press release issued by EIN Presswire.

The expedition started at 6 am US Pacific time on Aug 1, 2026, at Santa Monica beach in Los Angeles, CA and finished at the Washington Monument in Washington DC on Sep 21, 2026 at 12 noon US Eastern time. The three cyclists traveled an average of 65 miles (104 km) per day across 14 US states, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia before ending the ride in the District of Columbia. From Santa Monica, they traveled on Historic Route 66, the first transcontinental US highway built 100 years ago in 1926, as they wound their way across Grand Canyons, Flagstaff, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Amarillo, Tulsa to St. Louis, Missouri before heading east from Route 66 towards Indianapolis, Columbus, Pittsburgh and Washington DC. On Route 66, they experienced the history about the growth of the towns of Middle America in the 20th century.

The trio had to overcome a number of adversities along the way. They rode in extreme heat warning zones for several weeks, battling temperatures up to 119 F (49 C); on the shoulders of interstates

"RIDING ACROSS THE COUNTRY HELPED US EXPERIENCE AMERICA IN A VERY UNIQUE WAY. WE FELT AN EXHILARATING SENSE OF FREEDOM AS WE CYCLED THROUGH THE ENDLESS LANDSCAPES SEEING INNUMERABLE SUNRISES."- ANURADHA AND SAMIR PALNITKAR



Indian-origin trio Jai Rawat, Anuradha Palnitkar, Samir Palnitkar complete 3,168 mi (5,100 km) Cycle across America Expedition in Washington DC on Sep 21, 2026.

and highways with big trucks passing by at 75+ mph (120+ kmph); highways without shoulders, through thunderstorms in New Mexico; and in cold weather on the East Coast. They also had to repair their bikes, deal with ferocious dogs chasing them and bounce back from cycle accidents to complete the ride successfully.

The ride took them across tall mountain passes, deserts, valleys, forests, endless corn fields, plains, rolling hills, parks, historic towns, dedicated bicycling trails, frontage roads, highways and interstates as they made their way across the United States. They enjoyed the mountain vistas of California, Arizona and New Mexico, the

plains of Texas and Oklahoma, the rolling hills of the Ozarks in Missouri, the corn fields of Illinois and Indiana, the beautiful bicycling trails of Ohio, the Appalachian plateau in West Virginia, the iconic, 150-mile Great Allegheny Passage bicycle trail near Pittsburgh and the W & OD bicycle trail in Virginia. They crossed the Continental Divide in New Mexico at 7,881 feet altitude and the Eastern Continental Divide in Pennsylvania at 2,392 feet altitude.

Anuradha Palnitkar became the first Indian-origin woman to complete an unpowered transcontinental bicycle ride across the United States without a support vehicle. Jai Rawat and Samir Palnitkar also became the first Indian

Institute of Technology (IIT) graduates to complete an unsupported, unpowered bicycle ride across America.

"Riding across the country helped us experience the varied terrains, the cultural diversity and the history of America in a very unique way. It was very interesting to travel through small towns that powered the growth of America in the 19th and 20th centuries. We felt an exhilarating sense of freedom as we cycled through the endless landscapes seeing innumerable sunrises" - said Anuradha Palnitkar and Samir Palnitkar

"We experienced small-town hospitality as people chatted with us, offered free coffee as they learned about our cross-country ride. Cars drove patiently behind our slow bicycles and shop owners regaled us with stories about their historic artifact collections. We learned a lot about how the towns of Middle America made important contributions to the country's growth." - said Jai Rawat

Samir Palnitkar and Jai Rawat are graduates of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and have been friends for 40 years. Anuradha Palnitkar is a dietitian by profession, now teaching at a special needs school. They have completed a number of treks together in Nepal, India, Patagonia, Ecuador, France, Italy, Switzerland and Africa. This was Anuradha's first long cycle ride. Prior to this ride, Samir and Jai had completed the 500-mile (800 km) cycle ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles in 2018.

(Source: EIN Presswire)

Maharashtra educationist's daughter Nila Vikhe Patil elected to Swedish Parliament

NILA IS THE GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER OF THE FOUNDER OF ASIA'S FIRST CO-OPERATIVE SUGAR FACTORY, VITHALRAO VIKHE PATIL, AND GRANDDAUGHTER OF LATE UNION MINISTER BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026
MUMBAI (TIP)

Maharashtra educationist Ashok Vikhe Patil's daughter Nila Vikhe Patil has been elected to the Swedish Parliament.

Nila, 41, was elected a Member of Parliament from Stockholm City constituency in the national election held on September 13.

"It feels nice to be a part of the 349-member Parliament. I am looking forward to contributing to the city and the country," she told PTL.

"I would like to be voice for those who cannot vote," she said. "I want to contribute to a society where every child gets a chance for a good future. We need a habitable planet with clean water, living nature and as few human-caused natural disasters as possible," she added.



Maharashtra educationist Ashok Vikhe Patil's daughter Nila Vikhe Patil. Image credit/PTI

Great-granddaughter of the founder of Asia's first co-operative sugar factory, Vithalrao Vikhe Patil, and granddaughter of late union minister Balasaheb Vikhe Patil, Nila said, "I hope to make my grandfather proud. He made me read the state budget when I was 15." She served as a Political Advisor in the Swedish Prime Minister's Office, focusing on finance, taxes, and housing during the Stefan Lofven administration.

She has been a member of the City Council of the Stockholm Municipal Corporation. Born in Sweden, Nila spent early years in Ahmednagar in Maharashtra. She is niece of Maharashtra minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil.

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

Mehul Choksi's lawyer Vijay Aggarwal denied bail by UK court in sexual assault cases

AGGARWAL'S BARRISTER, SASHA WASS, DESCRIBED HER CLIENT AS A MAN OF 'GOOD CHARACTER' WHO HAS BEEN HELD AT WANDSWORTH PRISON FOR OVER A MONTH

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
LONDON (TIP)

Criminal lawyer Vijay Aggarwal, arrested in London last month on charges of sexual assault, was on Wednesday, September 23, denied bail by a UK court.

Aggarwal, who has represented fugitive businessman Mehul Choksi in fraud and money laundering proceedings, appeared before Justice John Milne at Southwark Crown Court charged with sexual assault for a bail hearing. The judge ruled against it on the grounds that he posed a flight risk and could fail to appear for his trial scheduled for March 2027.

His assistant, Manpreet Kaur, charged with two counts of intentionally encouraging or assisting sexual assault, was to appear via videolink but a prison



Vijay Aggarwal. A video grab / ANI

administrative error led to a failure to attend. This resulted in the formal arraignment of both accused to be delayed to a later date.

At Wednesday's hearing, the Crown Prosecution Service strongly opposed bail being granted to Aggarwal due to the serious nature of the allegations.

Aggarwal's barrister, Sasha Wass, described her client as a man of "good character" who has been held at Wandsworth prison in south-west London for over a month now.

Aggarwal, 57, a prominent advocate, and Kaur, 41, were arrested at a property on Brick Street in the posh Mayfair area of London on August 11 over alleged sexual offences on May 26 and August 9.

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

USCIRF welcomes bail for Jagtar Singh Johal, seeks release of other religious freedom prisoners

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026
LONDON (TIP)

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has welcomed the Delhi High Court's decision to grant bail to British-born Sikh activist Jagtar Singh Johal, while urging the US government to engage with Indian authorities over the cases of other individuals it identifies as prisoners of freedom of religion or belief (FoRB).

USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan US government commission created under the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act to monitor religious freedom abroad.

In a statement, USCIRF Chair Asif Mahmood said the organization welcomed the Delhi High Court's decision to grant bail to Johal after nearly nine years in detention. However, he noted that uncertainty remains over Johal's return to the United Kingdom and reunification with his family.

According to USCIRF, Johal's bail conditions require him to surrender his passport and bar him from speaking to the media. The commission also said he continued to face several charges that could carry the death penalty if convicted.

Johal was arrested in Punjab in November 2017 in connection with a series of targeted killings. Investigative agencies accused him of involvement in terror-related activities and murder conspiracies. Johal and his supporters have denied the allegations.

USCIRF described the charges against Johal as unfounded and criticized the invocation of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), saying its use was inconsistent with international human rights standards. The commission also said Johal had previously written about alleged human rights abuses against members of the



British-born Sikh activist Jagtar Singh Johal.
File photo

Sikh community.

The organization said Johal's trial had been repeatedly delayed and alleged that authorities had failed to produce credible evidence against him. It cited findings by UN experts who had described his detention as arbitrary and raised concerns over his treatment in custody. Johal has alleged that he was subjected to custodial torture and forced to make a confession. Indian authorities have previously rejected the allegations.

USCIRF urged the US government to press India to conduct a full investigation into Johal's detention and treatment and hold those

responsible accountable if violations are established.

USCIRF Vice-Chair CeCe Heil said Johal's case reflected what the commission described as a broader pattern of restrictions affecting religious minorities in India. She also referred to the cases of Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam, who remain incarcerated in UAPA-related cases.

India has repeatedly rejected international criticism of its human rights and religious freedom record, maintaining that its democratic institutions, judiciary and constitutional safeguards protect the rights of all citizens. New Delhi has also defended the UAPA as a necessary legal instrument to combat terrorism and threats to national security.

In its 2026 Annual Report, USCIRF recommended that the US State Department designate India as a "Country of Particular Concern" over alleged religious freedom violations. The Indian government has previously rejected such recommendations, describing USCIRF's assessments as biased and based on incomplete information.

Stranded in Cambodia for three years, Jalandhar youth returns home: Was duped of Rs 7.5L by travel agent

SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
JALANDHAR (TIP)

A Jalandhar-based youth allegedly duped by a travel agent returned home after being stranded in Cambodia for three years.



Hardeep Kumar meets MP Balbir Singh Seechewal

The victim, Hardeep Kumar, was allegedly taken to Cambodia after via Thailand by an agent who had promised him safe travel to Portugal for Rs 7.5 lakh in 2023.

The family alleged that Kumar's passport was confiscated after his arrival in Cambodia and it subsequently expired in May 2025, leaving him stranded. "In Cambodia, I got into a road accident and suffered a leg fracture. I did not receive adequate medical treatment and was forced to live in extremely difficult circumstances for nearly 15 months. The prolonged lack of proper treatment resulted in a serious infection in my leg, and I was left with a lasting physical impairment," Kumar said.

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

Rising 'cheating bride' cases in Punjab; Canada warns against marriage fraud

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
OTTAWA (TIP)

Amid increased scrutiny of immigration applications and visa compliance, Canada's immigration authorities have issued a fresh warning against marriage fraud, cautioning citizens, permanent residents and foreign nationals about the legal consequences of entering into relationships solely for immigration purposes.



Canada issues stern warning against marriage fraud for immigration. / Image credit: iStock

The advisory was issued by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) through a social media post highlighting concerns over fraudulent marriages and "relationships of convenience" used to obtain Canadian immigration status.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Property disputes, matrimonial matters come to fore at NRI milni

A TOTAL OF 75 NRIS OF THE MAJHA REGION - AMRITSAR, TARN TARAN, PATHANKOT AND GURDASPUR - PUT FORWARD THEIR GRIEVANCES

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
AMRITSAR (TIP):



Punjab NRI Affairs Minister Ravjot Singh attended the Amritsar NRI milni

Photo / Courtesy Babushahi.com

A total of 75 NRIs of the Majha region - Amritsar, Tarn Taran, Pathankot and Gurdaspur - put forward their grievances in front of officials concerned, besides Minister for NRI Affairs Dr Ravjot Singh today.

NRI Ajaib Singh (75), who had moved to the UK around six decades ago, said the girdawari of his 25 acres of land, which he purchased in 2010, in Gurdaspur's Dera Baba Nanak had been changed.

He maintained that some individuals in connivance with revenue officials were behind this move. He said his relatives grabbed his ancestral land at Shahkot village in Jalandhar.

NRI Harpal Singh said the person who sold him his 25 acres of land in Gurdaspur's Naushehra Majha Singh in 2021 passed away.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

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Sewa Pakhwada: Service Through Consular Reform, Economic Partnership and Diaspora Engagement

BY AMBASSADOR BINAYA
SRIKANTA PRADHAN,
CONSUL GENERAL OF
INDIA, NEW YORK



Sewa Pakhwada, observed from 17 September to 2 October, is an occasion to reaffirm the values of public service, collective responsibility and community participation. For us at the Consulate General of India, New York, the spirit of sewa is reflected in our everyday work: making consular services more accessible and responsive, engaging closely with the Indian diaspora, supporting students and businesses, and strengthening the many connections that bind India and the United States.

A key priority for the Consulate has been to make consular services more modern, convenient and citizen friendly. The Government of India has introduced several technology-driven improvements, including the rollout of e-Passports with embedded electronic chips, enhancing both security and convenience. The Consulate continues to facilitate timely delivery of passports, visas, OCI cards, attestations and other services, while maintaining dedicated arrangements to assist Indian nationals in emergencies. In another important step towards bringing services closer to the community, new Indian Consular Application Centres have been opened in Edison, New Jersey, and Columbus,



India House, New York.

interactions with buyers, retailers and prospective partners, helping businesses navigate market standards, supply-chain requirements and commercial opportunities. Our objective is to create stronger pathways for trade, investment, technology partnerships and innovation between our two countries.

Education and knowledge partnerships constitute another important pillar of our engagement. Indian students form a significant part of the international student community in the United States, and the Consulate works closely with universities and Indian student associations on student welfare, orientation and institutional linkages. At the same time, we are encouraging deeper collaboration between leading institutions in both countries. A recent example is the partnership between Columbia University and IIT Bombay in artificial intelligence and manufacturing, illustrating the growing possibilities for India-U.S. cooperation in advanced research, emerging technologies and innovation.

Our engagement also extends to the second- and third-generation Indian-American community. Through cultural programs, youth interactions, professional



One of the several community events held at the Consulate's ornate Ball Room



One of the several Student Meet and Greet sessions held at the Consulate General of India, New York.

Ohio, improving accessibility for applicants across our jurisdiction.

This emphasis on citizen-centric service is part of a broader transformation taking place in India. Technology and digital public infrastructure are increasingly being leveraged to make governance more accessible, inclusive and responsive. As of 31 July 2026, the Government's UMANG platform, which brings a wide range of Central and State Government services onto a single digital interface, offered around 2,575 services, while DigiLocker had more than 724.3 million registered users. Initiatives such as BHASHINI are further helping overcome linguistic barriers by enabling multilingual and voice-based access to digital services. Together, these initiatives demonstrate how technology is being used to deliver public services at scale while bringing government closer to citizens.

India is also sharing its experience in digital

transformation with partners around the world. As of July 2026, the Government of India had signed Digital Public Infrastructure cooperation arrangements with 24 countries to facilitate the sharing of successful population-scale digital solutions. This reflects an important dimension of India's international partnerships, with a focus on sharing scalable and inclusive solutions that can be adapted to local requirements and contribute to more efficient and accessible public-service delivery.

The same spirit of service and partnership guides our efforts to strengthen India-U.S. trade and investment ties. The Consulate regularly engages with businesses, investors, industry associations and institutions across its jurisdiction to connect Indian companies, including MSMEs, with opportunities in the United States. The India-USA Trade Facilitation Portal is one such initiative aimed at helping Indian exporters better understand the U.S. market. We also facilitate

networks and community outreach, we seek to deepen their connection with India while creating opportunities for engagement in education, innovation, entrepreneurship and other areas of mutual interest. The younger generation of Indian Americans has an important role to play in carrying forward the strong people-to-people relationship between our two countries.

The Indian diaspora remains one of the strongest and most enduring bridges between India and the United States. Its accomplishments across business, technology, academia, medicine, public service and many other fields have enriched both societies. Sewa Pakhwada is therefore not only an occasion to celebrate the idea of service, but also to renew our commitment to putting it into practice through responsive consular services, citizen-centric governance, stronger economic and educational partnerships, and sustained engagement with our community.

For National Mother-in-Law Day, Psychotherapist Shares 5 Tips on How to Celebrate

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

Psychotherapist Lesley Koeppel, author of *How to Be the "Perfect" Mother-in-Law: A Lighthearted Guide for Moms of Married Sons*, believes a healthy mother-in-law relationship doesn't require two people to become best friends or for a daughter-in-law to find a "second mother." It requires something more realistic: mutual respect, healthy boundaries, and an understanding that everyone is trying to find their place in a new family dynamic.

Whether you've got a great relationship with your M-I-L, or admit there is room for improvement, National Mother-in-Law Day is an opportunity to recognize the important role a mother-in-law can play while also acknowledging that the healthiest relationships are built, not assumed. During an interview/segment, Koeppel can share five tips that work for honoring the mother-in-law while building a relationship with her:

Remember that this is the woman who helped shape the person you love: Your spouse's mother was part of the process that helped shape the person you chose to marry. You don't have to agree with everything she does or see her as a second mother to appreciate the role she played in your spouse's life.

A good mother-in-law can become one of your family's greatest allies: A supportive mother-in-law can show up



National Mother-in-Law Day 2026 is on Sunday, October 25, 2026.

when you need an extra set of hands, celebrate your milestones, share family history, and love your children. For the mother-in-law, that support is most valuable when it comes without strings attached. The goal is to create a relationship where everyone knows they can count on one another.

Your mother-in-law may be the keeper of a family history you didn't grow up knowing: Your mother-in-law may know the stories, traditions, recipes, photographs, and family memories that help explain where your spouse came from. Instead of seeing those differences as intrusions, see them as an opportunity to learn more about the person you love

and the family you're now part of.

She doesn't have to become your "second mom": Not every mother-in-law relationship needs to become a mother-daughter relationship, and that's okay. The goal is to create a healthy adult-to-adult relationship based on respect, warmth, and genuine connection. The healthiest relationship is the one where both people appreciate each other without trying to force a closeness that doesn't feel natural.

The best mother-in-law knows that love doesn't require control: She can offer advice without insisting it be followed. She can be involved without taking over. She can have opinions without making

them obligations. She can love her son or daughter deeply while respecting the marriage and family they have created. Ultimately, she can love her family without trying to manage it.

Koeppel backs her heartfelt advice by adding, "A great mother-in-law doesn't try to become the most important woman in her child's life. She learns how to become an important woman in the life of the family her child has created."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lesley Koeppel, LCSW, is a psychotherapist with more than 30 years of experience helping individuals and families navigate serious health challenges and life's most complicated relationships. In her New York City private practice, she has counseled countless women whose personal struggles often reveal unspoken tensions between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. As a therapist and mother-in-law herself, Koeppel brings compassion, humor, a direct approach, and clarity to a subject routinely joked about but rarely explored honestly in her debut book.

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IOCUSA Vice Chairman Calls for Supreme Court Intervention to Protect Electoral Integrity

SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
JAMAICA ESTATE, QUEENS
(TIP)

George Abraham, Vice Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress USA (IOCUSA), expressed deep concern over revelations reported by The Indian Express concerning the functioning of the Election Commission of India and called upon the Supreme Court of India to closely examine the issues raised and take whatever steps it considers necessary to safeguard the integrity of India's electoral process.

The Indian Express investigation reports that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi raised objections at least 14 times over a period of 10 months concerning decisions involving voter registration, deletion and restoration of names, changes to Form 6, and control of the electoral roll database. The newspaper reports that the Commissioners complained that some decisions and communications were made without their knowledge or approval.

"These revelations should alarm every Indian who cherishes democracy. When serious objections reportedly arise from within the Election Commission itself, they cannot simply be brushed aside," Abraham said. "India's democratic institutions are



IOCUSA Vice Chairman George Abraham has appealed to the Supreme Court of India, as guardian of the Constitution, to examine the recent extraordinary disclosures about the functioning of the Election Commission of India, and ensure that the independence, transparency and credibility of India's electoral system are protected."

under tremendous strain. The Election Commission has a special responsibility because free and fair elections are the foundation upon which democracy rests. If the electoral process itself is manipulated, that would amount to the death of democracy."

IOCUSA calls upon the Supreme Court of India to urgently examine these reported irregularities and ensure the independence, transparency and integrity of the electoral process. "This is not merely about one political party winning or losing an election," Abraham added. "Governments come, and governments go. Political parties win today and lose tomorrow. That is democracy. But the machinery that conducts the election must remain above suspicion and beyond partisan manipulation. Protecting that machinery should be the common cause of every Indian, regardless of political affiliation."

"India is too important, and its democratic inheritance too precious, to permit unanswered questions of this magnitude to linger. We appeal to the Supreme Court, as guardian of the Constitution, to examine these extraordinary disclosures and ensure that the independence, transparency and credibility of India's electoral system are protected."

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Big gap on how GenZ should behave

Modi's choice of a leading college in Delhi to make his first outreach was problematic, both on account of the choice of the college and his use of some GenZ slang

BY VIVEK
KATJU



PM Modi's instinctive response to reach out to GenZ has been to engage them. / FB photo



The success of the BRICS summit, the 7.8% GDP growth in the first quarter of this financial year, the elaborate enthusiasm with which PM Modi's 76th birthday was celebrated and the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad's retention of its posts in the Delhi University elections, although by much lower margins, cannot obscure the headwinds faced by the government and the Sangh Parivar in its saffronisation project.

The June-July Cockroach Janta Party protests led to the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, a key demand of the protesters. It would not have been easy for Modi to let Pradhan go. However, the police crackdown on the protesters and the nationwide resonance of the protests did not leave the PM with any choice.

Certainly, some things have changed. But if Modi and his advisers believe, in the post-Pradhan scenario, that his resignation will help return the genie back into the bottle, especially after the repeat conduct of the NEET examination, then they may be mistaken.

More instances of paper leaks have surfaced to keep GenZ agitated even if these have occurred in non-BJP ruled states. The Nandan Nilekani committee's report, when it comes, may help in assuaging some GenZ fears on leak-proof examinations but the extent to which it will be able to do so remains to be seen.

There is an enormous gap between some sections of GenZ's thinking, attitudes and articulation and the ruling dispensation's view on how India's youth should behave.

This applies especially to young women. It would be wrong to make generalizations, however, as social behavior is a very complex phenomenon.

It would, however, be safe to say that many young women, particularly in urban settings, have moved away from more conservative norms of behavior. In some cases, their deportment is seen as "masculine;" the RSS would like them to conduct themselves according to age-old notions of modesty.

No wonder Modi appeared most pained by the language that some young women had used during the CJP protest while expressing their anger and angst. He had said in a video posted on X "Cultural shock hai ki hamari betiyaan iss prakar ki bhasha kaise bol sakti hain." He went on to say "Lekin samay hai bachhon ko raah dikhane ka".

Young women in ever larger numbers are in public spaces. They are even part of combat formations in the navy and air force. They are leading police units in anti-crime operations. Through all this, and much more, gender relations are being redefined. In large sections of our society young women openly aver that if the crass behavior of men is condoned, then why should the same approach not apply to them.

Modi's bewilderment at the language used by girls reveals an older, more cautious mindset: young women should be chaste, have downcast eyes, use polite language and remain modest.

Young girls of today, particularly in cities, generally do not accept gender

discrimination - which raises the issue of whether they have in some way, gone beyond the basic postulates underlying the Sangh's thinking on sanskar? This, notwithstanding the fact that religiosity may be increasing in India; but piety does not necessarily translate into conventional behaviour.

Modi's instinctive response to bridge the gap with GenZ has been to engage them. GenZ is obviously not a monolith but Modi's choice of a leading college in Delhi to make his first outreach was problematic, both on account of his choice of the college and his use of some GenZ slang.

The college is, of course, one of the country's leading educational institutions but its student body is not the kind which would participate in GenZ protests in large numbers. Students of this college are more likely to get admissions in prestigious institutions or land good jobs than those from other colleges.

Hence, Modi chose to bat on a placid pitch. Like every generation, GenZ has its own slang. The question is how does it react to an older person - even if he is the country's pre-eminent political leader - peppering his talk with some GenZ phrases.

More important than Modi's style of outreach is his difficulty in meeting the expectations of large sections of GenZ for jobs and stability in their lives. Modi is rightly focusing on creating the right environment for entrepreneurship for the young.

This is good but the focus of a very large number of the youth, particularly from

socially deprived sections in the north and the east, is on government or professional jobs. This is because they are associated with status.

It is here that the economy, despite being the world's fastest growing large economy, is not doing enough. This is leading to a large number of youth being attracted to the issues such as those raised by the CJP. These young people respond to nationalism but is their focus on following the thinking of the Sangh Parivar?

It is here that Rahul Gandhi is scoring high. There seems to be some discomfort in the BJP on the kind of response he is receiving. It is believed that authorities in BJP-ruled states have been putting obstacles, for one reason or another, on his youth rallies. The Indore rally was finally held on September 19, and reports indicate that like its previous iterations, it received a good response.

This does not mean that the BJP with its huge election machinery will suffer great reverses in the coming elections, but it does lead to food for thought whether the saffronisation project currently underway resonates with large numbers of the young.

Thus, academic syllabi may be modified and institutions may be led by BJP-RSS leaders, but if the economy does not yield more jobs, their agenda will no longer be necessarily compelling for GenZ, certainly from those social sections that have not gained from the BJP's economic preferences.

(Vivek Katju is former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs)

Who Guards the Guardians of India's Ballot?

The controversy surrounding the Election Commission raises a question larger than one Chief Election Commissioner: Can electoral democracy survive if citizens cease trusting its referee?

BY INDRAJIT SALUJA



Democracy contains an apparent paradox. Political parties are expected to fight ferociously for power, yet the institution supervising that fight must remain indifferent to who wins. That institution in India is the Election Commission.

The controversy now surrounding Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the reported disagreements within the Election Commission should therefore not be reduced to another BJP-versus-Opposition quarrel.

The real question is institutional. Who guards the guardians of India's ballot?

Recent reporting has revealed something extraordinary. Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi reportedly recorded objections at least 14 times over ten months concerning electoral-roll decisions, including addition and deletion of voters, appeals and control over electoral-roll software.

Some reported objections concerned decisions allegedly taken without their knowledge.

The Election Commission has rejected the suggestion that this demonstrates improper functioning. Its position is that Commissioners may express different views during deliberation but that final Commission decisions, including the Special Intensive Revision, were unanimous. That distinction matters.

So does another reported fact: the Commission's September 9 meeting was its first full meeting in four months. What exactly occurred during those months must now be established from records rather than political accusation.

But there is a deeper reason Indians should care. An election can be compromised long before polling day.

The electoral roll determines who enters the democratic arena as a voter. Remove an eligible citizen wrongly and that person's constitutional voice may disappear before a single ballot is cast.

This is why the scale of India's Special Intensive Revision deserves close scrutiny.

Recent reporting says more than 13 crore names were removed from draft rolls across 30 states and Union Territories during the SIR process.

Not every deletion is sinister. Electoral rolls must be cleaned. People die. Citizens move. Duplicate registrations occur. Some entries may be invalid.

The Supreme Court itself, while examining Bihar's SIR, recognized the Election Commission's authority to undertake revision. Bihar began the exercise with approximately 7.89 crore electors; about 65 lakh were absent from the draft roll published in August 2025. During litigation, the Supreme Court directed publication of excluded names with reasons and required Aadhaar to be accepted as an identity document, while clarifying that Aadhaar is not proof of citizenship.

Those judicial interventions demonstrate precisely why transparency matters.

The question is not whether electoral rolls should be revised. Of course they should. The question is whether revision procedures make it easier to remove an eligible citizen than to protect that citizen's vote.

West Bengal illustrates the stakes. The Election Commission recently told the Supreme Court that 27.16 lakh voters had been removed during SIR. More than 22 lakh subsequently appealed seeking inclusion. Whatever one's politics, those numbers deserve attention. No democracy should casually accept a system in which enormous numbers of citizens must fight their way back onto electoral rolls.

This controversy cannot be separated from the method by which India's Election Commissioners are selected.

In *Anoop Banarwal v. Union of India* in 2023, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court stepped into a legislative vacuum and prescribed that appointments should, until Parliament enacted a law, be recommended by a committee comprising the Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition and Chief Justice of India.

The reasoning reflected an obvious democratic concern: the Election Commission must possess independence from



: Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi reportedly recorded objections at least 14 times over ten months concerning electoral-roll decisions, including addition and deletion of voters, appeals and control over electoral-roll software. The controversy now surrounding Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and the reported disagreements within the Election Commission should therefore not be reduced to another BJP-versus-opposition quarrel. The real question is institutional. Who guards the guardians of India's ballot?

the political executive whose continuation in power depends upon elections administered by that very Commission. Parliament subsequently legislated. Under the new arrangement, the selection committee consists of the Prime Minister, the Leader of Opposition and a Union Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister. Thus, the government effectively occupies two of three seats. The constitutionality of provisions of that legislation has been challenged before the Supreme Court.

Whatever the eventual judicial determination, citizens are entitled to ask a simpler institutional question. Why should the government of the day possess dominant representation in selecting the referees of elections in which that government itself will compete? That question would be equally valid if Congress, BJP or any other party governed India. Institutions should be designed not around the presumed virtue of today's rulers but around the possibility of tomorrow's abuse.

Gyanesh Kumar's previous government service has also become part of the controversy. Before joining the Election Commission, the retired IAS officer served in important Union government assignments. He worked in the Home Ministry and handled Jammu and Kashmir matters during the period surrounding the abrogation of Article 370. He subsequently served as Secretary in the Ministry of Cooperation.

Both ministries were headed during relevant periods by Amit Shah.

Those facts are legitimate matters of public record. They do not establish that Kumar is controlled by Shah, nor should a career civil servant automatically be presumed partisan because he implemented policies of an elected government.

The stronger democratic argument is different.

Once a person enters a constitutional institution, previous loyalties—real or perceived—must become irrelevant. Independence must be demonstrated by conduct.

And that brings us back to the reported objections of Commissioners Sandhu and Joshi. If the reports are accurate, India deserves to see the institutional record.

What were the objections?
Which instructions were questioned?
Which were subsequently withdrawn or modified?
Which decisions received formal approval from all three Commissioners?

How did centrally controlled electoral software affect decisions of Electoral Registration Officers?

Why was there reportedly no full Commission meeting for four months?

These are factual questions capable of factual answers.

The Election Commission should provide them.

The Opposition, meanwhile, must also meet a standard of responsibility. Suspicion is not proof. Electoral defeats cannot automatically be converted into evidence of rigging. If political parties allege manipulation, they should produce verifiable evidence and submit it to

judicial and institutional scrutiny.

Similarly, the government and BJP cannot answer every question about electoral administration by dismissing critics as disappointed opponents.

A democracy requires both responsible accusation and credible explanation.

What India now needs is sunlight.

The relevant institutional records should be disclosed to the maximum extent permitted by law. Serious allegations should receive independent examination. Parliament should debate whether the present appointment system sufficiently protects Election Commission independence. Courts should continue scrutinizing questions affecting voting rights when properly brought before them.

There is also a compelling case for institutional reform.

Major Election Commission decisions affecting electoral rolls should ordinarily require recorded deliberation of the full Commission. Material dissent should be preserved in official records. Electoral-roll software should leave auditable trails identifying who authorized consequential changes. Large-scale deletions should trigger automatic transparency safeguards and accessible appeals.

Most importantly, India's method of appointing Election Commissioners deserves reconsideration with one objective above all others: no ruling political formation should be capable of creating a reasonable perception that it chooses its own referee.

The Election Commission is not another government department.

Article 324 gives it constitutional responsibility for the superintendence, direction and control of elections. That extraordinary authority carries an equally extraordinary obligation of independence.

The present controversy therefore offers India an opportunity.

Do not turn it merely into a demand to remove one man and then declare the system repaired.

Investigate the allegations. Establish responsibility wherever evidence warrants it. Protect individuals from unsupported accusations. And then repair any structural weakness that allowed the controversy to arise.

Because democracies rarely collapse only when someone announces their end.

They can also weaken quietly—when institutions lose credibility, when citizens cease believing that rules apply equally, and when electoral losers believe that the referee belongs to the winner.

India must never reach that point.

An Election Commission cannot tell 1.4 billion Indians simply to trust it.

It must show them why they should.

The government must be able to lose an election. The Opposition must be able to win one. And the citizen must be able to believe that neither result was written anywhere except on the ballot.

That is the standard.

Nothing less is worthy of the world's largest democracy.

NATIONALISM BEYOND BORDERS, THE QUESTION OF LOYALTY

BY VARGHESE K. GEORGE



The RSS's global outreach revealed contradictions in the Sangh's ideas about the people and territory that make up a nation



The visible emergence of Hindus in the West as a political community in recent decades has been a double-edged sword for Hindutva.

iStock photo

A section of Hindu nationalists in India has long questioned the national loyalty of its religious minorities. Under attack, Muslims and Christians have often sought to affirm their loyalty to the nation. But in a curious turn of history, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a key platform of Hindu nationalism, is now explaining to the world that loyalty to a nation is not determined by the faith traditions of its citizens.

"There is no conflict in being Indian and being a citizen of another country for a Hindu," RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said. At an event titled Celebrate Oneness/Celebration of Oneness in London, on September 6, 2026, Mr. Bhagwat said: "If British Hindus are good, committed, and true Hindus, there will never be a conflict between British and Bharat interests. If at all that happens, it is obvious that British Hindus will go with Britain. Exceptions may happen, but Hindutva is clear on this. Your Karmabhoomi is where your loyalties lie. Your Janmabhoomi, or land of your origin or your birthplace, Punyabhoomi or Janmabhoomi, is where you get your values, and you have to live those values in your Karmabhoomi, serving the Karmabhoomi. So, Hindutva never asks you to betray your Karmabhoomi. You are living there, you are earning there, you are living there," he said.

TWO FORMS OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism is a shared sense among a group of people that they are a group. Broadly, there are two types of nationalism: territorial and cultural. Territorial nationalism supposes that all people who are in a particular place are one. Whether one is Hindu, Christian, or Muslim, everyone who lives in India is Indian, according to this conception. Cultural nationalism, on the other hand, assumes that all people who share a culture are one, regardless of where they live. For instance, it could hold that all Christians, Muslims, or Hindus form one nation, wherever they live.

In real life, it is impossible to enforce such clear notions, because people and ideas move across national borders, which are themselves subject to change over time. Concepts and practices often get mixed up. In the

Indian context, the territorial nationalism depicted in Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India* draws upon culture too.

The cultural nationalism that the RSS represents considers all Hindus around the world as one nation, but it also holds strident views about the territory of India. The RSS anthem is the Sanskrit hymn *Namaste Sada Vatsale Matribhume*, underscoring the primacy of territory even while claiming Hindu universalism. Secularists, on the other hand, also draw upon the cultural iconography of *Bharat Mata*.

The link between culture and territory in the conceptualization of the nation has never been simple, but it has been further complicated by globalization and anti-globalization politics around the world in recent decades. It is this complication that Mr. Bhagwat has been trying to grapple with through his global outreach tour to mark the Sangh's centenary. On average, around 1.5 lakh Indians give up their Indian citizenship each year to become citizens of another country.

They may find themselves caught in the political equivalent of what clinical psychologists term dissociative identity disorder, or split personality disorder. After giving up their Indian passports, they attend meetings such as those addressed by Mr. Bhagwat and those organized by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in various parts of the world, where they chant "*Bharat Mata ki Jai*." In Australia and the United Kingdom, some of them support India when it plays cricket against their newly adopted motherlands. Not only are they caught between two mothers in terms of their loyalties, but they have also transported their fraternal conflicts from the subcontinent to the new territories. They carry their old battles over sects, castes and religions to their new motherlands.

THE 'INTERNAL ENEMY' THEME

Hindutva's foundational author, V.D. Savarkar, framed this concern about the split loyalties of those residing in the territory. In *Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* he distinguished between those who are in the territory of India by the accident of birth and those who consider it their sacred land.

The true Hindu, in his formulation, is one who has

India as both *pitrubhumi* and *punyabhumi*, a test that excludes Muslims and Christians who may have their sacred lands elsewhere. This fear of the resident alien, or even the enemy within, continues to persist in Hindutva thinking. Mr. Bhagwat himself has spoken of this. "This war is not against an enemy without, but against an enemy within. So, there is a war to defend Hindu society, Hindu Dharma and Hindu culture. Foreign invaders are no longer there, but foreign influence and foreign conspiracies continue..." he told *Organiser* in an interview in 2023. This theme of the internal enemy continues to animate Hindutva nationalism, at any rate, a vocal section of it.

When the RSS says it is spreading the message of the oneness of the world, how does this sit with its notions of territory and people? Is the RSS an organization meant for all Hindus, wherever they may be in the world, or is it about uniting all Indians?

Rather than an easy answer, what one might encounter in the Sangh's stated principles and practices are contradictions, and perhaps a struggle to come to terms with a changing world. The Sangh has become a global actor, partly by accident and partly by design. Mr. Bhagwat also maintains that all people who are in India and share the same ancestry are all Hindus.

If all people who share the same ancestry are Hindus and part of the nation, there is no reason why the RSS should be anxious about the movement of people from anywhere in the subcontinent. But that is not the RSS's position, which calls for the stringent protection of Indian borders and the removal of so-called infiltrators by all possible measures.

Migrations linked to colonialism dispersed Indians across distant shores. Wherever Indians settled, the anti-colonial movement also took root. Intellectual and organizational strands of the Indian national movement were present in many parts of the world in the early 20th century. In fact, both Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar developed their ideas while living in the United Kingdom.

DIASPORA DILEMMA

The visible emergence of Hindus in the West as a political community in recent decades has been a double-edged sword for Hindutva. The U.K. has had a Prime Minister of Hindu faith, Rishi Sunak. The RSS and the Bharatiya Janata Party introduced a new vocabulary of the *janmabhoomi-karmabhoomi* duet when they launched their diaspora politics under Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government. This worked quite well in reaching out to western audiences until native nationalisms in the West began to view migrants with suspicion. It so happened that the RSS's intensive diaspora politics, which became part of India's state policy under Mr. Modi, coincided with the rise of nativism in the West. Mr. Bhagwat's London speech sought to address this concern: Can a person of an allegedly foreign faith be a loyal citizen of the country?

THE NATIONALIST IN THE NRI

If this moment is truly one of self-reflection and marks an evolutionary milestone for the RSS in its 100th year, it must apply the same standard everywhere, across the entire *bhumi*. What is true in London must be equally true in Lucknow: loyalty to the nation is not determined by the faith one follows, but by one's residency and the modern concept of citizenship. Mr. Bhagwat has done well in stating that people of Indian origin must choose their adopted country over India in all situations, echoing Jawaharlal Nehru's position on this question. However, Mr. Bhagwat's words will be tested equally in the Indian context if they are to be accepted as a marker of the RSS's evolution.

(Varghese K. George is Resident Editor, New Delhi *The Hindu*)



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108 Sacred Fires, 15,000 Chants: Chinmaya Mission Los Angeles Hosts Grand Hanuman Havan



Congressman Dave Min with Swami Swaroopananda

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2026 |
CHINO HILLS, CA (TIP)**

Over 2,000 participants. 108 sacred fire pits. 15,000 recitations of the Hanuman Chalisa. Six hours of continuous devotion. And over thousands of meals served.

These were among the grand numbers behind a day of devotion on September 5, when Chinmaya Mission Los Angeles (CMLA) hosted the Shri Hanuman Chalisa Samashti Havan, bringing together devotees from across Southern California.



Thousands of people chanted the holy verses of the Hanuman Chalisa

Part of worldwide celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of Chinmaya Mission, known as Chinmaya Amrit Mahotsav, the event paid tribute to Lord Hanuman, revered as an embodiment of selfless

service and devotion. It also brought together members of the Indian American community representing a range of organizations, gathering under the umbrella of CMLA for collective prayer, fellowship, and a celebration of their shared cultural and spiritual heritage.

The day began before the first havan participant arrived. At dawn, volunteers and priests transported a splendidly bejeweled Panchamukha Hanuman deity in procession from its temple home in Torrance, CA. Installed at the havan site as the presiding deity, the idol served as the spiritual focal point for the day.

Swami Swaroopananda, head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide, presided alongside Swami Shantananda, president of Chinmaya West. The morning also brought together other spiritual and community leaders and elected officials.

Congressman Dave Min (D-CA-47), the guest of honor, offered a short address focusing on diversity as a bedrock principle of American society. Connecting his remarks to the event's central theme, 'samashti,' meaning "collective" or "whole," Min, sporting a tilak and mala, spoke about harmony and referenced Lord Shiva and condoled the pilgrims who lost their lives in the horrific Nepal flood.

Among the other distinguished guests were Irvine Council Member Melinda Liu, Artesia Council Member Zeel Ahir and Consul Kulwant Singh of the Indian Consulate in Los Angeles.

CMLA is also marking 30 years under the leadership of Swami Ishwarananda. During that time, he has helped expand the center's activities and community role, including its Sunday Bala Vihar program, which currently serves approximately 1,000 children. A laudatory message recognizing Swami Ishwarananda's service from U.S. Senator Adam Schiff and a Certificate of Congressional Recognition from California Congresswoman Young Kim (R-CA-40) were given to him.

The dignitaries presented commemorative plaques to Swami Swaroopananda, who then addressed the gathering in loving tones. He explained the spiritual significance of the occasion and shared a traditional account that Lord Shiva was so pleased with Sant Tulsidas' 'Hanuman Chalisa' that he gave a blessing: one who chants the 'Hanuman Chalisa' 100 times will attain life's goals, and all bondage and limitations will come to an end.

Swami Swaroopananda also shared a statistic from the worldwide anniversary celebration: the 'Hanuman Chalisa' has been chanted approximately 550 million times through the auspices of Chinmaya Mission.

The Havan ceremony was conducted in four batches throughout the day. Fifteen minutes before their assigned hour, ushers led each group into the main Havan arena, where 108 fire pits had been arranged in a precise grid. Fresh fuel bricks and ceremonial



Swami Ishwarananda was recognized for his decades of service and building CMLA

materials - including ghee, flowers, rice, sandalwood paste, and Kumkum - were placed at each station.

As instructions appeared on large LED screens, volunteers lit all 108 fires. Neither the afternoon heat nor swirling winds carrying smoke across the arena dampened the atmosphere. The collective chanting of the 'Hanuman Chalisa' instead grew louder and more focused with each repetition.



The padukas of Founder Swami Chinmayanada were ceremonially brought in

Children from the Chinmaya Bala Vihar program also joined the chanting. With animated images of Lord Hanuman displayed on the large screens, the children recited the sacred verses composed by poet-saint Goswami Tulsidas from the stage, their voices carrying across the grounds.

Between Havan sessions, attendees visited exhibition booths representing CMLA's seven regional centers across Southern California, including centers in Orange, Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties. The booths illustrated verses from the 'Hanuman Chalisa' and offered activities for children, including games, face painting and henna. Displays traced CMLA's history in Southern California, while a bookstore offered publications ranging from children's stories to advanced Vedantic texts.

A prominent exhibit presented the life story of Chinmaya Mission founder Swami Chinmayananda through large vertical visual panels. Many attendees stopped to view the display and take photographs.

After their havan session, participants were guided to the dining area, where they received fresh boxed mahaprasad before making way for the next group.

After the final batch completed its chants, the day concluded with a mahaaarati. Swami Ishwarananda closed the gathering by expressing gratitude to those who attended, with particular appreciation for the CMLA volunteers whose tireless service brought the day's celebration of faith, unity, and community spirit to life.



Dedicated volunteers

NYC Health + Hospitals recognizes Twelve Long-Term Care residents celebrating more than 100 years on National Centenarian Day

- NYC Health + Hospitals/Coler celebrates centenarian resident Carmen Augustin at age 112
- NYC Health + Hospitals/Sea View honors centenarian resident Josephine Linton at age 109
- NYC Health + Hospitals/Gouverneur recognizes six residents over the age of 100
- NYC Health + Hospitals/Gouverneur long-term care residents receive special citations from the Office of
- NYC Council Member Christopher Marte in celebration of more than 100 years of life experiences.

**SEPTEMBER 25, 2026
NEW YORK, NY (TIP)**

In celebration of National Centenarian Day (observed on September 22), NYC Health + Hospitals honored twelve residents who have reached an incredible life milestone of 100 years or older. There are six centenarians at NYC Health + Hospitals/Gouverneur: Pin Giu Liu (100), Mei Dor Chew (101), Sun L. Lum (102), Ru Liao (102), Yung Lin Chou (104), and Kam Po Ma (104). NYC Health + Hospitals/Sea View honored four centenarians - Grace Klee (100), Marion Henry (100), Luba Fatteringer (102), and Josephine Linton (109) - and NYC Health + Hospitals/Coler recognized two centenarians: Maria Gonzalez (101) and Carmen Augustin (112), the oldest long-term care resident across the health system's five skilled nursing facilities, and among the city's oldest living New Yorkers.

"At Gouverneur we are proud to be selected as home for our centenarians. Each of our have contributed so much in their many years and continue to be supported by their loving families and the staff at Gouverneur," said NYC Health + Hospitals/Gouverneur CEO Susan Sales, MPA, FACHE, LNHA.

"Carmen and Maria hold a very special place in the hearts of our staff and residents. Their lives, their resilience, and the years they have given this world are a legacy in themselves. I feel incredibly fortunate that we have the opportunity to care for them and celebrate their lives," said NYC Health + Hospitals/Coler CEO Nataliya Yakovleva, LNHA, LMSW.

NYC Health + Hospitals/Coler centenarian Carmen Augustin receives a mayoral proclamation in celebration of her 112th birthday.

"It is a wonderful privilege to celebrate four extraordinary centenarians here at Sea View! Josephine Linton, Luba Fatteringer, Grace Klee, and Marion Henry have all reached an incredible milestone, and we are so proud to have them as part of our Sea View family," said NYC Health + Hospitals/Sea View CEO Marisol Arroyo, LNHA, MPH, CPHQ. "Together, they represent more than four centuries of life filled with family, memories, accomplishments, and wisdom. Today, we celebrate not only the number of years they have lived, but the remarkable lives they have built and the joy they continue to bring to our community. Congratulations to our four amazing centenarians!"



NYC Health + Hospitals/Sea View centenarian Josephine Linton celebrated her 109th birthday and received a citation from NYS Senator Andrew Lanza to commemorate her extraordinary milestone.

These individuals are a testament to a lifetime of strength, resilience, and experiences spanning over the last 100 years. Here is some background on this year's National Centenarian Day honorees:

Carmen Augustin, 112, was born in Haiti, has lived through significant historical events from the rise of aviation, the Spanish flu pandemic, the start of both World Wars, 19 U.S. Presidents, among many others. Augustin enjoys singing in French and Creole with the residents and staff in the Memory Care Unit at Coler.

Josephine Linton, 109, Sea View's eldest centenarian, was born on January 11, 1917. One of seven siblings, Linton is the proud mother of two children, Dennis Linton and Diane Scotto. During her working years, she was a seamstress specializing in children's clothing. Her hobbies have included knitting, dancing, reading, and enjoying the company of those around her.

Kam Po Ma, 104, resides in Gouverneur. Born in China, he worked as a rice miller. He is a very optimistic person and enjoys playing Mah Jong, Chinese chess and playing cards.

Yung Lin Chou, 104, resides in Gouverneur. Born in Shanghai, China, he worked as a chef. He raised four children and lived in both Taiwan and the United States. His life is a testament to perseverance and adaptability.

Luba Fatteringer, 102, resides in Sea View. Originally from Yugoslavia, Fatteringer came to the United States at a young age. She has a passion for cooking and baking and especially enjoys spending time with friends, including sharing coffee together almost every day.

Sun L. Lum, 102, resides in Gouverneur. Born in China, she spent her life as a seamstress, finding solace in her family and her garden. Lum's quiet strength and passion for cooking reflect a life rooted in tradition but driven by love, ensuring that those around her were nourished both in body and spirit.

Ru Liao, 102, resides in Gouverneur. Born in China, she grew up in Chinatown and has four children, three daughters and one son. She enjoys exercising and remains active to this day.

Maria Gonzalez, 101, resides in Coler. Born in Puerto Rico, Gonzalez brings vibrant energy and warmth wherever she goes. A true social butterfly, she loves listening to lively salsa and merengue music, relaxing with a good movie, and enjoying her favorite treat: a warm cup of coffee paired with fresh muffins.

Mei Dor Chew, 101, resides in Gouverneur. Born in the United States and raised in China, she worked as a seamstress for six days a week to raise her family.



Through hard work and determination, she raised three children, all graduating from college. She also loves to play Mah Jong.

Grace Klee, 100, resides in Sea View. A life-long Staten Islander, Klee has always had a special love for dogs and enjoys the companionship and joy they bring.

Marion Henry, 100, resides in Sea View. A Staten Island native, she has a fun-loving spirit and enjoys settling in with a good action movie. She especially loves the excitement, adventure, and suspense that keep her entertained from beginning to end.

Pin Giu Liu, 100, resides in Gouverneur. Born in China, she enjoys staying active through exercise and socializing with peers. Liu can often be seen enjoying a game of Mah Jong, exercising her artistic expressions through painting, or watching classic movies and nature videos.

"Congratulations to all twelve New Yorkers celebrating this extraordinary milestone, including the six centenarians at Gouverneur here in our community," said NYC Council Member Christopher Marte. "Their stories of raising families, working hard, and finding joy in everyday life are a wonderful reminder of how much our oldest neighbors have to share. I'm grateful to the staff and caregivers who support them every day, and wish each honoree continued happiness, good health, and time with the people they love."

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news



India and Romania Explore Stronger Fashion & Textile Cooperation; Indian Participation in Pasarela 2026 Highlighted



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



Ms. Renu Sharma, Trustee, B&S Foundation and President, COWE (Delhi Chapter) presented her remarks and introduced the Indian companies.

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

The Embassy of India organized an India-Romania Hybrid B2B interaction on Fashion & Textiles on 18 September 2026, bringing together Romanian stakeholders and Indian companies to explore new opportunities for cooperation in the fashion, textiles and creative industries. The interaction placed particular emphasis on the upcoming Pasarela International Fashion Festival 2026, one of Romania's prominent fashion events, and the potential for a strong Indian presence at the festival.

Pasarela International Fashion Festival 2026, scheduled to be held in Bucharest from 3-6 December 2026 at Romexpo, is set to provide a significant platform for showcasing India's rich textile heritage, contemporary fashion, traditional craftsmanship and design excellence. This year India would be participating as the Country of Honour, reflecting the growing interest in strengthening India-Romania cooperation in the fashion and textile sector. The special participation is expected to bring together Indian fashion designers, textile manufacturers, handicraft and handloom enterprises, jewelry houses and other creative-industry stakeholders, offering them an opportunity to showcase India's diverse and vibrant fashion ecosystem and explore business partnerships with Romanian and European counterparts.

The event organized by the Embassy featured a presentation on Pasarela Exhibition by Mr. Christian Banica, followed by remarks by Ms. Renu Sharma, Trustee, B&S Foundation and President, COWE (Delhi Chapter). Indian companies participating through the virtual platform interacted with the Pasarela representatives during a dedicated Q&A session.

The programme was inaugurated with opening remarks by Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, Ambassador of India. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador highlighted the considerable potential for expanding India-Romania cooperation in fashion



Romanian companies actively participated and explored opportunities with Indian firms.



Mr. Christian Banica gave presentation on Pasarela Exhibition during the event



Group picture - India and Romania Explore Stronger Fashion & Textile Cooperation; Indian Participation in Pasarela 2026 Highlighted

and textiles. He noted that India possesses a globally competitive textile and apparel ecosystem, encompassing traditional handlooms and handicrafts, sustainable textiles, manufacturing capabilities, fashion design and a rapidly growing contemporary fashion industry.

Pasarela 2026, offers an important platform for Indian companies and designers to connect with Romanian and European buyers, fashion houses, designers, distributors and other industry stakeholders. The Embassy is encouraging greater participation from Indian enterprises with a view to creating sustainable business partnerships and opening new avenues for Indian fashion and textile products in the Romanian and wider European markets. India's participation would also provide an opportunity to showcase the diversity of India's textile heritage from handloom and traditional crafts to modern sustainable and technology-driven textile production alongside contemporary Indian fashion and jewelry.

The B2B interaction also explored opportunities for business-to-business partnerships, sourcing, distribution, joint collaborations and participation in international fashion platforms. The Embassy is facilitating dialogue between Indian companies and Romanian industry stakeholders to translate these opportunities into concrete commercial partnerships. The initiative assumes added significance in the context of the growing economic engagement between India and Romania and the wider opportunities emerging from enhanced India-EU economic cooperation. The fashion and textile sector, with its strong employment, manufacturing, design and export potential, can contribute significantly to expanding bilateral trade and business linkages.

The Embassy of India will continue to work closely with Romanian counterparts, industry associations and Indian business organizations to facilitate greater commercial engagement and create opportunities for Indian enterprises in Romania.

Canada starts thinking about traditional Indian medicine system on the 11th Ayurveda Day

BY
PRABHJOT SINGH



Ayurveda as an alternative to allopathy:
Consulate General of India observes Ayurveda
Day 2026



Participants in Ayurveda Day 2026

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
TORONTO (TIP)**

Can Ayurveda be a less toxic and more effective way to treat and cure some of the deadliest diseases? This is a question which was debated vigorously at various events organized on Tuesday, September 22, to mark the 11th Ayurveda Day.

The Government of India, Ministry of AYUSH, and the Consulate General of India, Toronto, in partnership with the Canadian Ayurvedic Practitioners Association, chose the theme 'Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow' for the celebration of the day.

The event highlighted Ayurveda's timeless wisdom and its growing relevance to preventive health, holistic well-being, research and innovation. The observance underscores India's continued efforts to promote awareness of Ayurveda globally and to facilitate greater dialogue around its traditional knowledge, preventive health principles, research and contemporary applications.

In Canada, there has been a proposal to start an Ayurveda Medical College to train

people in this traditional system of health care by minimizing the use of chemicals and other toxic elements.

In Toronto, the celebrations commenced with Dhanvantari Poojan and invocation, followed by an address by Consul General of India Mahavir Singhvi. Reflecting on the enduring relevance of Ayurveda in contemporary times, the Consul General, Mahavir Singhvi, said, "Ayurveda represents India's timeless wisdom on health, holistic wellness and harmony with nature, with enduring relevance in today's world. Ayurveda Day provides a meaningful opportunity to deepen awareness of this ancient knowledge while strengthening India-Canada engagement in traditional knowledge, holistic wellness and preventive healthcare. Through greater awareness, research, innovation and responsible engagement, we can further advance the understanding and appreciation of Ayurveda in Canada and around the world."

He also released the book AYURVEDA@HOME, authored by Vaidya

Harish Kumar Verma, Founder and President, Best Ayurveda Limited, Canada and Rohit Mehra, Creator of Jungles using Principles of Vriksha Ayurveda, which offers practical insights into integrating Ayurvedic principles and practices into everyday life for healthier living, preventive wellness and holistic well-being.

The program featured expert perspectives on various dimensions of Ayurveda as below:

Vaidya Harish Kumar Verma spoke on 'Ayurveda for a Healthier Tomorrow,' highlighting the role of Ayurvedic approaches in promoting healthier lifestyles and preventive wellness.

Sanjay Makkar, Vice Chair, Canada India Foundation (CIF), shared perspectives on 'What We Are Doing for Ayurveda & Yoga in Canada,' outlining efforts to promote awareness and engagement around India's traditional systems of wellness in the Canadian context.

Surendra Chaudhry addressed the theme 'Ayurveda: Integration, Research & Innovation,' underscoring the importance

of research, innovation and wider integration in advancing the understanding and contemporary relevance of Ayurveda.

Manju Setia spoke on 'Ayurveda for Community Well-being,' focusing on the potential of Ayurveda to contribute to holistic health and well-being at the community level.

The Government of India, Ministry of AYUSH, has designated 23rd September as Ayurveda Day each year, providing an annual date for observances and strengthening the global visibility of Ayurveda. The date also coincides with the autumnal equinox, symbolizing balance and harmony, principles closely associated with the Ayurvedic understanding of health and well-being.

The Consulate General of India, Toronto, has reaffirmed its commitment to promote greater awareness of India's rich traditions of wellness, including Ayurveda and yoga, and to support meaningful engagement and dialogue on their potential contribution to healthier and more balanced communities.

To step up its market share in North America, Air India introduces Boeing 787-9 aircraft in the Toronto-Delhi sector

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
TORONTO (TIP)**

To step its North American market share from 30 per cent upwards, the management of Air India has started replacing its old aircraft from the Canadian-Indian sector by introducing the latest version of the company-designed and manufactured Boeing 787 aircraft.

Since the introduction of a new aircraft that has a configuration of 30 business class, 28 premium economy and 238 economy class seats, the response from the Indo-Canadian community in general and others has been overwhelming, say the officials of the airline that went to private hands a couple of years ago.

Senior officials of Air India - Raghavendra Singh, Amit Arora, Arun Kapoor and Hardeep Singh - were on hand to explain salient features of the new aircraft that has been in use since the beginning of last months for 10 flights a week between Toronto and Delhi. Others accompanying them included Arun Kapoor and Anshu



Air India officials briefing media persons on board of an Air India Plane.

Kashyap.

Canada and India have had strong civil aviation relations for over 40 years, and they said that they want to make them stronger and more purposeful by catering to the needs of air passengers on various India and Canada corridors. The new aircraft have been designed keeping in view the demands, expectations and aspirations of our great patrons, the passengers.

Air India, they said, will soon have its office in Toronto. At present, it operates from Pearson International Airport.

At present, they said, only Air India and Air Canada operate direct non-stop



flights to India from Canada. Besides Mumbai and Delhi, there are four cities, including Amritsar, that are on Easy Connect for international flights. Easy Connect facilities are for international passengers only. They explained that if a passenger is planning to travel from Amritsar to Toronto, he can check in his bags and even get immigration clearances done in Amritsar rather than getting these done in Delhi or Mumbai.

A special tour was conducted for members of the media team to explain how an indigenous design relevant to Indian traditions and heritage has been incorporated in fabricating the internal



The Indian Panorama Contributing
Correspondent Prabhjot Singh taking a round in
an aircraft.

furnishings of the aircraft. "We have not started talking about the introduction of first class. It will take us a while to upgrade this new acquisition with the elite class," says Amit Arora, Regional Manager for North America.

Besides the acquisition of new aircraft, Air India also plans to renovate and upgrade its lounges at various destinations in North America, where it has close and code-sharing tie-ups with both Air Canada and WestJet.

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

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

UnitedHealthcare Celebrates Grand Opening of New Edison Asian Resource Center in New Jersey

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
EDISON, N. J. (TIP)

UnitedHealthcare today celebrated the grand opening of its new Edison Asian Resource Center, expanding access to culturally relevant health care support, benefits education, and community resources for New Jersey's Chinese, Korean, and South Asian communities.

Located at 561 US Highway 1, Suite C2, Edison, NJ 08817, the center provides in-language assistance and personalized support to help residents better understand and navigate their health care benefits and coverage options.

The grand opening ceremony brought together UnitedHealthcare leadership, New Jersey elected officials, community-based organizations, and local community leaders to commemorate the opening of the new center and its commitment to serving the diverse communities of Middlesex County and surrounding areas.

The Edison Asian Resource Center offers educational programs, health and wellness seminars, and customer service support for individuals seeking information about Medicare, Individual & Family Plans, employer-sponsored health coverage, and other health-related resources. Representatives are available to provide assistance in multiple Asian languages, helping community members access information and services in a culturally responsive environment.

QUOTES FROM UNITEDHEALTHCARE EXECUTIVES

CHRISTOPHER LAW, NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, UNITEDHEALTHCARE'S ASIAN INITIATIVES

"For more than three decades, UnitedHealthcare has worked to support Asian communities through culturally relevant outreach, health education, and personalized service,"



Ribbon Cutting ceremony to inaugurate the new Edison Asian Resource Center of UHC in New Jersey



Indian origin Edison Mayor Sam Joshi speaking on the occasion



Chris Law, UHC Vice President, Asian Initiative, speaking about the Edison Asian Resource Center

prescription medications, and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The customer service representatives are also available to help people enrolled in UnitedHealthcare employer-sponsored plans review their benefits and eligibility, and provide translation service for documents, including those not related to health insurance plans.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.UHCASIAN.COM OR EMAIL UHCASIAN@UHC.COM

ABOUT UNITEDHEALTHCARE

UnitedHealthcare serves more than 1.7 million people in New Jersey with a network of 100 hospitals, and more than 35,000 physicians and other care providers statewide.

UnitedHealthcare is dedicated to



Greg Wright, UHC M & R CEO sharing his thoughts with the gathering



Some fun. A Lion dance

said Christopher Law. "The opening of our new Edison Asian Resource Center reflects our ongoing commitment to meeting people where they are and providing trusted support in the languages they speak. We look forward to partnering with community organizations and local leaders to help improve access to health care information and community resources for residents throughout New Jersey."

New Jersey residents can visit this store (and another storefront located in Palisades Park) to learn about their insurance coverage options or attend educational seminars. Customer service representatives can answer questions and help connect people with community resources and social services such as the Medicare Saving Program (MSP), Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged & Disabled (PAAD) and Senior Gold programs - both New Jersey state-funded prescription drug initiatives that help eligible residents with the cost of

helping people live healthier lives and making the health system work better for everyone by simplifying the health care experience, meeting consumer health and wellness needs, and sustaining trusted relationships with care providers. In the United States, UnitedHealthcare offers the full spectrum of health benefit programs for individuals, employers, and Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries, and contracts directly with more than 1.5 million physicians and care professionals, and 7,000 hospitals and other care facilities nationwide. The company also provides health benefits and delivers care to people through owned and operated health care facilities in South America. UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE: UNH), a diversified health care company. For more information, visit UnitedHealthcare at www.uhc.com or follow UnitedHealthcare on LinkedIn.

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL MEMBER CAROLYN MALONEY, SPEAKER JULIE MENIN ANNOUNCE HISTORIC \$25.6 MILLION INVESTMENT TO EXPAND ADULT INPATIENT PSYCHIATRIC CARE AT NYC HEALTH + HOSPITALS/BELLEVUE



Council funding will modernize Bellevue Hospital's adult inpatient psychiatric infrastructure and create 40 additional beds.

From left to right: Bellevue Chief Nursing Officer Christopher Wilson, NYC Health + Hospitals President and CEO Dr. Mitch Katz, Council Finance Committee Chair Linda Lee, Bellevue Hospital Chief Operating Officer Erfan Karim, Congressman Jerry Nadler, Bellevue Hospital CEO Dr. Eric Wei, Council Health Committee Chair Lynn Schulman, Speaker Julie Menin, Council Member Virginia Maloney, Council Majority Leader Shaun Abreu, Manhattan Borough President Brad Hoylman-Sigal, and Bellevue Chief of Adult Psychiatry Bipin Subedi at the announcement of \$25.6 million City Council capital investment to modernize adult inpatient psychiatric infrastructure at Bellevue Hospital.

**SEPTEMBER 24, 2026
NEW YORK, NY (TIP)**

New York City Council Member Virginia Maloney, Speaker Julie Menin, members of the Manhattan Delegation, and NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue leadership today announced a \$25.6 million City Council capital investment to modernize adult inpatient psychiatric infrastructure at Bellevue Hospital and create 40 additional psychiatric beds. The funding was Council Member Maloney's number one capital priority in her first City budget.

"NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue plays a critical role in confronting New York City's mental health crisis," said Council Member Virginia Maloney. "When New Yorkers experience psychiatric emergencies, our city needs to have beds available, doctors and nurses equipped to treat them, and a safe and dignified place where they can stabilize and begin their path toward recovery. I made this my number one capital priority in my first City budget because strengthening that system of care is essential for patients, families, first responders, and our entire city. I am deeply grateful to Speaker Menin, my colleagues in the Manhattan Delegation and the Bellevue Hospital team for helping us deliver this \$25.6 million investment."

The Council investment includes \$10.6

million in Fiscal Year 2027 and \$15 million in Fiscal Year 2028. Bellevue Hospital currently operates at 98% occupancy, and the new capital funding will support the modernization of its adult inpatient psychiatric infrastructure and the creation of 40 additional beds.



Bellevue Hospital serves as the premier adult psychiatric safety-net institution for New York City. The City Council's historic investment will expand the hospital's ability to provide inpatient treatment and stabilization for New Yorkers experiencing serious mental illness at a time of significant demand for psychiatric care.

The funding comes as New York City continues to expand different parts of its mental-health continuum. Bellevue Hospital is separately undergoing a \$40 million expansion of its Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program, which provides 24/7 psychiatric emergency services and is expected to increase capacity from approximately 11,000 to 13,500 patients. The new \$25.6 million Council investment addresses another critical point in that continuum: inpatient beds for patients who need to be admitted for continued psychiatric treatment.

The announcement was made with Bellevue Hospital leadership and



members of the Manhattan Delegation, including Co-Chair Council Member Carmen De La Rosa.

"A New Yorker going through a psychiatric crisis should be met with immediate care, not a waitlist," said Speaker Julie Menin. "As the oldest public hospital in the United States, Bellevue has been at the forefront of protecting the health of Americans for nearly three hundred years, and continues to play a critical role in addressing the city's mental health crisis. This major Council investment will mean that more New Yorkers can access the treatment they need instead of being turned away or forced to wait

Council Member Virginia Maloney, Speaker Julie Menin, Council Health Committee Chair Lynn Schulman, and Council Member Mercedes Narcisse at the announcement of \$25.6 million City Council capital investment to modernize adult inpatient psychiatric infrastructure at Bellevue Hospital.

"Bellevue Hospital has always been here for New Yorkers in their most difficult moments, and that commitment is at the heart of our work in adult psychiatry," said Eric Wei, MD, MBA, Chief Executive Officer, NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue. "This investment will allow us to transform our inpatient psychiatric units into safer, more

during their most vulnerable moments. Thank you to Council Member Maloney for leading this important initiative, so that the incredible doctors and nurses of Bellevue are better equipped to protect the health of everyone who comes through their doors."

"NYC Health + Hospitals plays a critical role in ensuring that New Yorkers experiencing serious mental illness can access the right care at the right time," said NYC Health + Hospitals President and CEO Mitchell Katz, MD. "Bellevue Hospital has long been a national leader in providing specialized inpatient psychiatric care for some of New York City's most complex patients. This investment will strengthen that essential safety net by improving the inpatient environment and increasing capacity. We thank Speaker Menin, Council Member Maloney and the City Council for their leadership in making this important investment in the health and wellbeing of New Yorkers."

Bellevue Hospital CEO Dr. Eric Wei,

modern spaces while creating additional capacity for patients who need hospital-based care. For our patients and our teams, this means a more therapeutic environment, greater dignity and comfort, and the ability to care for more New Yorkers when they need us most. I am deeply grateful to Speaker Menin, Council Member Maloney and the City Council for recognizing how important this investment is to Bellevue Hospital and to the mental health of our city."

"Every patient admitted to our inpatient psychiatry service deserves a safe, therapeutic environment where they can stabilize and work with our multidisciplinary team toward the next step in their care," said Bipin Subedi, MD, Chief, Adult Psychiatry, NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue. "Our teams provide highly specialized treatment for patients with complex needs, and the physical environment is an important part of that care."

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news



Telangana leaders urge Chief Minister to set up NRI Commission

Dr. Addanki Dayakar, Jhansi Reddy seek single-window mechanism to address diaspora grievances and involve overseas Telanganites in State's development

SEPTEMBER 18, 2026

HYDERABAD, TELANGANA (TIP): Government Whip and Member of the Legislative Council Dr. Addanki Dayakar and Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) Vice President Hanumandla Jhansi Reddy have urged Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy to establish a dedicated Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Commission in Telangana to address the concerns of Telanganites living abroad and strengthen their participation in the State's development.

Dr. Dayakar, who holds State Minister status, and Reddy, who is also the Palakurthi Assembly Constituency in-charge, submitted a formal representation to the Chief Minister seeking the early establishment of the proposed commission.

The two leaders said Telangana has a large and growing diaspora spread across the United States, Gulf countries, Europe, Canada, Australia and other parts of the world. Overseas Telanganites, they said, make substantial contributions to the State through remittances, investment, entrepreneurship, technology transfer, philanthropy, education and healthcare.

At the same time, they said NRIs and their families frequently encounter difficulties requiring intervention or coordination with government agencies in Telangana. Among the issues cited in the representation were property and land disputes, documentation problems, fraudulent transactions, legal assistance, family emergencies and difficulties in coordinating with government departments while living overseas. NRIs can also require timely assistance and guidance when emergencies arise abroad, the leaders said.

Single-Window System Proposed



TPCC vice-president and Palakurthi constituency in-charge Hanumandla Jhansi Rajender Reddy with Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy in Hyderabad on Friday, September 18. Government Whip and Member of the Legislative Council Dr. Addanki Dayakar is seen on the extreme right.

The proposed NRI Commission, according to the representation, could function as a permanent institutional bridge between the Telangana Government and the State's global diaspora.

Dr. Dayakar and Reddy proposed that it operate as a "single-window" mechanism through which NRIs could approach the State government with grievances and requests for assistance rather than having to deal separately with multiple departments.

Its responsibilities could include a dedicated grievance-redressal mechanism, assistance in legal and property matters, measures to safeguard NRI assets against fraudulent transactions and exploitation, and coordination with appropriate authorities during international emergencies.

The commission could also establish regular communication between Telangana associations overseas and

departments of the State government, enabling diaspora concerns to be brought before the appropriate authorities in a systematic manner.

The proposal goes beyond grievance redressal and envisages the commission as a vehicle for bringing the Telangana diaspora more closely into the State's development process.

The leaders suggested that a transparent single-window framework could encourage NRI investment and entrepreneurship and facilitate technology and knowledge transfer. It could also promote diaspora participation in tourism, education, healthcare and philanthropic initiatives in Telangana.

Another proposal is the creation of a comprehensive database and communication network connecting Telanganites around the world. Such a network, the leaders said, could help the government maintain continuing engagement with its overseas community

instead of limiting interaction to individual cases or emergencies.

The proposed commission could also coordinate, where necessary, with the Government of India, Indian embassies and consulates and community organizations abroad.

Periodic NRI conferences and consultations have also been suggested so that members of the diaspora can communicate their concerns, offer suggestions and explore opportunities for contributing to Telangana's economic and social development.

"Strengthen Bond With Global Diaspora"

Dr. Dayakar and Reddy said institutional mechanisms for engaging NRIs already exist in several Indian states and expressed confidence that Telangana could develop a model suited to the particular needs of its expanding overseas community.

They argued that an effective NRI Commission could help Telangana tap not only diaspora investment but also knowledge, professional expertise, technology, employment opportunities and international partnerships.

The leaders also expressed readiness to consult NRI representatives on the proposed commission's structure, responsibilities and grievance-resolution mechanisms.

They appealed to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to consider the proposal positively and initiate action toward creating a permanent institutional mechanism connecting the Telangana Government with Telanganites living around the world.

The proposed commission, they said, could serve the dual purpose of protecting the interests of Telangana NRIs while giving the global Telangana community a structured role in the State's continuing development story.

UAPA charges dropped, US citizen, 6 Ukrainians allowed to travel home

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): US national Matthew Aaron VanDyke and six Ukrainian nationals, who were arrested in March by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), were released from jail late on Thursday, Sept 25, after a special court allowed them to travel back to their respective countries, subject to certain conditions.

All seven foreign nationals were released after the Rouse Avenue Court allowed applications filed by VanDyke and others seeking the release of their passports and permission to travel to their home countries.

However, the court directed them to return to India within 30 days. While VanDyke was lodged in Tihar Jail, the six Ukrainians were housed in Rohini Jail.

On September 23, the court had reserved its order on VanDyke's application seeking permission to visit his family in the United States, while granting default bail to the six Ukrainian nationals.

VanDyke had already been granted default bail by the special court last week.

The foreign nationals were granted default bail after the NIA dropped charges under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), under which they had initially been arrested, and proceeded only with immigration-related offences.

The NIA arrested VanDyke on March 13 in connection with alleged offences under the UAPA. The six Ukrainian nationals were also arrested and remanded to custody in the same case.

According to the NIA, the accused were arrested for allegedly imparting drone warfare training, crossing international borders illegally and maintaining links with armed groups operating in the North-East region.

The agency alleged that the accused had entered India on tourist visas and travelled to the North-East without obtaining the mandatory permits.

It was alleged that they subsequently crossed illegally from Mizoram into Myanmar, where they were involved in training ethnic armed organisations.

However in a dramatic turnaround, the NIA dropped the UAPA charges against them in its chargesheet filed before the special court on September 8. It only charged all seven under immigration offences.



Matthew VanDyke was arrested by NIA for alleged drone warfare training, illegal border crossings and links to armed groups operating near India's North-Eastern region.

Air India pilot fails breathalyser test before Zurich-Delhi flight, suspended

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): An Air India pilot who allegedly smelled of alcohol minutes before he was due to operate a Zurich-New Delhi flight failed a preliminary breathalyser test and was removed from flying duty, sources said on Friday, Sept 25. The incident marks the second substance-related case involving the airline's cockpit crew in recent weeks.

The pilot was scheduled to operate flight AI151 from Zurich to Delhi on September 6 when Air India personnel at the airport detected the smell of alcohol and voluntarily alerted the local authorities, officials said. "In the recent Zurich case involving a cockpit crew member, the individual was immediately removed from operating duties upon receipt of a preliminary breathalyser test report from the local authorities and referred for further medical evaluation. The employee was subsequently repatriated to India as a passenger and remains under suspension pending the final medical examination report and completion of the investigation," said a senior Air India official. The Air India official said disciplinary action would follow, depending on the findings. The incident comes close on the heels of another cockpit crew case that raised safety concerns at the airline.

Rai, Mishra named witnesses in Ram Temple donation theft chargesheet

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

LUCKNOW (TIP): Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust's former trustee Anil Kumar Mishra and former general secretary Champat Rai, who came under intense political scrutiny after allegations of irregularities in handling devotees' donations at the Ram temple surfaced, have been named as prosecution witnesses in the chargesheet filed in the case.

The two former senior Trust functionaries are among 133 witnesses cited in the 59-page covering part of the chargesheet filed before the special judge, Anti-Corruption Court, Ayodhya, on September 23.

The chargesheet also names Krishna Mohan, the then interim general secretary of the Trust and complainant in the case, and Gopal M Nagarkatte (also known as Gopal Rao), a former special invitee member of the Trust and VHP functionary, among the prosecution witnesses.

Six counting agents—Avinash Shukla alias Shani, Anukalp Mishra, Lavkush Mishra, Manish Kumar Yadav, Karunesh Pandey and Ramashankar Mishra—have been named as accused. The two co-accused are Subhash



Srivastava and Ramashankar Yadav alias Tinnu. HT accessed the cover part of the chargesheet.

The witness status of Mishra and Rai is notable as both held key positions in the Trust during the period under investigation and were questioned about its donation-handling arrangements.

Mishra was questioned about the roles and responsibilities of people involved in handling devotees' offerings. His name had earlier figured in the preliminary scrutiny conducted by the first SIT headed by Lucknow divisional commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant.

Rai, who was general secretary during the period under investigation, was also questioned. Both subsequently resigned from their respective Trust positions. Their resignations were announced by the

Trust on June 27.

Investigators have cited statements of these Trust-linked functionaries to describe the system for collection, counting and depositing donations and the circumstances in which the alleged irregularities came to light.

The case concerns allegations that portions of devotees' cash offerings were removed or concealed during counting at the temple premises before the money entered the banking process.

According to the chargesheet, the six counting agents were assigned to sort and count donations. Investigators allege that they misused their access to the cash during the counting process and, in concert with the two co-accused, diverted portions of the offerings.

The chargesheet invokes Section 316(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for alleged criminal breach of trust, along with Sections 317(2) and 317(5) concerning property allegedly derived from such an offence and its concealment, and Section 61(2) relating to criminal conspiracy. Prosecution sanction under the Prevention of Corruption Act has also been obtained against the six counting agents, according to the investigation record.

'Pakistan's duplicity will neither benefit it nor the world': India slams Shehbaz Sharif's UN speech

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

KANPUR (TIP): India on Saturday, Sept 26, hit out at Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's address to the United Nations General Assembly, accusing Islamabad of terrorism, deceit and duplicity and warning that its support for cross-border terrorism will have consequences.

Exercising India's right of reply, First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Petal Gahlot strongly rejected Pakistan's remarks on India and Jammu and Kashmir, while also taking aim at Islamabad's record on terrorism, democratic rights and treatment of minorities.

"At the heart of the issue is the long-standing practice of cross-border terrorism by Pakistan. We demonstrated last year that terrorists will have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide. Our right to defend ourselves against terrorism will be exercised and continued. Terrorism by Pakistan will have consequences," Gahlot said.

"We are confident that this Assembly will recognise Pakistan and its policies for what they really are, not what its representative mendaciously projects it to be. Reiterating falsehoods year after year does not make them true. Pakistan's terrorism, deceit and duplicity will neither benefit it nor the world," Petal Gahlot told the Assembly.

Gahlot also took aim at Sharif's remarks on democratic rights and human values, accusing Pakistan's military establishment of wielding real power.

"We heard some hypocritical homilies about democratic



Exercising India's right of reply, First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN Petal Gahlot strongly rejected Pakistan's remarks on India and Jammu and Kashmir, while also taking aim at Islamabad's record on terrorism, democratic rights and treatment of minorities.

rights and human values from a regime whose capital at this very moment is being fortified against its own people. And that, Mr President, is happening because this is a regime of the army, by the army, and for the army. Their puppets may come and go, but let us have no illusion about who calls the shots. The reality of Pakistan is expressed in its 27th Amendment and the lifelong immunity granted to its real ruler," she said.

The Indian diplomat also pointed to Osama bin Laden's presence near the Pakistani Army's premier academy, while questioning Islamabad's criticism of India.

"This afternoon, the General Assembly heard some bizarre remarks from the representative of Pakistan. This

happens just a fortnight after New York City and the world marked the 25th anniversary of the horrendous 9-11 terrorist attack. This context is important to keep in mind because its mastermind, Osama bin Laden, was living right on the doorstep of the Pakistani Army's premier academy. This was the very entity which was the subject of such deep genuflection before us today by the representative of Pakistan. But all this is only to be expected from what Pakistanis themselves call a Form 47 government"

Gahlot further accused Pakistan of hypocrisy over religious intolerance and minority rights.

"The views we heard emanate from those with a long record of bigotry and hatred. They claim to uphold security during the day; they actually carry out terrorism at night. This assembly was subjected to remarks about religious intolerance from the very regime whose mainstay is blasphemy laws. The world knows how minorities are treated in Pakistan. No pious platitude can mislead it," she added.

Sharif had also raised the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in his UNGA address. Rejecting Pakistan's remarks, India reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the country and instead drew attention to Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

India's response came after Sharif's address, in which he also raised the Indus Waters Treaty and India's Operation Sindoor. New Delhi has consistently rejected Pakistan's claims over Jammu and Kashmir and maintained its right to respond to cross-border terrorism.

India in history this Week

SEPTEMBER 25 TO OCTOBER 1

SEPTEMBER 25

1857 - First relief of the Lucknow Residency

During the uprising of 1857, forces led by General Henry Havelock and Sir James Outram fought their way into the besieged Lucknow Residency on September 25. The relief force, however, was itself trapped inside the Residency, and the siege continued.

1916 - Birth of Deendayal Upadhyaya



Political thinker and Jana Sangh leader Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya was born on September 25, 1916, at Nagla Chandrabhan in Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh. He later developed the philosophy of Integral Humanism.

1867 - Hindu Mela gains prominence

The Hindu Mela, founded in Calcutta in 1867 by Nabagopal Mitra, became an important platform for promoting national pride, indigenous products, literature, music and physical culture during the colonial period.

SEPTEMBER 26

1820 - Birth of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

Social reformer, educator and writer Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was born at Birsingha in Bengal. He became a major figure of the Bengal Renaissance and campaigned for women's education and widow remarriage.

1932 - Gandhi ends fast during Poona Pact period

The Poona Pact of 1932, reached between representatives of Mahatma Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar, followed Gandhi's fast against separate electorates for the Depressed Classes. The agreement became an important episode in the debate over political representation and social reform.

SEPTEMBER 27

1873 - Birth of Vithalbhai Patel

Prominent freedom fighter, social worker, and the first Indian President of the Central Legislative Assembly, Vithalbhai Patel (elder brother of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel), was born on this day in Karmasad, Gujarat.

1833- Death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy



The pioneer of modern Indian social reform and founder of the Brahmo Samaj passed away on September 27, 1833, in Bristol, England. He is remembered for his monumental efforts in abolishing Sati.

1760 - Accession of Mir Kasim

Mir Jafar was deposed, and his son-in-law, Mir Kasim, was made the Nawab of Bengal with the backing of the East India Company on September 27, 1760.

1989- Prithvi Missile Test Launch



India successfully conducted the second test launch of its indigenous surface-to-surface ballistic missile, Prithvi, from Sriharikota.

SEPTEMBER 28

1907 - Birth of Bhagat Singh



Revolutionary Bhagat Singh was born on September 28, 1907, in Banga village of Lyallpur district, Punjab, now in Pakistan. He became one of the best-known figures of India's revolutionary freedom movement.

1838 - Bahadur Shah Zafar becomes Mughal emperor

Following the death of Akbar Shah II, Bahadur Shah II, later known as Bahadur Shah Zafar, became the last Mughal emperor to occupy the throne of Delhi. His reign coincided with the final decades of Mughal political authority.

1929 - Birth of Lata Mangeshkar



Playback singer Lata Mangeshkar, one of India's most influential voices in Hindi cinema, was born on September 28, 1929.

SEPTEMBER 29

1959 - Arati Saha crosses the English Channel

Kolkata swimmer Arati Saha became the first Asian woman to swim across the English Channel on September 29, 1959. She completed the crossing in 16 hours and 20 minutes.

1836 - Madras Chamber of Commerce established

A meeting in Madras on September 29, 1836, led to the formation of the Madras Chamber of Commerce, an important milestone in the development of organised commercial activity in the region.

SEPTEMBER 30

1932 - Harijan Sevak Sangh established

The All-India Anti-Untouchability League, later known as the Harijan Sevak Sangh, was established on September 30, 1932, as part of efforts associated with Gandhi's campaign against untouchability.

1993 - Latur earthquake

A devastating earthquake struck the Latur-Osmanabad region of Maharashtra in the early hours of September 30, 1993. The magnitude is variously recorded around 6.3-6.4, and more than 10,000 people were killed according to Indian government scientific material. The earthquake particularly devastated villages around Killari and became an important reference point in India's later efforts to improve earthquake-resistant construction and disaster preparedness.

1915 - Shibpur revolutionary action

On the night of September 29-30, 1915, Bengali revolutionaries carried out the Shibpur political action, an episode connected with revolutionary activity during the freedom struggle. British authorities subsequently launched arrests and investigations.

OCTOBER 1

1854 - First postage stamps issued in India

The first postage stamps of British India went on sale on October 1, 1854. The initial stamps included a ½-anna blue and 1-anna red stamp, produced in Calcutta. India subsequently became associated with some of the world's earliest bi-colored postage stamps.

1953 - Andhra State comes into existence

The separate Andhra State was inaugurated on October 1, 1953, with Kurnool as its capital and Tanguturi Prakasam as its first Chief Minister. The creation of Andhra followed the movement for a separate Telugu-speaking state and became a major milestone in India's later reorganization of states on linguistic lines.



RADICAL VITALITY: HONORING WOMEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

BY MABEL PAIS

In honor of Menopause Awareness Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Radical Vitality brings together leading voices in women's health, nutrition, wellness, beauty, and community for an intimate dinner and conversation on thriving at every stage of life.

Vitality is not the absence of disease. It is the presence of energy, purpose, connection, and joy. This gathering will explore how women can nourish their bodies, support their health, build resilience, and create meaningful community through food, knowledge, and self-care.

EVENT DETAILS

WHAT: RADICAL VITALITY: Conversation on Breast Cancer & Menopause

WHEN: October 1 @ 6PM

WHERE: La Botaniste, 11 West 42nd Street, New York, NY 100360036

FEATURED SPEAKERS

DR. KANCHAN KOYA

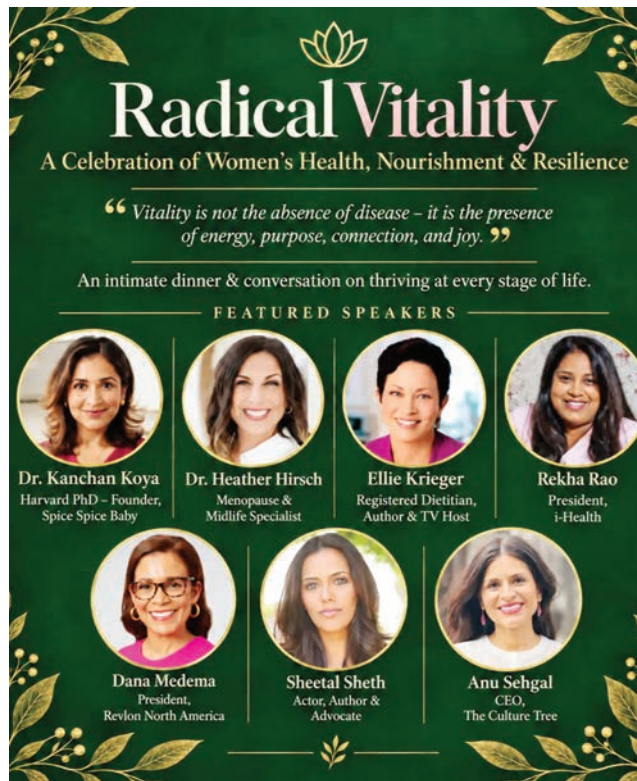
Harvard PhD, Founder of Spice Spice Baby
Dr. Kanchan Koya will introduce the concept of the Radical Vitality Plate, sharing how food, spices, and everyday nourishment can support energy, resilience, inflammation reduction, and women's long-term health.

DR. HEATHER HIRSCH

Menopause & Midlife Specialist
Dr. Heather Hirsch will discuss what women need to know about perimenopause, menopause, and midlife health, offering clear, practical guidance on symptoms, hormones, prevention, and advocating for better care.

SHEETAL SHETH

Acclaimed actor, author, advocate, and breast



Radical Vitality speakers, poster.

Credit: <https://theculturetree.com>

cancer survivor

Sheetal Sheth will speak on resilience, identity, self-advocacy, and how a serious health diagnosis can transform the way we think about our bodies, our priorities, and living fully.

ELLIE KRIEGER, MS, RD

Registered Dietitian, Food Network and PBS Host, Two-Time James Beard Award-Winning Cookbook Author

Ellie Krieger will discuss strategies for finding a sustainable path to eating well that prioritizes balance, flavor, and community, helping women move away from restriction and toward nourishment that

supports real life.

REKHA RAO

President, i-Health

Rekha Rao will share insights from the wellness and health industry on how women can take a more proactive approach to daily health, prevention, and long-term vitality through education, access, and trusted products.

DANA MEDEMA

President, Revlon North America

Dana Medema will speak about beauty, confidence, and self-care as part of women's wellness, exploring how women can feel seen, supported, and empowered through different stages of life, healing, and reinvention.

ANU SEHGAL

Founder and CEO, The Culture Tree

Anu Sehgal will bring the conversation together through the lens of community, culture, and connection, highlighting why women's health conversations are most powerful when they are honest, inclusive, and shared.

RADICAL VITALITY

Radical Vitality is designed as more than a panel. It is an intimate dinner and conversation that brings women together to talk openly about health, nourishment, menopause, breast cancer awareness, prevention, resilience, and joy. Through expert insight and community dialogue, the evening will create space for women to learn, connect, and leave with practical tools for caring for themselves at every stage of life.

TICKETS

Ticket price includes an intimate sitdown dinner and drinks, networking and high priced goodie bags. This is a very intimate gathering, with limited tickets. Tickets are non refundable.

MONMOUTH ARTS PRESENTS FREE MULTICULTURAL FEST WEEKEND

BY MABEL PAIS

Monmouth Arts will present the inaugural "Culture Around the Corner," a FREE three-day multicultural festival taking place Friday, October 2 - Sunday, October 4, in Long Branch, New Jersey.

The festival will bring Long Branch alive with music, dance, food, visual art, artisan experiences and family-friendly programming that celebrate New Jersey's cultural traditions and creative communities.

INDIA AT THE FEST

SUNDAY, OCT. 4

Whitechapel

15 Second Avenue

Long Branch

12 p.m. — **RAAS AND GARBA FOLK**

MUSIC & DANCE demonstration by Explore Envoy India presents traditional folk music and dance traditions from Gujarat, India, often performed during the Hindu festival of Navratri and at community celebrations.

12:25 p.m. **NEELIMA RAJU** Discover the expressive beauty of Kuchipudi with New Jersey dancer, choreographer and



RAAS AND GARBA Folk Music and Dance demonstration by Explore Envoy India presents traditional folk music and dance traditions from Gujarat, India, often performed during the Hindu festival of Navratri and at community celebrations. -Credit: <https://monmoutharts.org>

teaching artist Neelima Raju. A 2026 New Jersey Heritage Fellowship recipient, she shares this Indian classical dance tradition through intricate footwork, graceful movement and vivid storytelling.

Get the complete Festival schedule and updates, at <https://monmoutharts.org>

Monmouth Arts

Monmouth Arts was founded in 1971 after the Junior League of Monmouth County conducted a community survey and identified the need for a central agency to coordinate and assist all county artists and arts organizations. As the county's leading nonprofit arts organization, Monmouth Arts delivers programs, services, events, and creative opportunities that inspire people of all ages and backgrounds. For more information, visit monmoutharts.org

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

STUDENTS ARE INVITED TO ENROL IN NJPAC ARTS ED PROGRAMS FOR FALL 2026



NJPAC Arts Ed - Backstage Pathways
Credit : <https://njpac.org>

BY MABEL PAIS

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center Arts Education programs for the Fall semester for elementary and high school students runs Saturday, October 3 - Saturday, Dec 12, 2026.

REGISTRATION

Registration is open at <https://njpac.org/arts-education>

Students at every level can learn the artistic and technical skills needed to succeed in the performing arts and in technical theater production. Classes are taught by professional Teaching Artists — including some GRAMMY® Award winners — who are notable performers in the fields they teach.

Due to overwhelming demand, Musical Theater, Acting and Jeffrey Carollo & Frank Calabrese Music Scholarship are at capacity. Limited spaces remain in Hip Hop Arts & Culture, Backstage Pathways and the music performance programs of Band Together and the highly regarded TD Jazz for Teens.

For new musicians, Band Together offers instruction in how to play a musical instrument; class fees include the cost of instrument rental.

TD Jazz for Teens is a nationally-recognized training ground for emerging jazz artists. A performance video and music theory test are required for placement in this class.



NJPAC Arts Ed - Creative Coaching. Credit : <https://njpac.org>

Intersection Kids, an exploration of the performing arts for children ages 7 — 8, takes place at 5:30 – 7PM on Tuesday evenings. Now in its second year, this introduction to multiple art forms utilizes imaginative play and explores storytelling through sound and movement.

For classical musicians, the Jeffrey Carollo & Frank Calabrese Music Scholarship program is conservatory-style music instruction, supported by the MCJ Amelior Foundation and Harold I. & Faye B. Liss Foundation. The jazz and classical music programs include lessons in ensemble performance, the music business and professional readiness.

For young artists who prefer working behind the scenes, Backstage Pathways (ages 14 — 18) is a hands-on program in technical theater and live concert production. Students gain professional experience in shop safety; set design; and lighting, audio and video work. Supported by The Devils Youth Foundation, Backstage Pathways is a partnership with Record High, a program that provides educational tools and career resources for youth interested in careers in the music and entertainment industry.

In addition to nurturing creativity and talent, NJPAC Research and Evaluation has demonstrated that Arts Training programs strengthen children's social and emotional well-being.

“At NJPAC, our programs go beyond the stage — they build confidence and life skills young people carry with them everywhere,” says Dr. Sherri-Ann Butterfield, Senior Vice President, Social Impact. “We are also building a pipeline of talent — our young artists are earning admission to prestigious conservatories and universities and into careers as skilled performing

artists.”

Students in the Saturday Arts Training programs can opt into free wrap-around programs affiliated with the Ed Hajim Professional Readiness Program, which provides tools to strengthen life skills that support their art and prepare them for college, careers and community impact.

For example, students can elect to participate in Creative Coaching, which pairs students with Teaching Artists for personalized mentorship. In the Mix is a civic engagement program to develop leadership skills, and the Creator's Room is a series of conversations and workshops on career paths in the arts.

Arts Training programs will be held at Arts High School (550 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.) and 31 Mulberry St. (the temporary home of the Center for Arts Education) while construction is underway on the Cooperman Family Arts Education and Community Center. When the Cooperman Center opens in 2027, the 58,000-square-foot building will include classrooms, a children's arts reading room and a specially-designed space for teaching technical theater skills.

The Arts Training programs are part of the Colton Institute for Training and Research in the Arts which leverages the arts to benefit the communities of Greater Newark.

COST

For updates and pricing on available classes, visit <https://njpac.org/arts-education>

No student is turned away for financial reasons. Class descriptions and further details are available at <https://njpac.org/arts-education>

INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED MULTI HYPHENATE CHRIS TUCKER DELIGHTS NJ ONCE AGAIN

BY MABEL PAIS

CHRIS TUCKER, internationally recognized award-winning actor, producer and comedian will grace Prudential Hall of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center on Friday, October 2, 2026 at 8 p.m.

Known for his unforgettable role as Detective James Carter in the blockbuster “Rush Hour” film franchise, Tucker first became a stand-up favorite on HBO’s “Def Comedy Jam” before earning acclaim in films including “Friday,” “Money Talks,” “The Fifth Element,” “Jackie Brown,” “Silver Linings Playbook” and “AIR.” His high-energy storytelling, spot-on impersonations and sharp takes on pop culture have made him one of comedy’s most beloved live performers.

Chris Tucker is an award-winning actor, producer and comedian best



Chris Tucker. Credit: <https://njpac.org>

known for the “Rush Hour” franchise, his breakout role in “Friday” and his celebrated stand-up career. He has toured globally, released the Netflix stand-up special “Chris Tucker Live.” Learn more at <https://christucker.com>

Aside from entertaining millions of fans, Tucker is a dedicated humanitarian, spending much of his spare time traveling the world and doing



(left) Jackie Chan with Chris Tucker.

Credit: <https://christucker.com>

charitable work to make a difference through his Chris Tucker Foundation. He truly believes that we are blessed to be a blessing!

NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

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

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FOLLOW NJPAC'S STANDING IN SOLIDARITY SERIES ONLINE:

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

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

GANDHI JAYANTI

THE MAHATMA WHO MADE NON-VIOLENCE A FORCE FOR FREEDOM

There are few figures in modern history whose name has become so closely associated with an idea.

For India, Gandhi is inseparable from the struggle for freedom. For the world, his name evokes non-violence, civil disobedience, truth and peaceful resistance. His familiar image - a frail man in a simple loincloth, carrying a walking stick, walking among crowds or sitting beside a spinning wheel - has become one of the most recognizable symbols of the 20th century.

Yet the Gandhi of history was considerably more complex than the icon. He was a lawyer who initially struggled to establish himself professionally. He was a husband and father. He was a political organizer, campaigner, writer and social reformer. He could be uncompromising in his principles and controversial in his methods. He challenged British colonial rule while simultaneously asking Indians to confront social inequalities within their own society.

Above all, Gandhi believed that the means used to achieve freedom mattered as much as freedom itself.

His politics was built around an unusual proposition: an apparently powerless population could challenge a mighty empire without adopting the violence of the oppressor.

That idea would help transform India's freedom movement and inspire political struggles far beyond India's shores.

THE BOY FROM PORBANDAR

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar, in present-day Gujarat. He came from a Hindu Modh family. His father, Karamchand Gandhi, was involved in the administration of princely states, while his mother, Putlibai, was deeply religious. The atmosphere of his childhood exposed Gandhi to religious observance, moral discipline and different traditions of belief.

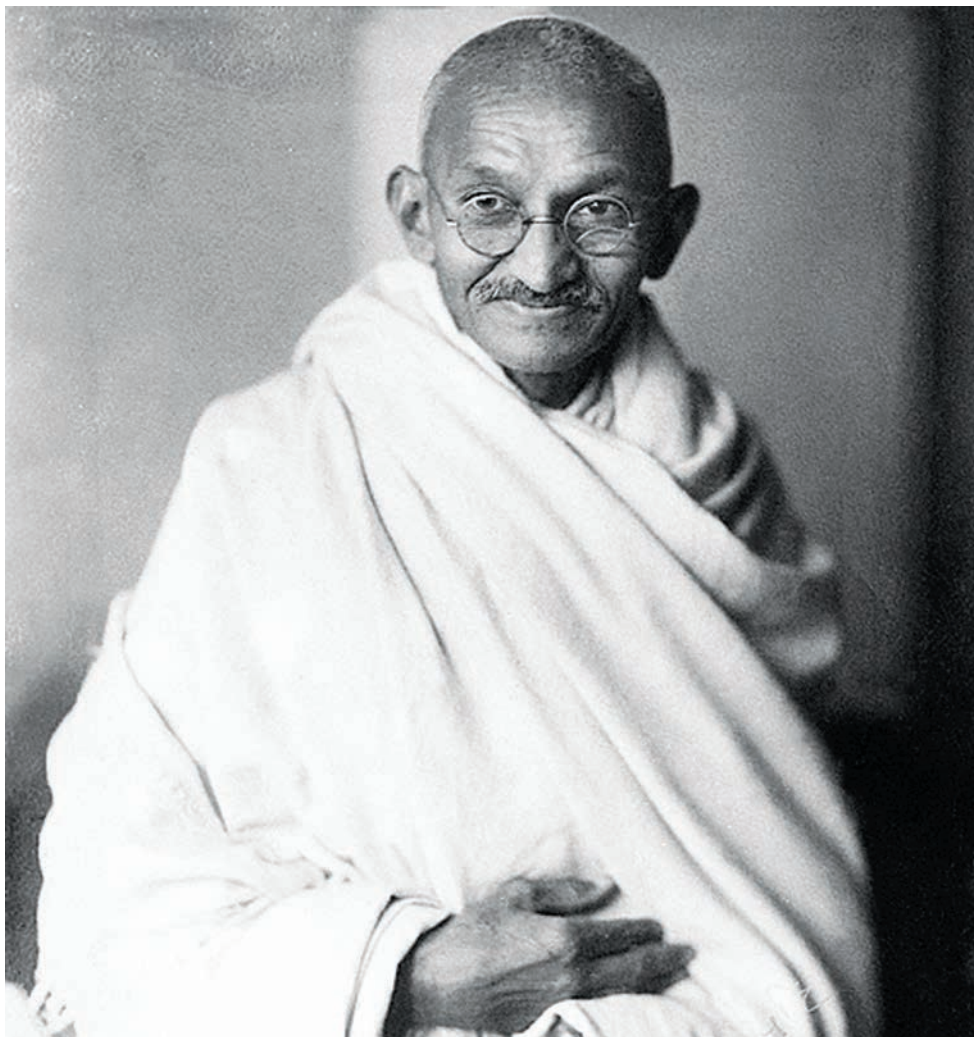
Nothing about his early academic life suggested that he would become one of the most influential political figures of his age. Gandhi was not remembered as an outstanding student. He was relatively shy and reserved, and his early life was shaped largely by family expectations and social customs.

At the age of 13, in 1883, he married Kasturba Makhanji, who was also 13. Their marriage, arranged by their families, would become one of the longest and most complicated personal relationships in Gandhi's life.

The young Gandhi later travelled to Bombay for further education. He found college unsatisfying and was uncertain about his future. Then came an opportunity that changed the direction of his life.

LONDON: THE YOUNG LAWYER

At 18, Gandhi travelled to England to



study law. He enrolled at University College London in 1888 and began preparing for a career at the Bar.

London initially presented him with a cultural challenge. Gandhi had made personal commitments to maintaining aspects of his religious and moral discipline, including vegetarianism and abstinence from alcohol. Far from abandoning these commitments, however, his years in London became a period of intellectual exploration.

He encountered people and ideas from different religious traditions and began studying Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism and other philosophical traditions. This exposure would later become significant.

Gandhi increasingly developed the conviction that religious traditions could contain different paths towards truth. His later political insistence on religious tolerance was connected to this broader philosophical outlook.

After completing his legal studies and being admitted to the English Bar, Gandhi returned to India.

But the young barrister discovered that having a law qualification did not automatically mean having a successful legal career. His early attempts at practice were disappointing.

Then, in 1893, came an offer to work for an Indian business firm in Natal, South Africa. He accepted what was expected to be a one-year assignment.

Instead, South Africa would become the place where Gandhi found his political purpose.

SOUTH AFRICA: THE MAKING OF GANDHI

Gandhi arrived in South Africa as a young lawyer. He left more than two decades later as a political thinker and organiser whose ideas would reshape India's freedom movement.

The experience of racial discrimination changed him profoundly.

One of the most famous episodes occurred when Gandhi was travelling by train. Despite holding a valid first-class ticket, he was ordered to leave the compartment because of his race. When he refused, he was thrown from the train.

The incident became emblematic of the discrimination experienced by Indians and other non-white communities in South Africa. Gandhi could have treated the incident as a personal humiliation. Instead, he increasingly saw it as evidence of a wider political system that had to be challenged. He began organising the Indian community, eventually establishing the Natal Indian Congress.

But Gandhi was not merely interested in demanding political rights through conventional lobbying.

He began experimenting with methods of resistance that relied upon non-cooperation, civil disobedience and moral pressure.

This was the period in which his concept of satyagraha began taking shape. The term is generally understood as a commitment to truth or "truth-force". Gandhi's method sought to resist unjust laws without responding with violence. The aim was not simply to

defeat an opponent but to expose injustice and appeal to the opponent's conscience. South Africa therefore became Gandhi's political laboratory.

The experiences he gathered there would later be transferred to India on a vastly larger scale.

RETURN TO INDIA

Gandhi returned to India in 1915. He was no longer simply the young barrister who had left the country decades earlier. He had developed a distinctive philosophy of political resistance and had acquired experience in organizing communities.

But Gandhi did not immediately assume the leadership of India's national movement. He first travelled widely and observed the country. He wanted to understand India beyond its cities and political organizations.

His attention increasingly turned to farmers, laborers and people facing economic and social exploitation.

This was crucial to his later success.

Gandhi did not present independence as an issue belonging only to educated political leaders. He connected the freedom struggle with the everyday experiences of ordinary Indians.

In Bihar, he became involved in a campaign highlighting the oppressive conditions faced by cultivators.

Elsewhere, he supported farmers and workers demanding relief and fair treatment. These struggles helped establish his reputation as a leader who was willing to leave political meetings and engage directly with people facing hardship. His political language was deliberately accessible.

Instead of complicated constitutional arguments, Gandhi spoke about salt, cloth, taxes, food, dignity, poverty and freedom. That ability to transform abstract politics into everyday concerns would become one of his greatest strengths.

THE MAHATMA EMERGES

As Gandhi's public influence expanded, so did his reputation.

He increasingly came to be called "Mahatma", meaning "Great Soul".

The title reflected the reverence with which many Indians regarded him, although Gandhi himself was often uncomfortable with excessive adulation.

By the early 1920s, he had become one of the most influential leaders of the Indian National Congress.

His political objective was increasingly expressed through the word Swaraj - self-rule.

But Gandhi's Swaraj meant more than replacing British administrators with Indian administrators.

He believed Indians had to become participants in their own liberation.

That meant refusing to cooperate with institutions of colonial authority.

NON-COOPERATION: WHEN MILLIONS ENTERED POLITICS

The Non-Cooperation Movement marked a major transformation in India's freedom struggle. Gandhi encouraged Indians to withdraw cooperation from British-controlled institutions and to boycott foreign goods.

Schools, colleges, courts and imported products became targets of the campaign. Khadi became more than clothing. It became a political statement.

The spinning wheel, or charkha, became one of the defining symbols of Gandhi's politics. By spinning and wearing khadi, Indians could reject imported cloth and participate directly in the economic dimension of the freedom movement. The campaign helped bring ordinary citizens into national politics on an unprecedented scale. But Gandhi's commitment to non-violence was tested when the movement became associated with violence.

After the incident at Chauri Chaura in 1922, where protesters killed policemen, Gandhi decided to suspend the movement. To many political activists, the decision appeared extraordinarily costly. For Gandhi, however, it was necessary. If freedom was to be achieved through violence, he believed, the movement would lose the moral foundation on which he had built it.

His arrest followed. On March 10, 1922, Gandhi was arrested and tried on sedition charges. He received a six-year sentence and spent two years in prison.

THE SALT MARCH: A WALK THAT SHOOK AN EMPIRE

If one image captures Gandhi's political genius, it may be that of the elderly-looking leader walking towards the sea with a staff in his hand.

In 1930, Gandhi selected salt as the focus of his next campaign against British rule. The issue appeared simple.

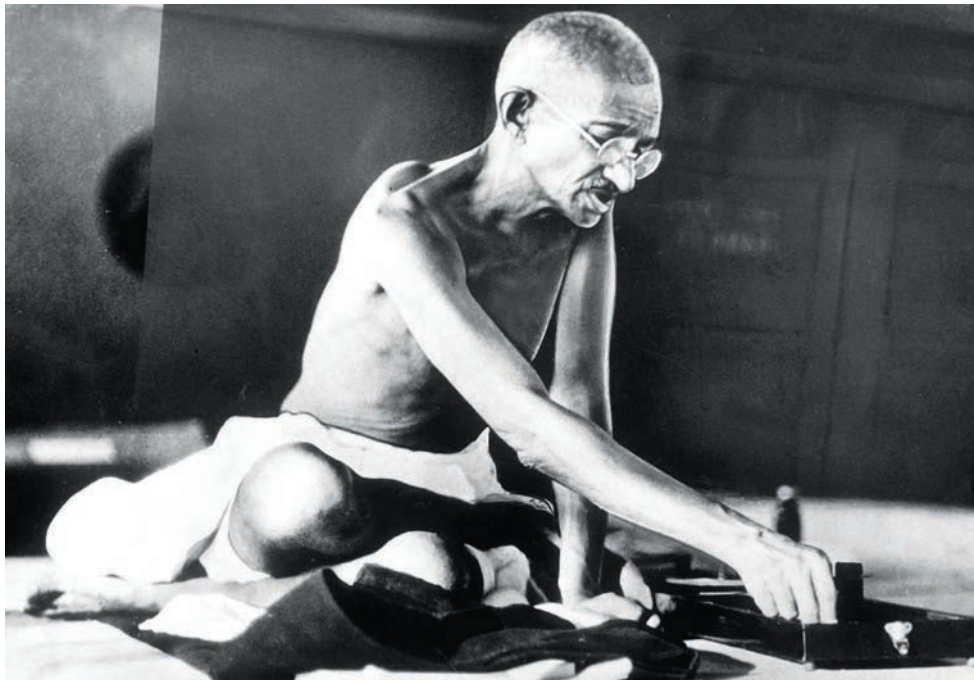
The British government imposed a tax and restrictions on salt, a commodity required by everyone. Gandhi understood the symbolism. Salt belonged to everyone. If the British could control something as basic as salt, the issue could be transformed into a powerful illustration of colonial control.

On March 12, 1930, Gandhi began his march from Sabarmati Ashram towards the coastal village of Dandi.

He walked roughly 240 miles - often described as about 250 miles - accompanied by followers. The journey attracted enormous public attention. By the time he reached the coast, the march had become an international story. On April 6, Gandhi broke the salt laws by making salt. A simple act became an act of defiance. Across India, people joined the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Salt March demonstrated Gandhi's ability to turn a political demand into a mass spectacle that ordinary people could understand and replicate. It also demonstrated the vulnerability of an empire when confronted by organized, peaceful non-cooperation.

GANDHI'S OTHER BATTLE: REFORMING INDIA

Gandhi's political life cannot be



understood only through his opposition to British rule. He repeatedly argued that Indians also needed to confront problems within their own society.

One of his major concerns was untouchability. He campaigned for the dignity and rights of communities subjected to caste-based exclusion and discrimination.

He also promoted village industries and economic self-reliance.

For Gandhi, independence was not simply about a flag, a parliament or a change of rulers.

It was about changing the relationship between citizens and society.

He imagined an India in which villages could be economically self-reliant and people could participate directly in their communities. His ideas about economic development would later differ significantly from the industrial and centralized development model pursued by independent India. That difference remains an important part of the debate surrounding his legacy.

THE YEARS OF WAR AND THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

The Second World War created a new crisis. Britain expected India's participation in the war effort even

though India remained under colonial rule. Gandhi questioned the logic of asking Indians to fight for democratic freedoms abroad while those freedoms were denied to them at home.

By 1942, the Congress launched the Quit India Movement.

The demand was direct: Britain should leave India. The British response was immediate. Gandhi was arrested on August 9, 1942, and imprisoned at the Aga Khan Palace in Pune.

His imprisonment lasted nearly two years. But those years brought profound personal tragedy.

In February 1944, Kasturba Gandhi died at the Aga Khan Palace.

For Gandhi, the death of his wife of more than six decades was an enormous personal loss. When he was finally released in May 1944, India was moving rapidly towards a political transformation. The question was no longer whether Britain would eventually leave. The question was what India would look like when it did.

THE PARTITION HE DID NOT WANT

Independence came with Partition. The British plan divided the subcontinent into India and Pakistan.

Gandhi opposed the division and feared that communal separation would create long-lasting conflict.

His fears were realized with horrifying speed. Partition triggered enormous violence, displacement and suffering.

Millions were uprooted from their homes. While political leaders prepared for independence, Gandhi focused on communities caught in the violence.

He travelled to areas affected by communal conflict and used fasting and personal appeals in an attempt to stop violence.

On August 15, 1947, when India celebrated independence, Gandhi was not in Delhi participating in the official ceremonies. He was instead working for communal peace.

It was a fitting reflection of the way he understood freedom.

Political independence mattered, but Gandhi believed freedom could not be complete if Indians remained divided by hatred.

A MAN UNDER THREAT

It was late afternoon on January 30, 1948. Gandhi was walking towards his prayer meeting at Birla House in New Delhi. He was surrounded by people.

Nathuram Godse approached him.

Godse fired three shots at close range.

Gandhi collapsed. The man who had spent decades preaching non-violence had been killed by an assassin who believed Gandhi's approach to religious coexistence had betrayed Hindu interests. Gandhi was 78.

The assassination stunned India and the world.

Godse was arrested and later tried along with other conspirators. He and Narayan Apte were convicted and executed in November 1949. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who was accused as an architect of the conspiracy, was acquitted for lack of evidence. Gandhi was cremated according to Hindu custom.

LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI

The quiet man with a steely resolve. His birth anniversary falls on Oct 2

On October 2, India remembers two leaders born decades apart but bound by an extraordinary commitment to the nation - Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri. While Gandhi became the face of India's freedom struggle, Shastri emerged from that struggle as one of the country's most understated yet consequential leaders.

Small in stature, soft-spoken and famously modest, Shastri carried an unusual combination of humility and resolve. His political career was built not on grand gestures or flamboyant speeches, but on personal discipline, administrative responsibility and a willingness to accept difficult decisions.

His famous call, "*Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan*", captured the two pillars he believed were indispensable to India's security and survival: the soldier who defended the country and the farmer who fed it. His brief tenure as Prime Minister came at a particularly difficult moment, marked by food shortages, economic pressures and the 1965 war with Pakistan. Yet it was during this period that the unassuming Shastri demonstrated the firmness that would define his legacy.

A childhood shaped by simplicity

Lal Bahadur Shastri was born on October 2, 1904, in Mughalsarai, a small railway town near Varanasi in present-day Uttar Pradesh. His father, Sharada Prasad Srivastava, was a schoolteacher who died when Lal Bahadur was only about a year and a half old. His mother, Ramdulari Devi, raised her three children in difficult circumstances.

The family had limited means. As a schoolboy, Shastri had to walk long distances to attend classes and was known at home as "Nanhe", or little one. The hardships of childhood, however, did not prevent him from developing a strong sense of self-respect and determination.

As a young student, he became increasingly influenced by the freedom movement. The ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and the growing demand for independence drew him towards public life. It was a decision that would change the course of his life.

From student to freedom fighter

Shastri joined the national movement while still young. Gandhi's call for non-cooperation deeply influenced him, and Shastri became involved in the struggle against British rule.

His commitment came at a personal cost. He spent a total of about seven years in British prisons during the freedom movement. Those years were formative: imprisonment, political work and association with senior Congress leaders gave him experience that would later prove invaluable in public administration.

In 1927, he married Lalita Devi. The wedding itself reflected the values he would carry throughout his public life. According to the Prime Minister's Office



biography, Shastri rejected a conventional dowry and accepted only a spinning wheel and some handspun cloth. His simplicity was not merely an image. It was woven into his personal choices.

Freedom struggle forged his leadership

The Salt Satyagraha of 1930 brought a new phase of mass resistance against British rule. Shastri threw himself into the movement and participated in campaigns demanding independence.

Unlike leaders who acquired fame through dramatic oratory, Shastri built his reputation steadily - through organisation, discipline and service.

By the time India became independent in 1947, he had already spent years learning the mechanics of political mobilisation and public administration. The Congress leadership recognised his abilities, and after independence he moved into increasingly important governmental responsibilities.

He served in the government of Uttar Pradesh before entering national politics. His rise was gradual, reflecting a career built more on organisational ability and trust than on personal ambition.

The minister who accepted responsibility

Shastri's career after independence included several important ministerial assignments. He served as Minister of

Railways and later held other major portfolios, including Home Affairs.

His tenure as Railway Minister is remembered particularly for his response to major railway accidents. Shastri offered his resignation following a serious railway accident, accepting ministerial responsibility even though he was not personally responsible for the accident. The episode came to symbolize a political ethic in which public office carried accountability. It was this combination - administrative competence, personal modesty and moral responsibility - that gradually established Shastri as one of the country's most trusted political figures.

Prime Minister at a difficult moment

Jawaharlal Nehru died on May 27, 1964. After a brief interim period under Gulzarilal Nanda, Lal Bahadur Shastri became India's second full-time Prime Minister after Nehru on June 9, 1964.

He inherited a country facing enormous challenges. India was dealing with food shortages and economic difficulties. The country was also navigating a complicated international environment during the Cold War.

Shastri's approach was markedly different from the towering public presence of his predecessor. He was understated and spoke in a calm,

measured manner. Yet behind that quiet personality was a leader prepared to take difficult decisions.

"Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan"

The defining phrase of Shastri's premiership came to represent his vision of national strength: "*Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan*." The slogan recognised the essential contribution of India's soldiers and farmers at a time when the country faced both military conflict and food insecurity. The Prime Minister's Museum and Library describes Shastri's leadership as central to promoting the Green and White Revolutions and associates his premiership with the slogan.

Shastri also appealed to citizens to conserve food during a period of shortages. The appeal was accompanied by his own example of austerity and discipline.

For him, patriotism was not restricted to the battlefield. It could also mean accepting inconvenience at home so that the nation could confront a larger crisis.

1965: The test of leadership

The greatest test of Shastri's leadership came in 1965, when India and Pakistan went to war.

The conflict initially centred on developments in Jammu and Kashmir before expanding into a broader war. Shastri authorised India's armed forces to respond firmly, and Indian forces crossed the international border in the western sector. The conflict eventually ended with a ceasefire.

The war transformed public perceptions of the seemingly mild-mannered Prime Minister.

The man who had appeared physically unimposing demonstrated political resolve at a moment when the country's security was under pressure. His leadership during the war became an important part of his historical legacy.

Yet Shastri did not see military strength and peace as contradictory. Following the war, India and Pakistan moved towards negotiations, culminating in the Tashkent Declaration in January 1966.

Tashkent: the final chapter

The Tashkent negotiations were held in the Soviet city of Tashkent, now the capital of Uzbekistan, with Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin facilitating the talks between Shastri and Pakistan's President Ayub Khan.

The Tashkent Declaration was signed on January 10, 1966.

Hours later, Shastri died in Tashkent on January 11, 1966, at the age of 61. His death came suddenly, just months after he had led India through the 1965 war.

His death left a nation mourning a Prime Minister whose tenure had lasted only about 19 months.

In 1966, he was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honor.

Jaishankar meets Iranian, Russian foreign ministers on UNGA margins

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): India held discussions with Russia and Iran on the margins of the high-level UN General Assembly session, days after US President Donald Trump signed a new law on sanctions on countries purchasing oil and gas from Moscow and Tehran.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met his counterparts from Iran and Russia, with discussions ranging from bilateral issues, cooperation in the BRICS grouping and the Gulf conflict.

Jaishankar met Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and discussed bilateral issues as well as cooperation in the BRICS grouping.

"A good meeting with FM Sergey Lavrov of Russia today #UNGA81. Exchanged views on a number of ongoing issues. Also took stock of our bilateral and BRICS cooperation," Jaishankar said, referring to the grouping of Brazil, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iran, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and the United Arab Emirates.

India had earlier this month hosted the BRICS Leaders' Summit that was attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.

A readout of the one-on-one meeting between Jaishankar and Lavrov provided by the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry said that the two leaders discussed "key issues of Russian-Indian cooperation, the schedule of upcoming bilateral contacts, and current regional and global issues, including the Ukraine crisis and the situation in the Middle East".

They expressed their intention to continue efforts to strengthen the "special and privileged strategic partnership" and to maintain close coordination at the UN, in the G20, BRICS, and other international groupings.

Jaishankar also met Iranian Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi on the margins of the high-level UNGA session here Friday, Sept 25.

"Appreciate the conversation with FM @araghchi of Iran at the @UN #UNGA81. We discussed the latest developments with regard to the Gulf conflict. Will continue to be in touch," he said. Last week, Trump signed the 'Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026', which authorises and expands statutory sanctions, tariffs, and prohibitions on Russia and extends existing sanctions on Iran. India has said it remains firmly committed to ensuring energy security for its 1.4 billion people, and it will continue to do so through diversified sourcing, in response to the US' Russia sanctions legislation.

Australia pledges another \$60 million of aid to Ukraine

The Ukrainian president also earmarked an impending 'drone deal'

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026

UNITED NATIONS (TIP): Australia and Ukraine have signed a 10-year security agreement, with Canberra also pledging another \$60 million (US\$42.2 million) in support for the war-torn nation.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy signed the deal in New York on Sept. 23, on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

The new package includes \$45 million worth of Australian Defense Force equipment, \$10 million for Ukraine's Energy Support Fund, and \$5 million in humanitarian aid. It brings Australia's total support for Ukraine to \$1.9 billion, according to the prime minister's office.

"This bilateral security agreement underscores Australia's ongoing commitment and enduring support for Ukraine as it defends itself against Russia's aggression," Albanese said.

Defense Minister Richard Marles added that "Australia remains committed to supporting Ukraine for as long as it takes to resolve this conflict on its terms."

Foreign Minister Penny Wong said Australia would "continue to work with partners to impose costs on Russia." Australia has now placed nearly 1,900 sanctions on Russia and listed about 300 "shadow fleet" ships.

The agreement covers training, equipment, energy, aid, cyber security, rebuilding and mine clearance. Australia will also join the UK and Norway-led Maritime Capability Coalition, which supports Ukraine's navy.

If the current fighting formally ends and Russia attacks again, the two countries will "consult within 24 hours to discuss measures or support that may assist to counter the armed attack." The text says Australia acts "consistent with [its] status as a non-party to the armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine." It is a set of political commitments rather than a binding treaty.

Ukraine's presidential office said it is the 30th such security deal Kyiv has signed under a G7 declaration made in July 2023.

"The people of Australia have always stood with Ukraine," Zelenskyy said after meeting Albanese. "Thank you for your real and concrete support-military, energy support, which has been



Australian Prime Minister Anthony and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy with the bilateral defense agreement signed between the two countries.

Photo/ Courtesy of the Office of the President of Ukraine

critically important, and humanitarian assistance."

"Ukraine, in return, is ready to share its experience and technologies," Zelenskyy said. He said the two countries' teams would prepare a "drone deal."

Australia's defense relationship with Ukraine has been moving beyond the provision of equipment.

In July 2025, the two countries already discussing a formal security agreement focused on defense cooperation, drone technology and intelligence sharing. Australia has also increasingly looked to Ukraine's battlefield experience as it develops its own drone and counter-drone capabilities, with the Defense Department committing billions of dollars to autonomous and unmanned systems.

In July 2024, Marles announced a \$250 million package, then Australia's largest, focused on air and missile defense. It took total aid to \$1.1 billion. Then in October that same year, Australia pledged 49 M1A1 Abrams tanks worth more than \$170 million. At the time, Zelenskyy said, "Australia remains our reliable partner in defending freedom, democracy, human life, and global security."

Putin says all Ukraine peace proposals 'on the table', warns of Russian retaliation

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

MOSCOW (TIP): Russian President Vladimir Putin on Friday, Sept 25, said all proposals for a settlement to the war in Ukraine remained on the table, while warning that Moscow would first assess what was in Russia's best interests before deciding its next steps.

Speaking to journalists in St Petersburg, Putin said Moscow had been prepared to resume negotiations with Kyiv after Russia's parliamentary elections last week, but accused Ukraine of carrying out attacks on Moscow and Russian polling stations.

"They are the ones who started it. Everywhere, on every front," Putin said, warning that Ukraine would face a sustained Russian response.

"They should therefore be made to feel Russia's retaliatory strikes and understand that no provocative actions, no stirring up the situation to



secure a result, will work," he added.

Putin said Russia's response to Ukrainian attacks had contributed to Kyiv's renewed calls for a ceasefire and a return to negotiations.

"They are all on the table. It's all possible," he said. "But after everything they have done, we will still have to think carefully about what we need to do in response."

Ukraine has repeatedly said its strikes on Russian targets are a response to Russian attacks on Ukrainian cities and critical infrastructure. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has also called for direct negotiations to end the war.

Putin also claimed that Ukraine had attacked polling stations during Russia's parliamentary elections, killing an election official and injuring others.

Russia has continued launching missile and drone attacks on Ukrainian cities, while Ukraine has intensified strikes on Russian military and energy targets, including facilities deep inside Russian territory.

Putin said Ukraine was also seeking talks because of difficulties countering Russia's newer jet-powered drones, which he said fly at higher altitudes and are harder to intercept.

2 Generals among 14 dead in Congo plane crash

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

KINSHASA (TIP): At least 14 people, including two senior military officials, have died in a plane crash in Congo, the military said Friday, Sept 25.

The two senior military officials are Lieutenant General Mutombo Katalayi Tiende, head of the military court, and Lieutenant General Bakumi Likulia, auditor general of the armed forces.

"In addition to the two general officers, twelve members of the delegation and the crew members also lost their lives in this accident," Major General Efomi Ekenge, spokesperson of the Congolese military, said in a statement.

The plane was returning to the capital city, Kinshasa, from southwestern Kikwit when it developed a technical fault and crashed in Kenge where everyone on board died, according to local officials.

An investigation has been opened to determine the cause of the accident, Ekenge said.

Tryphon Kin-Kiey Mulumba, Chairman of the Board of the Civil Aviation Authority, said the cause of the crash is unknown.

The Congolese military has been battling scores of rebel groups, including the Rwanda-backed M23 rebel group in the eastern region since last year, after a blitz of attacks that led to the rebel groups seizing key cities.

Pope Leo XIV warns AI can weaken humanity on landmark France visit

Pope Leo XIV on Friday warned that a "paradise of machines" could weaken humanity as he began a four-day visit to France, raising broad questions about what it means to be human at a time of artificial intelligence, a nuclear arms race and other threats to life. Speaking at the Elysee Palace after arriving in Paris, Leo also reaffirmed the Vatican's opposition to nuclear weapons and called the doctrine of nuclear deterrence "mistaken".

His visit, the first by a pope to France in 18 years, has drawn strong public interest, with church bells ringing across the country as his flight landed at Orly airport and more than a million people expected to attend events during the trip. Later on Friday, Leo was scheduled to speak at UNESCO headquarters, attend vespers at the newly reopened Notre-Dame cathedral and lead a large youth vigil at the Paris stadium.

Iran won't budge on nuclear program, even if US accepts peace deal: Report

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

TEHRAN (TIP): Iran is awaiting an official US response to its proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz and end fighting in the wider war in West Asia, though Tehran has made it clear that it would make no concessions on its nuclear program.

From the US side, the Wall Street Journal reported that President Donald Trump had rejected the deal sent by Iran. Trump has vowed that Tehran will never acquire a nuclear bomb, even as a senior Iranian official told Reuters on Friday that Iran will show no flexibility over its nuclear program.

Iran raised the diplomatic initiative at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, saying it had been transmitted to the Americans via Qatari mediators and could reopen the strategic waterway and put an end to hostilities in the region within seven days.

Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi told reporters at the United Nations on Friday that the deal would trigger a seven-day countdown to the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and a pause in regional fighting.

"If there is seriousness on the US side to come to a deal and reopen the Strait of Hormuz, everything is now prepared," Araghchi said.

If the US were to agree, the warring parties could start wider talks "on mutually agreed subjects," Araghchi said.

A senior Iranian official told Reuters



that Iran will show no flexibility over its nuclear program even if the United States accepts its peace deal.

Iran would grant no concessions over its rights, including enriching uranium or shipping its highly enriched uranium out of the country, the official said.

The Iranians also engaged their Saudi rivals regarding the Strait of Hormuz, underscoring the stakes of a seven-month-old conflict that has disrupted oil flows through one of the world's most critical shipping lanes and taken a toll on the global economy.

Iran had put forward a plan that could

halt hostilities on all fronts, including Lebanon. Abbas Araghchi said the plan in turn would require the United States to lift its blockade on Iranian ports, release Iran's frozen funds, and waive its oil sanctions.

A US official had previously called discussions through mediators "positive and constructive."

But according to a report in the Wall Street Journal, Trump was privately sceptical that Iran would meet his demands, and he told his staff that he sees a renewed bombing campaign as likely, potentially after the November midterms.

Italy's women senators pose in short skirts amid row over deputy PM's sexist remark

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

ROME (TIP): Italian foreign minister Antonio Tajani is facing intense backlash after he made remarks on women's clothing and said that women who wear longer skirts are more faithful. "If I had to advise a young man which woman to marry, I would suggest a less flashy but more reliable, more serious woman, who will certainly be a good mother," he was quoted as saying by The Independent.

Tajani's remarks set off a row in Italy, with a protest in the Italian Senate where female opposition senators appeared in short skirts.

The controversy erupted after Tajani reportedly made the comment at an event in Formello, a commune near Rome. He said, "If I had to advise a young man which woman to marry, I would suggest a less flashy but more reliable, more serious woman, who will certainly be a good mother."

He then went on to say that a "less pretty" woman in a "longer skirt" would keep her promise to marry and ensure stability in the home. He contrasted this with an attractive woman, saying that with her, "you might only get a few cornettos." His comments sparked furious backlash from politicians across Italy.

Former Italian prime minister Matteo Renzi responded in an X post, saying, "It's devastating to think that at the most difficult moment of international politics we have a Foreign Minister who is incapable, backward, banal." He attached AI-generated images of Tajani to the post, adding that the foreign minister is now more of a meme than a minister.



Antonio Tajani's remarks kindled a fierce reaction from the opposition politicians and a protest in the Italian Senate, where female opposition senators appeared in short skirts. (Instagram/@lamalp/Bloomberg)

Italian politician, Chiara Appendino also responded to the statement on X by sharing a picture of her confidently sitting in a short skirt and writing, "Tajani, aren't I a 'reliable' woman? Aren't I a 'good family mother'?"

Appendino also wrote, "In 2026, we can't still hear a Minister of the Republic explaining to us that it's better to marry a woman with a longer and less flashy skirt."

Pak govt's security costs set to rise after Imran Khan's party delays protest march to Oct 4

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): he Pakistan government's security costs are set to go up after jailed former prime minister Imran Khan's party announced to postpone its planned protest in the capital from Sunday to October 4.

Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had announced a long march to Islamabad on September 27, primarily demanding the release of the party founder.

The 73-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician has been incarcerated since 2023, when he was arrested after conviction in a corruption case. Currently, he is lodged at the high-security Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi. To curb the protest march, the federal government brought hundreds of shipping containers to block roads and reinforce security forces. However, the PTI turned the tables by delaying its protest until October 4, meaning that the federal government would have to remain alert for another week before the protest begins. Citing sources in the police, the Dawn newspaper reported that the amount requested by the capital police for security arrangements to counter the PTI's protest would effectively double and was likely to cost the exchequer more than PKR 1 billion.

Nepal seeks grants, not loans, for flood recovery after deadly glacier disaster

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): Nepal Prime Minister Balendra Shah called for grant-based international support at the United Nations General Assembly on Sept 24 to help the Himalayan nation recover from the glacier flood that killed at least 1,450 people.

Shah said in New York that Nepal's recovery and reconstruction needs were estimated at about 10% of gross domestic product following the flood that struck mountain communities four weeks ago, and argued that vulnerable countries should not be forced to take on additional debt to rebuild from catastrophic climate events. "When a climate-driven disaster destroys infrastructure of a poor country, the answer cannot simply be another mega loan or a patchwork of small grants," Shah said. "We need adequate grant-based support from the world."

He urged closer cooperation between Nepal, India and China on climate resilience

Pakistani forces kill Afghan Taliban fighters in border escalation

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): Pakistan has foiled an "attempted Afghan aggression" on the Pakistan-Afghan border.

Pakistani security sources said several Afghan members of the Taliban were killed in an intermittent exchange of fire in the Gulistan area of the border on Friday, Sept 25, and that fighting was ongoing.

There has been no official confirmation from either country involved.

The Afghan government said on Thursday that it would deliver an "appropriate response" to Pakistani air attacks on 10 locations in Afghanistan earlier in the day.

The strikes were in response to a "deliberate and unlawful incursion into Pakistan by drones" on Wednesday, Pakistani Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said on Thursday.

Tarar said in a post on his X account that Pakistan's aerial and drone attacks hit "terrorist hideouts and support infrastructure including drone launching and storage sites".

He also posted a video said to show the military strikes on the Afghan sites.

Afghanistan's government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said the air strikes targeted Kandahar,



A member of Taliban security forces uses a metal detector amid the rubble of a house that was damaged in what the Taliban said was a Pakistani air strike in Gurbuz district of Khost province, Afghanistan, on September 24, 2026 [Reuters]

Paktia and Khost provinces.

Taliban officials denied that their government launched drones against Pakistan on September 23.

The air raids on Thursday were carried out amid growing tensions between the former allies over attacks by armed groups in Pakistan, which triggered their worst fighting in years in February.

Islamabad accuses Kabul of harbouring fighters who stage cross-border attacks, but Afghanistan's government denies harbouring anti-Pakistani armed groups and says the attacks are Pakistan's internal problem.

The escalation threatens mediation efforts by China, Turkiye, Qatar and Saudi Arabia to broker a lasting peace between the two neighbors.

Bangladesh PM calls for stronger international cooperation on peace, democracy & development

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): Bangladesh Prime Minister Tarique Rahman has called for stronger international cooperation on peace, democracy, development and regional cooperation while addressing the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Reaffirming Bangladesh's commitment to multilateralism, disarmament and peaceful resolution of conflicts, PM Rahman said international disputes should be addressed through dialogue, diplomacy and mutual cooperation. He also reiterated Bangladesh's support for the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to establish an independent State of Palestine.

On the Rohingya crisis, the PM called for stronger international support for the safe and sustainable repatriation of more than 1.2 million Rohingyas sheltered in Bangladesh. He urged the United Nations and the international community to continue life-saving humanitarian assistance until their repatriation to Myanmar.

Addressing climate change, PM Rahman called for greater climate



finance, adaptation support and climate justice. He highlighted Bangladesh's programmes for tree plantation, clean and solar energy, water conservation, and excavation of canals.

The Prime Minister outlined his government's three-R strategy-Recovery, Restoration and Reconstruction-for rebuilding Bangladesh. He highlighted initiatives focused on employment generation, entrepreneurship, women's empowerment, education, healthcare

and social protection.

He also called for equitable access to artificial intelligence and advanced technologies for developing countries, along with technology transfer, skills development and capacity building.

Concluding his address, PM Rahman said Bangladesh seeks to build a prosperous, self-reliant and welfare-oriented democratic society where people can live with equal rights, respect and dignity.

Almond nails: the elegant shape your manicure needs

Elegant, feminine and endlessly versatile, almond-shaped nails have become a beauty favorite for a reason. With gently tapered sides and a softly rounded tip, the shape creates the illusion of longer, slimmer fingers while working beautifully with everything from minimalist nude polish to elaborate nail art. The best part? You do not need extremely long nails to achieve the look. With the right shaping technique and a little care, almond nails can look polished and sophisticated at almost any length.

What makes almond nails different?

An almond nail is narrower at the tip than at the base, with the sides gradually curving inward before meeting at a rounded point. Unlike the sharper stiletto shape, the almond tip is softer and more wearable.

The shape is particularly flattering because it visually elongates the nail bed. It can also make short or wider fingers appear more slender.

Start with the right length

Before reaching for the nail file, decide how much length you want to retain. For a classic almond shape, the nails generally need some free edge because the tapered sides require enough length to create a visible curve. However, you do not need dramatically long nails. If your nails are naturally short, allow them to grow slightly before shaping. Alternatively, extensions or press-on nails can create the required length.

File, don't force the shape

The key to almond nails is gradual shaping. Begin with clean, dry nails and use a fine-grit nail file. Avoid aggressively sawing back and forth, particularly if your nails are thin or prone to splitting. Start from one side and file diagonally towards the centre of the tip. Repeat on the other side, checking regularly to make sure both sides are symmetrical. Do not try to create the pointed tip immediately. The almond shape should develop gradually from the sides towards the centre.

Keep the tip softly rounded

This is where almond nails differ from stiletto nails.

Once the sides have been tapered, gently soften the tip. The end should have a rounded point rather than a sharp peak. Think of the shape of an almond: gently



pointed at both ends, but never needle-sharp.

Check every nail from different angles

Symmetry can be difficult to judge when you look at one nail at a time. After filing, hold your hand palm-up and look at the nails together. Check whether the tips follow a similar curve and whether the sidewalls are evenly tapered. It can also help to photograph your hands from above. Small differences in shape that are easy to miss while filing often become obvious in a photograph.

Don't over-file the sides

One common mistake is removing too much from the sidewalls in an attempt to make the nails look slimmer. Over-filing can weaken the nail and may make it more vulnerable to breaking. The sides should taper naturally rather than becoming extremely narrow. If you have naturally thin or brittle nails, retain a little more width and concentrate on creating a gentle curve.

Smooth the edges

Once you have achieved the basic almond shape, lightly run the file along the free edge to remove rough areas. Avoid repeatedly filing the same spot. A few controlled strokes are usually enough.

Finish by gently smoothing the surface only if necessary. Excessive buffing can thin the natural nail.

FOOD CORNER

Chicken keema palak



Ingredients

- 300g chicken mince, 300g baby spinach, washed and chopped, 75g Saffola Masala Classic Masala Oats, 100g onion, finely chopped, 100g fresh tomato puree, 1 green chilli, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon ginger garlic paste
- 1 tablespoon Saffola Oil
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 1/2 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon red chilli powder
- 1 teaspoon jeera, 1 tablespoon ginger, julienne
- Onion rings and coriander leaves to serve

Method

- Dry roast oats in a pan for 3-4 minutes on medium heat, and keep it aside
- Wash spinach leaves in a big pot of water to clean it thoroughly and chop it. Keep it aside
- Heat the oil in the pan and saute onion and ginger garlic paste in it until light brown
- Add all the whole spices and ground spices and pureed tomatoes
- Cook on medium heat till water is dried. Add minced meat, stir well and cook covered on medium heat for 4 minutes. Now add chopped spinach and 1 cup of water, mix well and cook it covered for 5 minutes more
- Add roasted oats now, cook for 3-4 minutes more
- Remove the lid mix in garam masala powder and finely chopped green chilis. Serve it hot garnished with fresh green coriander leaves, slit green chilli, ginger julienne and lemon juice.

The glass-skin glow: Simple habits for luminous skin

The Korean glass-skin trend has made one beauty goal especially desirable: skin that looks smooth, hydrated, fresh and naturally luminous. But despite the name, glass skin is not about having perfectly poreless or unrealistically shiny skin. The look is largely about healthy-looking skin with good hydration, an even texture and a strong skin barrier. While Korean skincare routines are often associated with multiple products and elaborate steps, achieving a fresh, dewy appearance does not necessarily require a bathroom shelf full of bottles. Consistent daily habits can make a bigger difference than constantly switching products.

Start with gentle cleansing

Clean skin provides the foundation for the rest of your routine. Use a gentle cleanser suited to your skin type,

particularly at night to remove sunscreen, makeup, excess oil and everyday grime. Avoid cleansing too aggressively or using very hot water. Over-cleansing can leave the skin feeling tight and dry and may compromise its protective barrier.

Hydration is the secret

One of the defining features of glass skin is its dewy appearance, and hydration plays a major role. Use a moisturiser that suits your skin type and apply it while the skin is still slightly damp. Ingredients such as glycerin, hyaluronic acid and ceramides can help support skin hydration and the barrier. If you have oily or combination skin, a lightweight gel or lotion may feel more comfortable. Drier skin may benefit from a richer cream.

Never skip sunscreen

No glass-skin routine is complete



without daily sun protection. UV exposure contributes to premature skin ageing, pigmentation and uneven skin tone. Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher during the day and reapply when appropriate, particularly when spending extended periods outdoors.

Keep exfoliation gentle

Smooth skin does not mean scrubbing it aggressively. Exfoliation can help remove

accumulated dead skin cells and improve the appearance of uneven texture, but excessive exfoliation can cause dryness, irritation and sensitivity.

If you use chemical exfoliants such as alpha-hydroxy acids or beta-hydroxy acids, introduce them gradually and follow the product instructions.

Treat your skin consistently

Serums can be useful when they address a specific concern.

For dull-looking skin, ingredients such as vitamin C or niacinamide may help improve the appearance of uneven tone. Hydrating ingredients can provide a plumper, fresher appearance.

The key is consistency. Give a product enough time to work rather than changing your entire routine every few days because you have not seen an immediate transformation.

HIV injections keep virus suppressed better than daily pills: Study

A new clinical trial has found that long-acting HIV injections given every eight weeks may keep the virus suppressed more effectively among adolescents than daily antiretroviral tablets.

Published in *The Lancet*, the study found that only two adolescents, or 1 per cent, receiving the injectable treatment experienced confirmed viral rebound after 96 weeks. This compared with 15 adolescents, or 6 per cent, among those taking daily tablets.

The LATA (Long-Acting Treatment in Adolescents) trial involved 476 adolescents aged 12 to 19 across five clinics in Kenya, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Participants were randomly assigned to either standard daily tablet treatment or injections containing the long-acting HIV medicines cabotegravir and rilpivirine.

All participants had already been taking tablet treatment for more than a year, had fully suppressed HIV and had no previous treatment failure. Almost all had acquired HIV at birth.

Viral rebound refers to an increase in the amount of HIV in the blood after the virus has been suppressed. Researchers noted that rising viral loads can affect long-term health and may increase the risk of transmission.

The study also found that 94 per



cent of adolescents in the injectable group said receiving treatment every eight weeks was much easier than taking medicines every day. Researchers noted that daily pills can be challenging for young people because of bullying and stigma associated with HIV treatment.

Professor Sarah Pett of University College London said long-acting injections taken every two months could help young people lead a more normal life. She also noted that the benefits seen among adolescents were stronger than those previously observed in adult trials.

Researchers said wider access to the injections, particularly in Africa and other lower-resource settings, faces several challenges. The medicines are more expensive than standard tablets, remain under patent and cost more to

manufacture. Rilpivirine also requires refrigeration, while trained nursing staff are needed to administer the injections every eight weeks.

Around 1.6 million adolescents aged 10 to 19 are living with HIV. While there is currently no cure, antiretroviral treatment can help people live long, healthy lives and substantially reduce the risk of transmission.

The World Health Organisation currently recommends long-acting injectables as an alternative for adults and adolescents who have successfully suppressed HIV and do not have active hepatitis B.

Researchers said limited availability in Africa could widen existing inequalities in HIV care, particularly as newer injectable treatments requiring only twice-yearly dosing are being studied.

Constant stress, chronic inflammation could cause structural changes to heart: Study

Persistent inflammation, caused by chronic stress from one's socioeconomic situation and lifestyle, could cause damaging structural changes in the heart, reveals a study.

Researchers, led by those at the UK's Imperial College London, analysed UK Biobank data from over 4,88,000 adults. Along with heart imaging and genetic data, a blood marker known as glycoprotein acetyls (GlycA) that measures inflammation was also looked at. The findings, published in the *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*, show that in addition to a higher risk of heart attack and stroke, those with higher levels of GlycA also showed more evidence of structural changes in their hearts, including thickened heart walls, smaller heart chambers and poorer heart filling.

The changes may develop quietly for years before progressing to heart failure, the researchers said.

"Chronic systemic inflammation is associated with reduced left ventricular volumes and increased cardiovascular risk in the community, with circulating cytokines and growth factors including IL-1 (Interleukin-1) and TNF (tumour necrosis factor) identified as potential mediators of these associations," the authors wrote.

Author Declan O'Regan, British Heart Foundation Chair of Cardiovascular AI at Imperial College London, said, "Our study, which is the largest of its kind, suggests that millions of people could be living with hidden inflammation, which is slowly changing their heart and causing long term damage—increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke."

"Chronic inflammation is complicated, but we know it's tied to our health and driven by a range of lifestyle and economic factors—meaning people may be at more risk just because of their surroundings, their economic status, their family's health and their lifestyle," O'Regan said.

Chronic inflammation, a long-term low-level activation of the body's immune system, has been linked with a range of diseases, including cancer and diabetes, and is increasingly recognised as a hidden driver of heart disease.

"But while tackling health inequalities remains an issue, there are things that we can do about inflammation, including reducing risk factors like smoking and obesity," O'Regan said.

The study found that people with persistently higher levels of inflammation—the top 20 per cent—faced a 43 per cent higher risk of heart attack and stroke, compared to those with lowest levels, even if they had no previously existing heart disease.

Source: PTI

Why fit-looking people can still face a hidden heart risk

A slim waist, regular workouts and an active lifestyle are often seen as signs of good health. But appearances can be misleading when it comes to heart health. Even people who look fit and exercise regularly can have underlying cardiovascular risk factors that are not visible from the outside.

One important factor is cholesterol. Some people can have high levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol without experiencing any symptoms. Over time, excess LDL can contribute to the buildup of plaque in the arteries, increasing cardiovascular risk. Genetics can also play a role, meaning that a person who eats well and exercises may still have an inherited tendency



towards high cholesterol.

High blood pressure is another potential hidden risk. Often called a "silent" condition, hypertension may not cause noticeable symptoms while gradually placing additional strain on the heart and blood vessels. Regular blood-pressure checks are therefore important even for people who feel healthy.

Blood sugar, smoking, alcohol consumption, sleep, chronic stress

and family history can also influence cardiovascular health. Visceral fat - fat stored around internal organs - may pose metabolic risks even when someone appears relatively lean.

Fitness, therefore, should not be judged solely by appearance or exercise performance. A person can run, cycle or lift weights regularly and still benefit from periodic health checks.

Depending on age, family history and individual risk factors, routine assessments may include blood pressure, blood glucose and a lipid profile. People with a strong family history of premature heart disease or unusually high cholesterol may need to discuss additional evaluation with a healthcare professional.

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Apple is working on screenless fitness band like a Whoop

Apple is reportedly developing a screenless health and fitness tracker similar to devices such as Whoop and Google's Fitbit. According to Bloomberg's Mark Gurman, the Apple Watch maker is now looking to expand its health and fitness portfolio with a simpler wearable focused on tracking health and fitness without a display. The company has reportedly been exploring the category for several months and has built prototypes, although it has not yet decided whether the product will be released.

If things go all planned, Apple's first fitness brand could debut before 2028. The report says the project has the backing of senior executives, including Apple executive chairman Tim Cook and services chief Eddy Cue, who now leads the company's health efforts.

The prototypes reportedly feature a thin fabric band with a sensor-equipped computing module that sits on the wrist. Unlike the Apple Watch, the device would not have a display. Instead, it would focus on health and fitness tracking. Gurman notes that the project is still in the early stages, and Apple has not yet decided whether to launch it. However the year 2028, is anticipated to be the launch year.

But why a fitness band? Because screen less health and fitness wearables are becoming more popular. Companies such as Google, Whoop and Oura have built large user bases with devices that focus mainly on health tracking rather



than apps and notifications. Garmin also offers fitness trackers without displays. Apple now seems to be looking to join the trend, while bringing some of the advanced health and fitness features from its smartwatch lineup to a simpler, screenless wearable.

The latest Apple Watch models already offer more advanced heart-rate tracking, readiness-style measurements and estimates of biological age based on health data. Apple is also testing a redesigned Health app in iOS 27.2, with a simpler interface and clearer guidance. According to the report, Eddy Cue, Apple's Senior Vice President of Services and Health is now pushing the

health team to make its products easier to use and more focused on health and fitness tracking.

Meanwhile, Apple is also working on other wearable products, including smart glasses and AirPods with cameras, both targeted for 2027. Apple has also worked on an AI pendant with a camera, although that project has been postponed. Earlier this month, Apple also refreshed its Watch line with a feature that can record audio during the day and use AI to generate summaries of conversations and activities.

Apple is also reportedly preparing a broader redesign of its smartwatch lineup as early as late 2027.

Qualcomm launches Snapdragon 8 Elite Gen 6, fastest chip for Android phones with agentic AI tech

Qualcomm has unveiled its new generation of flagship mobile platforms, the Snapdragon 8 Elite Extreme Gen 6 and Snapdragon 8 Elite Gen 6. Both new chips are designed to deliver faster performance and more advanced on-device AI to the next generation of premium Android smartphones. The chips were announced at the Snapdragon Summit in Maui on September 23, 2026, with Qualcomm positioning them at the centre of what it calls the agentic AI era.

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The Snapdragon 8 Elite Extreme Gen 6 is the more powerful of the two new chips and comes with several upgrades focused on gaming, AI and cameras. For gaming, Qualcomm's new Adreno Neural Fusion uses AI to improve graphics and visuals, while also helping phones deliver longer gaming sessions.

For cameras, the chip supports Advanced Professional Video (APV) and Intelligent Pixel Control. Qualcomm says these features can help the phone better understand a scene, improve image quality and produce more natural-looking photos and videos.

The Extreme Gen 6 also has a CPU that can reach 5.0GHz, which Qualcomm calls the world's fastest mobile CPU. The chip combines this CPU with a new Adreno GPU and Hexagon NPU to handle demanding AI, gaming and camera tasks.

The Snapdragon 8 Elite Gen 6 uses the same 2nm process and Qualcomm's Oryon CPU, Adreno GPU and Hexagon NPU as the Extreme version. It brings many of the same AI, gaming, camera and connectivity features to more premium Android phones, although the Extreme Gen 6 remains the more powerful option.

X-ray method could help predict battery chemistry and accelerate materials discovery

Scientists have developed a new method for measuring and predicting how negatively charged particles interact with other materials, a breakthrough that could eventually help in the development of longer-lasting batteries and speed up the search for new chemical materials.

Researchers from the University of East London have co-developed the approach, which focuses on anions - negatively charged particles that play an important role in batteries and a wide range of chemical reactions. Understanding how these particles interact with other substances can help scientists determine how materials will behave and which combinations may offer useful properties.

The study, published in the Journal of the American Chemical Society, uses X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS) to examine materials at the atomic level. In the technique, X-rays are directed at a material, allowing researchers to



determine which elements are present and how they are chemically bonded.

The researchers used XPS to measure how tightly particular atoms within anions hold their electrons. These measurements provide a way of quantifying how readily the anions can interact with other substances - information that is important for understanding chemical reactions and material performance.

The team then combined the experimental measurements with computer modelling. This allowed them

to recreate the observed behaviour virtually and use the resulting information to predict how promising battery materials might interact without having to test every possibility through extensive laboratory experiments.

The approach could potentially make materials research faster and more efficient. Instead of testing a large number of chemical combinations individually, researchers could use measurements and modelling to narrow down the candidates most likely to show useful properties.

The implications could extend well beyond batteries. According to the researchers, the data could eventually contribute to a large database covering the behaviour of different chemical elements and compounds. Such a database could provide valuable training material for machine-learning and artificial-intelligence systems designed to assist chemical discovery.

India cuts import duty on crude, refined edible oils amid rise in retail prices

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Centre has reduced import duties on crude and refined edible oils, including palm, soybean and sunflower oil, in an attempt to ease pressure on consumers as cooking oil prices rise and demand gathers pace ahead of the festive season.

The revised customs duty structure came into effect on September 24. Under the new rates, the Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on crude sunflower oil has been reduced from 10% to nil, while the duty on crude soybean oil and crude palm oil has been cut from 10% to 5%.

The government has also lowered duties on refined varieties. The BCD on refined sunflower oil has been reduced from 32.5% to 22.5%, while that on refined soybean and palm oils has been brought down from 32.5% to 27.5%.

The government said the move is aimed at moderating domestic edible oil prices and containing inflationary pressure arising from higher international prices. It has retained a 19.25% differential between crude and refined edible oils, a structure intended to support domestic refining capacity and discourage excessive imports of refined oil.

The duty reduction comes at a crucial time for consumers, with edible oil prices having risen amid higher global commodity prices. India relies heavily on imports to meet its edible oil requirement, leaving domestic prices sensitive to



movements in international palm, soybean and sunflower oil prices.

The government has also sought to ensure that the reduction in import costs translates into lower prices for consumers. The Food Ministry has asked edible oil companies and industry bodies to pass on the benefit of the duty cuts through the supply chain and revise distributor prices and retail prices wherever warranted.

The move is expected to be particularly relevant during the upcoming festive period, when consumption of cooking oil typically increases. Demand rises not only from households but also from sweet manufacturers, restaurants, hotels and catering businesses.

Industry representatives have said

lower duties should reduce the landed cost of imported edible oils and could provide some relief in the retail market. However, the extent and speed of any price reduction will depend on international edible oil prices, freight costs, currency movements and inventories held by importers and refiners. The latest decision follows the Centre's earlier reduction in duties on crude edible oils in June 2025, when the BCD on crude palm, soybean and sunflower oils was lowered from 20% to 10%.

With food prices remaining a key concern for households, the latest duty cut is intended to provide near-term relief while maintaining a policy differential that supports domestic edible oil refining.

'India moved from manufacture for India to manufacture for the world': Piyush Goyal

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): India has moved from an ambition of manufacturing products primarily for its domestic market to becoming a country that can manufacture for global markets, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Friday, as the 'Make in India' initiative completed 12 years.

Goyal said the vision behind Make in India, launched in 2014, was not limited to reducing India's dependence on imported products but was aimed at building an economy capable of producing goods for consumers across the world.

Looking back at 2014, Goyal said there were debates about India's manufacturing potential at a time when many products used in the country were imported.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi envisioned an India where products made in the country would be used globally and carry the 'Made in India' identity for their quality.

"The real story of Make in India goes



beyond these numbers. It is the confidence it has created. The confidence among our startup founders, entrepreneurs, manufacturers, innovators, exporters and, most importantly, our people that 'India can make, India can innovate, and India can compete with the world'," Goyal said in a social media post.

According to Goyal, India recorded its highest-ever annual foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow of USD 94.53 billion in FY 2025-26. Cumulative FDI inflows from FY 2014-15 to FY 2025-26 reached USD 843 billion.

He also highlighted the role of

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes in expanding manufacturing capacity across key sectors.

As of March 31, 2026, the PLI schemes had resulted in Rs 2.40 lakh crore of actual investment, Rs 23.8 lakh crore in production and sales and Rs 15.2 lakh crore in exports, while generating more than 14.6 lakh direct and indirect jobs, Goyal said.

Goyal also highlighted the development of greenfield industrial smart cities under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme.

He said Ease of Doing Business reforms had simplified regulations and reduced the compliance burden, while reforms in key sectors had created new opportunities for investment and manufacturing.

The minister also pointed to the growth of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), which he said is giving a boost to small enterprises. More than 470 crore orders have been placed through the platform, according to his post.

Oil, US yield surge, insurance shake-up spur Nifty, Sensex market sell-off

SEPTEMBER 25, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): TA surging oil market, historic highs in US yields, and a regulatory shake-up in domestic insurance combined to trigger a broad sell-off in equities on Thursday, Sept 24, with India faring among the worst in Asia.

Brent crude oil crossed \$106 a barrel and US treasury yields rose to their highest in nearly 20 years, while a proposed insurance overhaul cast a cloud over the distribution incomes of Indian banks. Financial services account for 36.47% of the Nifty's weight, making the sector a key driver of the benchmark.

The Nifty and Sensex fell 1.6% and 1.7% respectively, hitting their lowest levels since 6 April and 8 June. The India Vix jumped nearly 23% as volatility shot up. In other markets, the Shanghai Composite fell 1.2%, while the CAC 40, DAX, Nasdaq and S&P 500 declined 0.4%, 0.2%, 1.1% and 0.8%.

Financial services bore the brunt of the sell-off in India, a day after the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai) moved to lower customer acquisition costs, revamp distributor commissions, enforce expense limits and streamline intermediary categories. While aimed at curbing mis-selling and lowering policyholder costs, industry executives warned such caps could disrupt distribution networks, squeeze lower-ticket products and taper consumer choice.

The sector reeled: the Nifty Financial Services ex-Bank index slumped 4.3%, followed by the Nifty Mid-small Financial Services index, which fell 4.4%. Nifty Private Bank fell 2.2%, while Nifty Bank shed 2%. PB Fintech Ltd and Turtlemint Fintech Solutions, which operate in the insurance distribution space tanked 36% and 20%, respectively.

"The insurance distribution business is an important revenue stream for banks and NBFCs and the Irdai's consultation paper, if implemented, surely will impact the projections for most of them in the near term," said Aniruddha Sarkar, co-founder and chief investment officer of Equinova Investment Managers, a boutique PMS and AIF investment firm managing over \$100 million in assets.

He said FPI buying depends on earnings recovery in large-cap stocks. Since foreign institutional investors primarily hold large-cap stocks, pressure on banks from the latest insurance-related developments "could keep foreign investors cautious, making large FII inflows before January unlikely," he said.

Oil prices, which had stabilized over a brief ceasefire between Iran and the US, rose as attacks resumed and the Houthis in Yemen blocked vital supply routes.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

ARIES

Ganesha says this week, the stars will be giving favorable economic conditions to deal with the respective economic sectors. In such a situation, the status will remain in related work and business. That is, this week will be full of opportunities to move fast on the path of development. On the other hand, there will be pleasant opportunities to make a name and identity in the related work and business world. This week's stars will be good from the beginning in terms of health. But in the middle of the week, there will be a continuous success in the real estate sector. Sweetness can come in love relationships. So diligent effort may be needed. By the way, in the third part of the week, the brightness of the face will increase again. In this way, you will be able to get rid of diseases and pains. However, on the last days of the week, there will be a need to show more promptness in completing the work related to the family. Along with your own health, you will have to pay attention to the health of other family members.

TAURUS

Ganesha says this week, discussions will be held with the concerned companies to increase the scope of capital investment. In such a situation, talks can be intensified to buy the stake of the concerned companies. This week's stars will be somewhat weak in terms of health. Therefore, pay full attention to your food and drink. During this, the work of some far-flung areas will be expected to be completed. Therefore, there will be a need to show more promptness. On the other hand, there can be moments of love between partners in love relationships. But in the middle of the week, health will be flourishing. If there are any diseases and pains, they will stay away. If you want to organize matrimonial and religious functions in the family, then you will be successful. However, in the third part of the week, there will be a need to show more proactivity in completing the work related to real estate. On the other hand, in the last days of the week, there will be success at every step in the fields of sports, films, arts, and medicine. Love relations will be sweet. But there can be some tension from relatives.

GEMINI

Ganesha says this week, the movement of the stars will increase material comforts and give the gift of positive changes in economic policy. In such a situation, the standard of living in

the family will be pleasant. There will be a period of pleasant dialogue between siblings. As a result, there will be a period of progress in purchasing any desired item and decorating important aspects related to work and business. However, in the middle of this week, you will be able to buy stakes from any public and private sector company on a large scale. Same again from the third part of the week, the movement of stars will give auspicious and positive results. In such a situation, there will be moments of happiness in the courtyard of married life. If you are eligible for marriage or are engaged in finalizing the marriage arrangements. So there will be a period of progress. On the other hand, on the last days of the week, there will be sweetness in love affairs. Will be able to buy any real estate.

CANCER

Ganesha says the movement of the stars of this week will bring great success in the economic sectors. In such a situation, your happiness and satisfaction will increase. If you are going to work on the political and diplomatic front, then due to the influence of global conditions, you will keep moving fast on the path of development. But there can be deep tensions between the wife and the children in some matters. So don't weaken your understanding. However, the process of earning and raising money will be fruitful in the middle of the week. If you are interested in love affairs, there will be opportunities for sweetness. There will be a message of laughter and happiness from the child's side. However, there will be a challenge to increase work and business on the last days of the week. During this time, the economic expenditure will remain increased. If you are engaged in buying shares of a company, you will be successful. But this week's stars will be somewhat weak in terms of health. But in the last days of the week, there will be a positive atmosphere in the areas related to health and livelihood.

LEO

Ganesha says the stars of this week will give auspicious and positive results in the respective political and social life. If you are sitting in a competitive position, then you can make comprehensive changes in domestic policies to increase investment and employment in related areas. It will remain pleasant and luxurious in terms of health. But in this direction, you have to walk with full promptness. If you are engaged in completing any matrimonial and religious works, then there will be desired opportunities. In the middle part of this week, again, the movement of stars will give desired progress in work and business. Very possible, can be nominated for some big responsibility. On the other hand, in the third part of the week, there will be the best kind of success in the economic sphere. There will be a gift of sweetness in love

relationships. But in the last days of the week, fame and fame will increase.

VIRGO

Ganesha says this week, there will be a continuous auspicious and positive atmosphere in related court cases. Due to this, there can be a gift of success at every step. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the efforts. On the other hand, in the areas of livelihood, you will have to travel and migrate to far-flung areas. If you are engaged in promoting capital investment. So you will be successful, but there will be chances of some ups and downs in your health. However, in the second part of the week, you will be able to finalize the works of any religion and charity. On the other hand, in the third part of the week, there will be possibilities of moving forward with intensity in the study of related subjects. Due to which the body and mind will be happy. But some will be worried about the child's side. On the other hand, for sweetness in love relations, we will have to walk more actively. Although there will be tension in some things.

LIBRA

Ganesha says this week there can be moments of laughter and happiness in the courtyard of married life. In such a situation, the body and mind will remain happy. This week, the campaign to encourage work and business will be fruitful. Due to the influence of global conditions, there will be a period of continuous progress. If you want to go for an interview, you will be successful. But in the second part of the week, there will again be a period of challenges in money matters. In such a situation, you will be constantly worried. There can be a period of continuous success in the areas of livelihood. But in terms of health, diseases and pain and pain in the genitals will remain troubling. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good. In a love relationship, there can be deep tensions between the partners on some matters. So don't weaken your understanding. However, on the last days of the week, the movement of stars will give auspicious and positive results.

SCORPIO

Ganesha says that this week, there will be opportunities to collect the means of physical happiness and to use them properly. If you are looking for employment somewhere, there will be opportunities for desired growth. Profit in capital investment can be made. In love relations, you will be troubled due to deep tension in some matters between the partners. However, you will need to walk in this direction with full promptness. There will be more activism in the areas of livelihood. If you are looking to go somewhere for education and training, then this week's stars will give positive results. In the middle of this week, the movement of stars will make the garden

of married life fragrant. A small guest will be the one who fills the soul with happiness. But in the last days of the week, some extra time will have to be given to reworking and raising the business. However, during this time, the opposing side will dominate.

SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says the movements of the stars of this week will give an auspicious and positive atmosphere both from outside and inside in the related work and business. However, this week's stars will be somewhat weak in terms of health. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good. But again, in the middle of the week, the movement of stars will be good for completing important tasks related to my career. If you are engaged in the manufacture of mathematical science, medicine, or research, and medicine. So there can be opportunities for desired progress. At the same time, there will be progress in the preparation of civil services at every step. There will be a breeze of sweetness in personal relationships. On the other hand, in the last days of the week, in connection with work and business, you will have to travel and migrate to far-flung areas. During this, some will be troubled in court cases.

CAPRICORN

Ganesha says this week, the stars will be helpful in developing harmony among the relatives. In such a situation, there will be an auspicious and positive atmosphere in the family. If you are engaged in raising work and business somewhere. So there will be chances of desired progress. However, according to the movement of the stars, you should avoid such steps, which will give tension in the relationship. However, due to some diseases and pain in your health, you will remain troubled. So keep up the smartness. In the middle part of this week, there will be a period of great success in the areas of re-study and teaching. There can be moments of love for each other in love relationships. From the middle of this week, there will be a wide variety of progress in achieving financial goals. So don't weaken your understanding. So it will be good. By the way, due to the opening of files in any court case, you will be worried. Therefore, do not hesitate to continue the understanding.

AQUARIUS

Ganesha says this week, the stars will be increasing the brightness of the face. If there is a disease or pain, you may be able to have it removed. This week, there will be moments of love among the relatives. Due to this, there will be moments of laughter and happiness among the brothers and sisters. So don't weaken the level of understanding. The intention of finalizing the works of any religion and charity may be fruitful. On the other

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : SEPTEMBER 28 TO OCTOBER 4 BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

SEPTEMBER 28

Ganesha says although you are very talented, you need to learn to control your occasionally domineering and haughty behavior. This time, businessmen would diversify their operations into new, lucrative directions. Dealing in real estate might be quite profitable for you, but you should anticipate some partner resistance. Make the most of it since for some people, this is a new romance. Yoga and meditation should be practiced for both physical and spiritual benefits. Your children will likely have some exciting news to share.

SEPTEMBER 29

Ganesha says your ability to sway a sizable population is very strong. You are in the spotlight because of your modern, revolutionary beliefs, but you need to curb your occasionally stubborn and envious behavior. You will have a lot of energy this year, and if you use it well, you will achieve great success. Financially, it appears to be a good time to purchase property and equities, but all purchases should be made with the long term in mind. Later in the year, a far-off

trip looks likely, probably to attend a fortunate event.

SEPTEMBER 30

Ganesha says you are a person who is ambitious, competent, organized, sober, and straightforward. Slow projects would pick up steam. If there are any disagreements, they will be resolved and you will feel relieved. Coworker romances could blossom, but they would be very fleeting. You would keep ahead of others thanks to your competitive spirit, which would also make you well-liked by your fellow students. Friends will be supportive yet obstinate.

OCTOBER 1

Ganesha says today might be a good day for you to create new contacts that will benefit your career. Additionally, you would experience unexpected career advancements. If you go out and participate in clubs and other social activities, you will be quite successful socially. Compared to the previous several years, your income would be significantly higher. Even if they can be possessive at times, your loved one would

be supportive and helpful. Minor health issues like backaches, stiff necks, or body aches will cause a lot of trouble.

OCTOBER 2

Ganesha says many people's financial situations get better, and some people even inherit property. Your confidence will increase as the business prospers and you make money. The legal issues that have been weighing on your mind will be resolved to your satisfaction. For some, promotions and pay raises are likely. However, romance won't be enjoyable because you'll constantly be thinking about your regular conflicts and disagreements. Both academically and athletically, students will do incredibly well.

OCTOBER 3

Ganesha says the highlight today will be starting new employment and assignments. Transfers and promotions for select staff. Long-term returns on property investments will be favorable. You will travel frequently and successfully, earning money along the way, and you will develop enduring



relationships. Your relationships with people of the opposite sex will get stronger, giving your life a new and exciting direction. Your mood will improve after hearing some thrilling news from kids. Anxiety and tension may be brought on by an increase in your medical costs due to your parents' health.

OCTOBER 4

Ganesha says the upcoming season is favorable for launching new businesses. Projects that have been lagging up until now would pick up steam. If there are any disputes, they will be resolved and you will feel relieved. Coworker romances might start to grow, but they would be quite fleeting. You would keep ahead of others thanks to your competitive spirit, which would also make you well-liked by your peers. Friends will be supportive but also demanding.

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hand, in the middle of the week, you may have to do a long exercise to complete the work related to land and building. Some opponents may conspire to humiliate you by eating inside. But in the third and last part of the week, there will be sweetness in love relationships. So that he will be positive about you. Because the stars will continue to give better results than expected in the economic sectors. Overall, you will continue to get auspicious and positive results this week. But don't weaken your understanding.



PISCES

Ganesha says this week will bring opportunities to strengthen your work and business while overcoming financial challenges, boosting your confidence. However, disagreements and tension may arise among relatives, so handle matters with patience and understanding. Your health should generally remain good, and you may enjoy delicious food. By midweek, the stars favour further improvements in health and greater

prosperity for your family. In the final days of the week, you can expect steady

progress in matters related to property and vehicles. Despite this success, minor

health concerns and family tensions may resurface.

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Sikh History This Week

SEPTEMBER 25 TO OCTOBER 1

SEPTEMBER 25

1935 - Ban on carrying kirpan withdrawn



The restriction on carrying the Sikh kirpan was withdrawn on September 25, 1935. The development was significant in the long history of Sikh efforts to secure recognition of religious practices and symbols.

1969 - All-Parties Conference demands Chandigarh for Punjab

An All-Parties Conference held in Chandigarh on September 25, 1969, demanded that Chandigarh be returned to Punjab. The issue was part of the continuing political developments following the reorganization of Punjab and the creation of Haryana.

SEPTEMBER 26



Joti Jot of Guru Amar Das Ji: Commemorates the third Sikh Guru passing his physical mortal form and merging with the Divine (noted as 10 Assu / September 26 in specific traditional calendar mappings).

1978 - Anti-Sikh Violence in Kanpur

Sikhs in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, faced violent clashes involving Nirankaris on September 26, 1978, amid heightened communal tensions during that era.

1932 - Birth of Dr. Manmohan Singh



India's first Sikh Prime Minister and economist Dr. Manmohan Singh was born on September 26, 1932.

SEPTEMBER 27

1691 - Birth of Sahibzada Jujhar Singh



The second son of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and Mata Jito Ji was born on September 27, 1791 (as per the Nanakshahi calendar) at Anandpur Sahib. He later displayed immense bravery and attained martyrdom at the tender age of 14 during the Battle of Chamkaur in December 1705.

1926 Release of Akali Leaders

Prominent Akali leaders of the Gurdwara Reform Movement who had been imprisoned inside the Lahore Fort during the agitation were officially released on September 27, 1926.

SEPTEMBER 28

1940 - Akali Dal condemns Gandhi's comments on the sword

On September 28, 1940, the Akali Dal condemned comments made by Mahatma Gandhi concerning the Sikh sword. The episode reflected continuing debates surrounding the recognition and protection of Sikh religious symbols.

SEPTEMBER 29

1914 - Komagata Maru passengers fired upon at Budge Budge



On September 29, 1914, police and military forces opened fire at Budge Budge Ghat near Calcutta (now Kolkata) after the return of the Komagata Maru. Several Sikh passengers were killed in the firing. The incident became an important episode in the history of Sikh and Indian resistance to discriminatory colonial immigration policies.

1984 - Army leaves the central area of Darbar Sahib

On September 29, 1984, the Army left the central area of Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, following the military operation earlier that year. The event was part of the

highly consequential developments surrounding the Sikh shrine in 1984.



SEPTEMBER 30



1981 - Sikh sword banned on domestic flights

On September 30, 1981, the Indian government extended a ban on carrying the sacred Sikh sword aboard domestic flights. The issue became part of wider discussions about Sikh religious symbols and their accommodation in public life.

OCTOBER 1

1961 - Master Tara Singh agrees to end fast



On October 1, 1961, Master Tara Singh agreed to end his fast unto death after the government agreed to establish a high-powered commission to discuss the Punjabi Suba issue. The demand for a Punjabi-speaking state was a major chapter in post-Independence Sikh and Punjab political history.

2026 - 150th anniversary of the Singh Sabha Movement

October 1, 2026, marks the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the Singh Sabha Movement. The SGPC held a major Gurmat Samagam at Gurdwara Sri Manji Sahib Diwan Hall, Amritsar, to commemorate the anniversary. The celebrations highlighted the movement's role in Sikh religious revival, education and identity during the late 19th century.

Shraddha and Pitru Paksha: A sacred fortnight to remember the ancestors

Every year, as the lunar calendar enters the waning phase of Bhadrapada, Hindu families turn their thoughts towards those who came before them. Homes become quieter, memories of parents and grandparents return, and simple acts of food offerings, prayers and charity acquire a deeper meaning.

This period, known as Pitru Paksha, is a sacred fortnight dedicated to the remembrance and honouring of departed ancestors. The rituals performed during this time are collectively associated with Shraddha, a Sanskrit word derived from shraddha, meaning faith, devotion and sincere reverence.

For many Hindus, Shraddha is not merely a ritual performed for the dead. It is an expression of gratitude towards the generations whose lives, sacrifices and values have shaped the family that exists today.

A bridge between generations

Hindu tradition places considerable importance on the relationship between the living and their ancestors. The family is viewed not simply as a group of individuals living in the present, but as part of a continuing lineage connecting past, present and future.

The ancestors, or pitrs, occupy an important place in this tradition. Remembering them is considered an act of duty as well as gratitude.

Pitru Paksha generally lasts for 16 lunar days, beginning with the full moon or the day after it, depending on the regional calendar, and concluding with Sarva Pitru Amavasya, also known as Mahalaya Amavasya. The exact dates vary each year according to the lunar calendar.

During these days, families perform Shraddha on the tithi, or lunar date, corresponding to the death anniversary of an ancestor.

The legend of Karna and the world of ancestors

One of the most famous stories associated with Pitru Paksha comes from the Mahabharata.

According to the legend, when Karna, the great warrior and son of Surya, died in the Kurukshetra war, his soul reached the ancestral realm. There, he was offered gold and precious objects rather than food.

Karna was puzzled and asked why he was not being given nourishment. He was told that during his life he had donated immense wealth and performed acts of generosity, but he had never offered food or performed Shraddha for his ancestors because he did not know their identity.

Karna then asked for an opportunity to correct this omission. He was allowed to return to Earth for a period of time, during which he performed offerings for his ancestors. The period became



Important information

Shraddha - Pitru Paksha 2026

Shraddha Start Date: Saturday, 26 September 2026

Shraddha End Date: Saturday, 10 October 2026.

Time Period : Pitru paksha is a time period of fifteen days.

associated in popular tradition with the observance of Pitru Paksha.

The story conveys an important message: charity and generosity are meaningful, but remembering those from whom we received life is also considered a sacred responsibility.

Why food is offered to ancestors

Food occupies a central place in Shraddha rituals. Traditionally, offerings may include cooked rice, sesame seeds, water and other foods prepared according to family and regional customs. The food is offered with prayers and reverence before being given to Brahmins, family members, cows, birds or other recipients, depending on local practice.

The ritual is not necessarily understood literally as the departed consuming physical food. Rather, the offering represents the family's gratitude and remembrance.

The act also reflects an important Hindu principle: food is sacred and sharing it is an act of compassion and duty.

The ritual of Tarpan

One of the most recognisable practices associated with Pitru Paksha is Tarpan, the offering of water to the ancestors.

Water is offered while remembering

the names and lineage of departed family members. In many traditions, sesame seeds are also used.

The gesture is simple, yet deeply symbolic. Water sustains life, and offering it to the ancestors represents respect, remembrance and the continuation of the bond between generations.

The ritual is generally performed by family members according to prescribed customs, often under the guidance of a priest.

Pind Daan: symbolic offerings of nourishment

Another important ritual is Pind Daan, in which pindas, traditionally made from cooked rice and other prescribed ingredients, are offered as part of ancestral rites.

The word pinda refers to a rounded offering. It symbolises nourishment and is associated with prayers for the peaceful onward journey of the departed.

Places such as Gaya in Bihar, especially the Vishnupad Temple and the banks of the Phalgu River, have been associated with ancestral rites for centuries. Many families undertake pilgrimage there to perform Pind Daan.

Other sacred places, including Varanasi, Prayagraj, Haridwar and Siddhpur, are also associated with

rituals for ancestors.

The significance of the death tithi

A distinctive feature of Shraddha is that families traditionally perform the ceremony according to the lunar date on which a person died rather than simply following the corresponding Gregorian calendar date.

Each day of Pitru Paksha is associated with particular lunar dates. Families perform the ritual on the tithi corresponding to the death of a parent, grandparent or other relative.

If the exact death date is unknown, Sarva Pitru Amavasya provides an important opportunity to remember ancestors collectively.

This final day is therefore especially significant for families who may not know the precise lunar date of an ancestor's death.

Sarva Pitru Amavasya: remembering all ancestors

The concluding day of Pitru Paksha is known as Sarva Pitru Amavasya, or Mahalaya Amavasya.

It is traditionally regarded as an occasion to honour all departed ancestors, particularly those whose Shraddha could not be performed on their specific tithi.

The day carries a sense of completion. Families offer prayers, prepare food, make donations and remember relatives who are no longer physically present.

In Bengal and some other regions, Mahalaya also has a special cultural significance because it marks the traditional beginning of the period associated with Durga Puja.

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Ladakh in winter: Where the mountains meet the extreme

There are landscapes that impress you, and then there are landscapes that leave you speechless. Ladakh belongs firmly to the second category.

Set high in the Himalayas, the Union Territory is a land of stark mountains, vast valleys, turquoise lakes, ancient monasteries and seemingly endless skies. Often described as a high-altitude cold desert, Ladakh is dramatically different from most other destinations in India. In summer, its roads fill with travelers and motorcyclists. But come winter, a different Ladakh emerges - quieter, colder and more austere. The crowds disappear, the mountains turn white and the landscape seems to return to an older, slower rhythm.

For travellers prepared to embrace extreme weather and high-altitude conditions, winter offers an opportunity to experience Ladakh in a remarkably serene setting.

Leh and Ladakh: understanding the difference

The names Leh and Ladakh are often used interchangeably, but they refer to different places.

Ladakh is the Union Territory, while Leh is a town and district headquarters and one of its principal tourist centres. The Union Territory is divided into the Leh and Kargil districts.

Leh serves as an important base for exploring the region. Its attractions include the historic Leh Palace, Shanti Stupa, monasteries, traditional markets and the colourful Leh Bazaar.

Beyond Leh lies a vast landscape dotted with Buddhist monasteries, mountain passes, remote villages and high-altitude lakes.

A land of monasteries and prayer flags

Ladakh's cultural landscape is as compelling as its mountains.

Ancient Buddhist monasteries, known locally as gompas, rise dramatically from hillsides and rocky outcrops. Their interiors contain colourful murals, sculptures, thangkas and prayer halls, while prayer flags flutter in the mountain wind.

Places such as Thiksey, Hemis, Alchi, Lamayuru and Diskit offer glimpses into the region's rich Buddhist heritage.

The monasteries are not simply tourist attractions. They remain living centers of faith, meditation, learning and community life.

For visitors, the experience can be deeply atmospheric: the sound of prayer, the scent of incense and the sight of monks in traditional robes against a backdrop of barren mountains.

Why winter changes everything

Ladakh in winter is not for everyone.

Temperatures can fall well below freezing, particularly at night, and conditions can be challenging at high



elevations. Water may freeze, roads can become slippery or temporarily blocked by snow, and weather disruptions can affect travel plans.

Yet the harshness is also part of the attraction. With fewer visitors, the region becomes quieter. Roads carry less traffic, tourist centers are less crowded and landscapes that are busy during the

summer can appear almost untouched.

Snow-covered peaks, frozen streams and icy valleys create a version of Ladakh that feels stark, beautiful and timeless.

Getting there in winter

When the major mountain passes are closed because of heavy snowfall, flying

into Leh is generally the practical option for winter visitors.

Flights connect Leh with major Indian cities, although schedules can be affected by weather. Travelers should therefore avoid tight onward connections and keep some flexibility in their itinerary.

The approach by air can itself be spectacular. On a clear day, the flight offers sweeping views of snow-covered Himalayan ranges and rugged valleys.

One important point: arriving in Leh means arriving at high altitude. Acclimatisation is essential. Visitors should take it easy after arrival and allow their bodies time to adjust before undertaking strenuous activity.

Dress for the conditions

Winter in Ladakh demands serious preparation. Layering is more effective than relying on a single heavy jacket. Thermal innerwear, insulating mid-layers, a windproof and waterproof outer layer, warm socks, gloves, a cap and sturdy footwear are useful.

Don't forget protection from the sun. At high altitude, sunlight can feel deceptively mild while UV exposure remains strong. Sunglasses, sunscreen and lip balm can be valuable companions.

And remember: winter conditions can change quickly.

Getting around

Winter transportation requires patience. Local buses may operate on selected routes, but services can be less frequent and dependent on weather and road conditions. Taxis and four-wheel-drive vehicles are generally more practical for travellers exploring beyond Leh. Motorcycling, a popular summer experience in Ladakh, is considerably less suitable in severe winter conditions because of freezing temperatures, snow and icy roads.

When hiring a vehicle, choosing an experienced local driver can be particularly useful. Local drivers are familiar with changing road conditions and the challenges of travelling through the region in winter.

A simple rule makes sense: reach your destination before darkness whenever possible.

Winter accessibility varies considerably across Ladakh. Leh and several nearby areas remain accessible, while conditions on higher passes and remote routes can change rapidly.

Popular destinations such as Nubra Valley and Pangong Lake may be accessible depending on weather and road conditions, but travelers should never assume that a route will remain open simply because it was open the previous day.

High passes such as Khardung La and Chang La can experience severe weather and temporary closures.

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Trump, Xi conclude Washington...

negotiators additional time to address tariffs, Chinese purchases of American goods, rare-earth supplies and other outstanding economic disputes. U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said further details of the trade negotiations are expected to be released Monday.

The leaders also discussed artificial intelligence, Taiwan and international security issues. No major agreement was announced on Taiwan or the wider technological competition between the two countries. The summit therefore appeared to preserve a measure of stability in U.S.-China relations rather than resolve the principal strategic differences between them.

Iran also figured in the discussions. According to the U.S. ambassador to China, Trump told Xi that Chinese assistance to Iran would be unacceptable and received assurances that Beijing would not provide such support.

The visit placed considerable emphasis on personal diplomacy. Trump hosted Xi at a formal White House state dinner attended by senior U.S. officials and leading business and technology executives. The two presidents also held further informal discussions over tea before visiting the National Archives on the final day of the visit.

Both sides indicated that high-level contacts would continue. Trump said he expects to meet Xi again in China in November and at the G20 gathering in Florida in December, providing further opportunities for negotiations on the unresolved economic and strategic issues.

The immediate outcome of the Washington meeting was therefore an extension of the trade truce and a commitment to continued engagement, rather than a comprehensive settlement of U.S.-China differences. The two governments remain divided over trade, technology, Taiwan and other strategic questions, but the summit demonstrated their willingness to keep negotiations open and manage their competition through continued dialogue.

Pressure mounts on CEC as nationwide...

The Congress organized protests in Delhi and State capitals across the country, with workers attempting to march towards Election Commission offices. Police detained protesters at several places and used water cannons or tear gas in some cities as demonstrations were stopped from proceeding towards election offices.

Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal demanded not only Kumar's resignation but his arrest, alleging electoral malpractice. The demand is an allegation by the Congress; no finding of criminal wrongdoing against the CEC has been established by the protests themselves.

The political confrontation follows an investigation by The Indian Express reporting that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had placed objections or concerns on record at least 14 times between November 2025 and August 2026 over decisions concerning electoral rolls and the Special Intensive Revision (SIR).

According to the report, the issues included voter additions and deletions, changes involving Form 6 used for voter registration, centralization of controls over the ERONet electoral-roll system, and electoral-roll matters in West Bengal and Goa.

The Election Commission has rejected the suggestion that these exchanges demonstrate a breakdown in collective decision-making. EC officials have said observations, operational queries and differing views are part of the normal functioning of a multi-member constitutional institution and maintained that final decisions of the Commission, including those concerning the SIR, had the approval of all three Election Commissioners.

The controversy has nevertheless moved beyond the Congress-led Opposition.

Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president Chirag Paswan, an NDA ally, called upon the CEC to publicly clarify the Commission's position, saying that doubts about the electoral process needed to

be addressed in order to preserve public confidence. Upendra Kushwaha, another NDA ally, also sought clarification from the Election Commission over the controversy surrounding the SIR.

Biju Janata Dal president and former Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik separately called for Kumar's resignation and said the entire SIR process should be revisited in light of the reported differences within the Commission. The Election Commission disputes the characterization of those exchanges as evidence that final SIR decisions lacked unanimity.

The controversy has also reached the Supreme Court. A petition filed by advocate Shailendra Mani Tripathi challenges decisions, guidelines and software changes allegedly undertaken without the concurrence of the other Election Commissioners and seeks legal action over alleged violations. These claims remain allegations before the court and have not been judicially established.

Separately, the Supreme Court this week raised concerns over aspects of the SIR process in Delhi, observing that a number of notices appeared to have been issued "almost mechanically" and suggesting that voters be permitted to respond through modern communication methods such as email and WhatsApp.

Another point of controversy is a "Mark VIP" feature in the Booth Level Officer application. The Congress has alleged that creation of such a facility constitutes unequal treatment of voters and has demanded disclosure of its purpose and operation.

The political temperature was visible across the country on Friday.

In Delhi, Congress workers and separate groups of activists demonstrated against the CEC. Civil society activists and political leaders participated in a protest at Jantar Mantar, while the Delhi Congress attempted to march towards Nirvachan Sadan, the Election Commission headquarters.

Police said protesters were detained where demonstrations had not received the required permission.

In Bihar, Congress workers marching towards the election authorities' office in Patna were stopped with water cannons. Water cannons were also reported during protests in Chandigarh, while clashes occurred between protesters and police in Lucknow. In Assam, State Congress president Gaurav Gogoi and other leaders were detained during a demonstration.

Demonstrations were also reported in Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh and other parts of the country. Police used tear gas to disperse protesters in Manipur.

Meanwhile, two scheduled voter-awareness programs involving CEC Kumar in Meerut and Varanasi were postponed. The Election Commission said the changes were routine and unrelated to the controversy, explaining that such programs can be rescheduled because of venue availability, official schedules and other logistical considerations.

The Congress has indicated that the agitation will continue and party sources have also spoken of the possibility of Opposition parties pursuing a motion in Parliament seeking Kumar's removal. The matter is expected to figure at the Congress Working Committee meeting scheduled for September 29.

The dispute has therefore developed into a wider institutional controversy involving three separate questions: whether procedures governing revision of India's electoral rolls have adequately protected eligible voters; whether important Election Commission decisions were reached through the collective process required of the three-member body; and whether the Commission has sufficiently explained its actions to maintain public confidence in the neutrality and integrity of elections.

For its part, the Election Commission maintains that its final decisions were unanimous and that internal observations and disagreements during deliberations should not be confused with institutional division. The allegations against Kumar and demands for his resignation, removal or prosecution remain political and legal claims that have not been established as findings of wrongdoing.

With protests continuing, a petition now before the Supreme Court and political demands for greater

disclosure coming from beyond the principal Opposition, the controversy is unlikely to end with Friday's demonstrations. At its center lies an issue larger than any individual office-holder or political party: public confidence that India's electoral institutions operate transparently, collectively and impartially.

IRS Probing \$100 Billion in Potential...

The IRS will determine whether additional taxes and penalties apply, including penalties for committing fraud, according to the SBA.

The suspected fraud pertains to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and COVID Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) initiatives.

PPP was aimed at helping businesses keep their workforce during the pandemic, while EIDL provided loans and advances to help businesses recover from the economic impacts of the crisis.

In 2023, the SBA judged that 20 percent of the \$1.2 trillion pandemic relief program could have been obtained by fraud.

SBA Administrator Kelly Loeffler said: "The IRS's identification of approximately \$100 billion in suspected tax fraud sends a clear message: fraudsters who stole from SBA's COVID-relief programs will ... face accountability at the SBA.

"If they inflated payroll, fabricated employee counts, falsified business records, or otherwise lied to obtain taxpayer-funded loans, they will also face scrutiny from the IRS."

The federal government is estimated to lose \$233 billion to \$521 billion annually to fraud, the Government Accountability Office said in an April 2024 report.

The Trump administration has taken several steps to crack down on COVID-19 loan fraud.

an April 24 statement, the SBA said it had referred 562,000 suspect loans to the Department of the Treasury for collection. These were PPP and COVID EIDL loans.

SBA is legally obligated to refer delinquent debts to a Treasury bureau when they are deemed to be sufficiently past due.

However, under the prior administration, the SBA failed to refer the 562,000 loans to authorities for investigation and collection, the statement said.

On Sept. 14, task force head Vice President JD Vance announced that the administration would permanently suspend 870,000 people from receiving any more federal loans, as they are suspected of having defrauded \$39 billion from COVID-19 small business programs.

Starbucks to Close 250 Stores Across...

operating (COO) officer, as it continues its restructuring.

In a letter, Starbucks COO Mike Grams noted that most of the company's 18,000 stores were profitable, while a small percentage of locations were not.

"We have carefully reviewed our North America coffeehouse portfolio and identified locations where we do not believe we can consistently deliver the experience we want for customers and partners or where we don't see a path to acceptable financial performance," Grams said in the statement.

The company announcement did not specify which coffeehouses will be shut down, nor did it provide a breakdown of how many are located in the United States, Canada, or Mexico.

The 250 locations will now be shut down "later this week," he said, adding that it represents about 1 percent of its stores on the continent.

Employees who work at the soon-to-be shuttered locations may be transitioned to other stores, if possible, Grams said. But he added that other affected workers will be provided "severance support."

Grams suggested that the move was routine, noting that Starbucks shuts down some of its coffeehouses and opens others each year. He said Starbucks is "excited about the significant long-term" status of the company in North America.

"We are actively developing a strong pipeline of new coffeehouses and remain committed to growth," the statement said.

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

History This Week

SEP 25 - OCT 01

SEPTEMBER 25

September 25, 1513 - Spanish explorer Vasco Nunez de Balboa first sighted the Pacific Ocean after crossing the Isthmus of Panama.

September 25, 1690 - The first American newspaper was published. A single edition of Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestick appeared in Boston, Massachusetts. However, British authorities considered the newspaper offensive and ordered its immediate suppression.

September 25, 1789 - The first U.S. Congress proposed 12 Amendments to the Constitution, ten of which, comprising the Bill of Rights, were ratified.



Birthday - American writer William Faulkner (1897-1962) was born in New Albany, Mississippi. Best known for *The Sound and the Fury* and *The Reivers*.

Birthday - Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) was born in St. Petersburg, Russia. He witnessed the Russian Revolution and went on to become one of the greatest Soviet composers.

SEPTEMBER 26

September 26, 1687 - The Acropolis in Athens was attacked by the Venetian army attempting to oust the Turks, resulting in heavy damage to the Parthenon.

September 26, 1918 - The last major battle of World War I, the Battle of the Argonne, began as a combined force of French and Americans attacked the Germans along a 40-mile front.

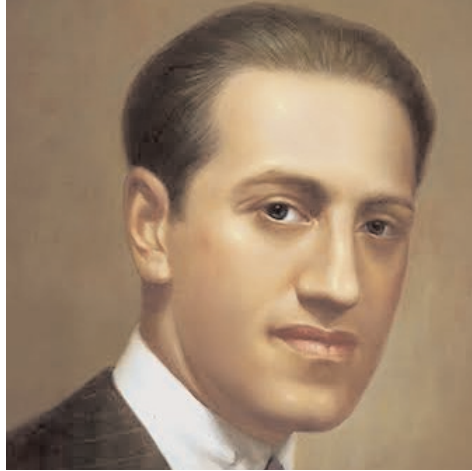
September 26, 1960 - The first-ever televised presidential debate occurred between presidential candidates John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Many who watched were inclined to say Kennedy 'won' the debate, while those who listened only to the radio thought Nixon did better. Nixon, who declined to use makeup, appeared somewhat haggard looking on TV in contrast to Kennedy.

September 26, 1984 - Britain agreed to allow Hong Kong to revert to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

Birthday - American folk legend Johnny Appleseed (1774-1845) was born in Leominster, Massachusetts (as John Chapman). For 40 years, he traveled through Ohio, Indiana and into Illinois, planting orchards. He was a friend to wild animals and was regarded as a "great medicine man" by Native Americans.

Birthday - Writer T.S. (Thomas

Stearns) Eliot (1888-1965) was born in St. Louis, Missouri. He rejected conventional verse and language in favor of free expression.

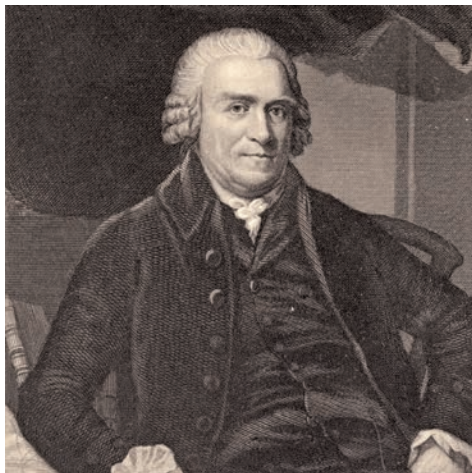


Birthday - Composer George Gershwin (1898-1937) was born in Brooklyn, New York. Along with his brother Ira, he created enduring songs including *The Man I Love*, *Strike Up the Band*, *I Got Rhythm* and the opera *Porgy and Bess*.

SEPTEMBER 27

September 27, 1964 - After a 10-month investigation, the Warren Commission Report was issued stating a lone gunman had been responsible for the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

September 27, 1995 - The Israeli cabinet agreed to give Palestinians control of much of the West Bank which had been occupied by Israel for 28 years.



Birthday - American revolutionary leader Samuel Adams (1722-1803) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. He was a passionate, vocal man who helped ignite the revolution and served as a delegate to the First and Second Continental Congresses. He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation.

Birthday - American political cartoonist Thomas Nast (1840-1902) was born in Landau, Germany. He originated the symbols for the two main U.S. political parties, the Democratic donkey and the Republican elephant. Nast was also instrumental in destroying the Tweed Ring, a group of corrupt politicians plundering the New York City treasury.

SEPTEMBER 28

September 28, 1066 - The Norman conquest of England began as Duke William of Normandy landed at

Pevensey, Sussex.

September 28, 1542 - California was discovered by Portuguese navigator Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo upon his arrival at San Diego Bay.



September 28, 1978 - Pope John Paul I died after only 33 days in office. He was succeeded by John Paul II.

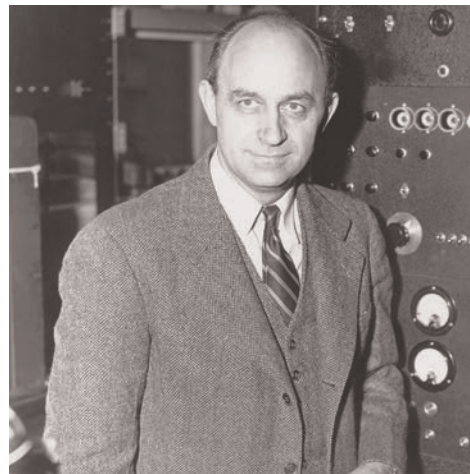
September 28, 1995 - Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat signed an accord at the White House establishing Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

SEPTEMBER 29

September 29, 1789 - Congress created the United States Army, consisting of 1,000 enlisted men and officers.

September 29, 1829 - Britain's "bobbies" made their first public appearance. Greater London's Metropolitan Police force was established by an act of Parliament at the request of Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, after whom they were nicknamed. The force later became known as Scotland Yard, the site of their first headquarters.

September 29-30, 1941 - Nazis killed 33,771 Jews during the Babi Yar massacre near Kiev.



Birthday - Nuclear physicist Enrico Fermi (1901-1954) was born in Rome. While teaching at the University of Chicago, he developed a method of causing nuclear fission, producing a chain reaction releasing explosive nuclear energy which led to the development of the Atomic bombs.

SEPTEMBER 30

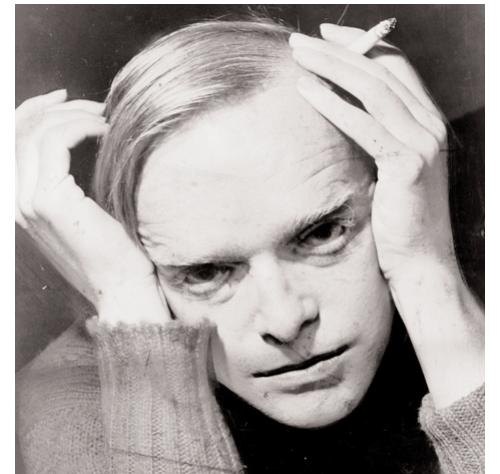
September 30, 1938 - British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned to England declaring there would be "peace in our time," after signing the Munich Pact with Adolf Hitler. The Pact ceded the Czechoslovakian Sudetenland to the Nazis. Chamberlain claimed the agreement meant peace, however, Hitler seized all of Czechoslovakia in March of

1939.

September 30, 1949 - The Berlin Airlift concluded after 277,264 flights carrying over 2 million tons of supplies to the people of West Berlin, who were blockaded by the Soviets.

September 30, 1955 - Actor James Dean was killed in a car crash in California at age 24. Although he made just three major films, *Rebel Without a Cause*, *East of Eden* and *Giant*, he remains one of the most influential actors.

September 30, 1966 - Nazi war criminals Albert Speer and Baldur von Schirach were released from Spandau prison after serving 20 years. The prison, originally built for 600 inmates, was left with only one prisoner, former Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess.



Birthday - American writer Truman Capote (1924-1984) was born in New Orleans, Louisiana (as Truman Streckfus Persons). He took the last name of his stepfather, becoming Truman Capote. Best known for *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and *In Cold Blood*.

OCTOBER 1

October 1, 1908 - Henry Ford's Model T, a "universal car" designed for the masses, went on sale for the first time.

October 1, 1938 - Hitler's troops occupied the Sudetenland portion of Czechoslovakia. In an effort to avoid war, the leaders of Britain and France had agreed to cede the German-speaking area to Hitler, who later broke the agreement and occupied all of Czechoslovakia.

October 1, 1946 - Twelve Nazi leaders were sentenced to death at the International War Crimes Tribunal in Nuremberg, Germany.

October 1, 1979 - After 70 years of American control, the Panama Canal Zone was formally handed over to Panama.



Birthday - Virtuoso pianist Vladimir Horowitz (1904-1989) was born in Berdichev, Russia. He made his American debut in 1928 with the New York Philharmonic and became a U.S. citizen in 1944. In 1986, after a self-imposed absence of 60 years, he performed a concert in his native Russia.



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

NAGOYA (TIP): India's campaign at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games has gathered considerable momentum, with a growing medal haul across shooting, athletics, weightlifting, wushu, badminton, rowing, squash and kabaddi raising hopes of a strong finish.

India's tally climbed to 27 medals - three gold, 11 silver and 13 bronze - on September 26, with the women's kabaddi team providing the latest golden moment. India defeated Iran 37-34 in a closely fought final to successfully defend its Asian Games title. The victory was India's third gold of the Games, following the women's cricket triumph and the mixed-team 10m air-pistol gold in shooting.

The latest gold has transformed the mood around the Indian contingent. What initially appeared to be a cautious start has developed into a steady medal-winning run, with athletes and teams from a wide range of disciplines now contributing to the tally.

India had entered Aichi-Nagoya after its record performance at the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games, where it crossed the 100-medal mark for the first time. India won 106 medals in Hangzhou, including 28 gold, 38 silver and 40 bronze.

With the Games continuing until October 4, the Indian camp can now look forward to several more opportunities to add to its medal collection.

Kabaddi delivers another gold

The women's kabaddi team produced the latest highlight of India's campaign, overcoming Iran 37-34 in a tense final on Saturday, Sept 26. The victory completed an unbeaten campaign for the defending champions and gave India its fourth women's kabaddi gold since the sport was introduced at the Asian Games in 2010. India had previously won the title in 2010, 2014 and 2022, while Iran had ended its run in the 2018 final.

The Indian team had remained unbeaten throughout the Aichi-Nagoya competition before overcoming Iran in the final. The victory also strengthened India's hopes of adding further medals through team sports.

The men's kabaddi team has also reached the gold-medal match, where it is scheduled to face Iran.

Cricket opens India's gold account

India's first gold of the Games came from the women's cricket team, which successfully defended its Asian Games title. India defeated Sri Lanka by 147 runs in the T20 final, posting 216/3 before bowling Sri Lanka out for 69. Smriti Mandhana led the batting charge with 79, while Richa Ghosh struck an unbeaten 49 off 22 balls. The emphatic victory gave India its first gold of the Aichi-Nagoya Games and extended its dominance in women's T20 cricket at the Asian Games.

Shooting provides the second gold

Shooting has once again emerged as one of the main pillars of India's medal campaign. Suruchi Singh and Kamaljeet

India's medal momentum gathers pace as kabaddi adds third gold at Asian Games



India's Suruchi Singh and Kamaljeet celebrate after winning Gold medal in the 10 meter air pistol mixed team event. PTI



Sawan Barwal produced a landmark performance in the men's marathon, winning silver in a national-record time of 2:11:37. His medal was India's first in the Asian Games marathon since 1982.



India's first gold of the Games came from the women's cricket team, which successfully defended its Asian Games title. India defeated Sri Lanka by 147 runs in the T20 final.

produced the country's second gold by winning the mixed-team 10m air-pistol event with a score of 484.6.

The shooting contingent has also contributed several silver and bronze medals. Elavenil Valarivan has been among the standout performers, winning silver in the women's 10m air-rifle team and individual events.

India added another shooting silver on September 26 when Ashi Chouksey, Tilottama Sen and Vidarsa Vinod finished runners-up in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions team event.

The steady flow of medals from the range has made shooting one of the biggest contributors to India's campaign.

Barwal ends 44-year marathon wait
Athletics has provided another historic moment.

Sawan Barwal won silver in the men's marathon on September 26, clocking 2:11:37, a national record and personal best. His performance ended India's 44-year wait for a men's marathon medal at the Asian Games. The last Indian to win a medal in the event was Hosur Kukappa Seetharan, who took bronze at the 1982 Asian Games in Delhi.

Barwal's silver has added another memorable chapter to India's athletics campaign.

Baranica Elangovan has also created history by winning India's first Asian Games medal in women's pole vault, while Gulveer Singh added silver in the men's 10,000m. India has also secured silver in the mixed 4x400m relay.

Mirabai and Roshibina keep India on podium

Olympic medallist Mirabai Chanu finally added an Asian Games medal to her collection with silver in the women's 49kg weightlifting category.

Wushu star Naorem Roshibina Devi also secured silver in the women's 60kg sanda category, continuing India's strong record in the discipline.

Their performances have demonstrated that India's medal prospects extend well beyond its traditional strengths.

Badminton, rowing and squash add to tally

India's men's badminton team secured bronze after losing 1-3 to China in the semi-final. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty registered India's only victory against the Chinese side.

India has also collected medals in rowing and soft tennis, while squash has added another podium finish.

Joshna Chinappa and Velavan Senthilkumar won bronze in mixed-doubles squash, further strengthening India's medal count on September 26.

India has also made its mark in mixed martial arts, winning its first-ever Asian Games medal in the discipline.

Hockey remains a major medal hope

The medal momentum has also raised expectations from India's team sports.

The women's hockey team has been in formidable form in the preliminary stage, producing some huge victories. Against Thailand, India registered a 20-1 win, with Deepika once again scoring eight goals.

Deepika has emerged as one of the tournament's leading scorers and the Indian women's hockey team remains one of the country's important medal prospects.

The men's hockey team is also in action, while the men's kabaddi team has the opportunity to join the women's side on the top step of the podium.

From cautious start to medal momentum
The narrative around India's Aichi-Nagoya campaign has changed significantly within a matter of days.

The early concern over a relatively modest medal count has given way to growing confidence as podium finishes have come from an increasingly wide range of sports.

India now has 27 medals - three gold, 11 silver and 13 bronze - with the women's kabaddi team providing the latest gold on September 26.

(Prabhjot Singh is a Toronto-based senior journalist who writes on Sports, politics and community. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

Shubman Gill suffers elbow injury scare before West Indies ODI series

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

MUMBAI (TIP): India captain Shubman Gill suffered an injury scare during a practice session in Thiruvananthapuram on Friday, Sept 26, just two days before the start of the three-match ODI series against the West Indies. Gill was struck on the elbow by a rising delivery from Mohammed Siraj while batting in the nets and was left in considerable pain.

The right-hander immediately stopped batting and received medical attention for nearly 20 minutes, PTI reported. The incident briefly raised concerns over his availability for the series opener, particularly with Gill set to lead India in the ODIs. However, he eventually returned to the nets and faced throwdowns before the session ended. There was no immediate indication from the team that the injury would rule him out of the opening match.

Gill's fitness will be closely monitored as India prepare for the return of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to the ODI setup. Both senior batters were part of the team's preparations in Thiruvananthapuram, with India looking to settle their batting combination ahead of the 2027 ODI World Cup.

India bowling coach Morne Morkel backed Gill's leadership and highlighted the value of having experienced players around the young captain.

Hardik Pandya's comeback suffers fresh blow, shin injury rules him out of Australia A and New Zealand tour

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): All-rounder Hardik Pandya's absence from the Indian national team is set to enter its fifth month. The all-rounder has sustained a fresh injury to his right shin and is set to be ruled out of the white-ball tour of New Zealand.

Pandya's 'Return To Play' date was set for September 20 and, accordingly, the selectors picked him for India A for the upcoming One-Day series against Australia A, starting October 6. The all-rounder, however, will now be ruled out of the tour of New Zealand, which starts on October 22. India are playing five T20Is, five ODIs and two Tests in the bilateral series.

"This is very unfortunate but Hardik's latest scan reports have revealed an injury to his right shin. He has been advised complete rest for a period of two weeks. BCCI's medical panel head Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala has seen his reports and on his return from Japan, will assess him and decide on when he can start his rehabilitation," a BCCI source tracking COE developments told PTI on condition of anonymity.

Hardik Pandya last played a competitive match in the Indian Premier League on May 24. Since then, he has missed the home series against Afghanistan (ODI + T20I), the tour of Ireland and England, and is in line to miss the home ODI series against West



Indies as well. The fresh development only adds to that list.

It is understood that the BCCI wanted Pandya to travel with the squad to Japan for the Asian Games and the BCCI's operations team had taken his passport for visa-related work.

However, just before the start of the Afghanistan T20 series, he suddenly developed a shooting pain around his knee while doing his fielding drills. He took a break and decided to take a few days' rest. However, just as he was ready to get a fitness certificate, the pain resurfaced and scans revealed that there was an injury. The 32-year-old Pandya

has been based in Bengaluru since the end of the IPL and now trains at the Centre of Excellence after relocating to the Garden City.

But over the course of the last four months, at least thrice, during the Afghanistan ODIs, England T20Is and now Australia A, the all-rounder has suffered a fresh niggle that has proved to be an impediment to his comeback.

With the New Zealand series also out of his way, Pandya will now have to wait for the Zimbabwe ODIs in January 2027 if he is fit to play, or perhaps check his fitness in the Vijay Hazare Trophy or Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Four women wrestlers on Friday, Sept 25, filed an appeal against a magistrate's order acquitting former Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in a sexual harassment case.

The criminal appeal filed before the principal district and sessions judge of the Rouse Avenue court also assails the acquittal of former WFI assistant secretary Vinod Tomar of the charge of criminal intimidation in the case.

On August 3, the magisterial court acquitted former BJP MP and former WFI chief in the case filed by six women wrestlers, including World Championships medallist Vinesh Phogat, on grounds of lack of evidence. Besides Singh, the court also acquitted Tomar in the case.

According to the plea filed on Friday, the verdict of acquittal was unsustainable in law, founded on a "manifestly erroneous and selective appreciation" of the evidence on record, proceeded on conjectures and surmises and failed to apply binding and well-settled principles of law.

The plea claimed that a major portion of

Four wrestlers challenge Brij Bhushan's acquittal in sexual harassment case



Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh

the magisterial court's judgment rested its reasoning on archaic and stereotypical assumptions about the expected behaviour of victims of sexual assault and harassment, instead of a fair and evidence-based assessment after taking into account the circumstances of the

victims. It argued that the verdict had throughout applied the standard of the ideal victim, and when read as a whole, it expressly and repeatedly applied a standard of expected victim behaviour that had no basis in law.

These standards, the appeal said, included assumptions such as that a genuine victim would remember the exact place and year of an assault with photographic precision even while forgetting the precise dates of tournaments played years apart.

It was assumed that the ideal victim, the appeal said, would fight back or provoke a reaction right when the incident happened, besides cutting off all future professional contact with her harasser, even though he still controlled her livelihood.

It said the standards also assumed that she would tell every confidante the full story at once in identical terms, and anything less than these, counted as a

serious, fatal inconsistency.

The appeal underlined that such assumptions do not reflect how real victims actually behave. It alleged that the findings relied on certain unverified defence materials instead of the complainants' detailed and corroborated record.

According to the plea, the magistrate's verdict merely drew an adverse inference against one of the complainants and never dealt with the substance of her testimony to support the prosecution's case.

It said the testimonies of the two (hostile) witnesses, who resiled from their statements, did not affect the independently corroborated case of the four women wrestlers or appellants.

It alleged that the evidence on record established that Singh, a six-time Member of Parliament and three-time president of WFI, exercised extensive control over the appellants' careers, directly and through Tomar and the coaching staff.



Karan Johar to bring R&AW founder RN Kao's untold story to the big screen in 2028

Rameshwar Nath Kao, who founded India's external intelligence agency R&AW and later served as its first chief, is set to be the subject of a large-scale theatrical film backed by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions and Leo Media Collective. The yet-untitled espionage actioner, based on Kao's life and work, is targeting an August 11, 2028 release during the Independence Day weekend.

The announcement was made on September 21, marking 58 years since the foundation of R&AW, with the film planned as part of the agency's 60-year legacy celebrations in 2028. Based on Nitin Gokhale's book *Gentleman Spymaster*, the film will trace Kao's journey from 1955 to 1971, including the events that led to the creation of R&AW and its first major mission during the 1971 war with Pakistan.

The project is currently in development, and the makers plan to take it on floors by mid-2026. The film will explore the years leading up to the formation of R&AW and Kao's role in shaping India's intelligence operations on the global stage. Often described as a pioneering figure in Indian espionage, Kao's work and strategic approach have since been discussed by several former R&AW chiefs.

In an official statement, Karan Johar said, "Leo Media has painstakingly been researching and dramatising this narrative with passion for the past two years, we want this film to be a gripping story based on true facts to pay homage to RAW and honour their milestone year with a solid motion picture all of us at Dharma are so excited to get going."

The film marks another collaboration between Dharma Productions and Leo Media Collective after *Bad Newz* (2024) and *Kesari: Chapter 2* (2025). While the director and cast have not been revealed yet, the makers are expected to cast an A-list actor in the lead. Details about the cast, director and other members of the creative team are being kept under wraps for now.

Udta Teer: Ayushmann's Pakistani spy joins Sara in chaotic action comedy

The trailer for the upcoming action comedy *Udta Teer*, featuring actors Ayushmann Khurrana and Sara Ali Khan, has been unveiled, offering a look into a narrative built around high-stakes misadventures and ensemble humour. Directed by debutant Akash A Kaushik, the film is scheduled for a nationwide theatrical release on October 9, 2026.

The trailer outlines an espionage satire driven by amnesia and mistaken identity. Ayushmann Khurrana plays Bilal, a Pakistani intelligence operative who suffers memory loss following a blast and awakens convinced he is an officer with India's Counter-Terrorism Squad (CTS). Sara Ali Khan features alongside him as a fellow CTS officer, unaware of his actual origin.

Pushing identity-swap comedy to the forefront, the footage captures Bilal adopting hyper-patriotic traits while his handlers in Pakistan scramble to contain the situation. The narrative blends traditional spy-thriller set-pieces—including train combat and explosion sequences—with fourth-wall-breaking gags and political satire.

Enhanced by composer duo Sachin-Jigar's upbeat soundtrack and slick visual palette, the trailer positions *Udta Teer* as an irreverent, light-hearted satire on classic spy-action tropes.

Udta Teer reunites Ayushmann and Sara following their appearance in *Pati Patni Aur Woh Do*, which also features actors Rakul Preet Singh and Wamiqa Gabbi. Meanwhile, the feature marks writer Akash A Kaushik's first outing as director.

The film features an extensive supporting cast, including Rahul Bose, Ram Kapoor, Suhail Nayyar, Gulshan Grover, Mukul Dev, Raghubir Yadav, Brijendra Kala, Sandeep Anand, Supriya Pilgaonkar, and Smita Tambe. *Udta Teer* marks a renewed studio collaboration between Karan Johar's Dharma Productions and Guneet Monga Kapoor's Sikhya Entertainment. Prior collaborations between the two production houses include *Kill* (2024), *Gyaarah Gyaarah* (2024), and the acclaimed 2013 drama *The Lunchbox*.

The upcoming film is jointly produced by Johar, Kapoor, Adar Poonawalla, Apoorva Mehta, and Achin Jain.



Love & War: Ranbir's bruised arm, vintage avatar in 1st look from Bhansali film

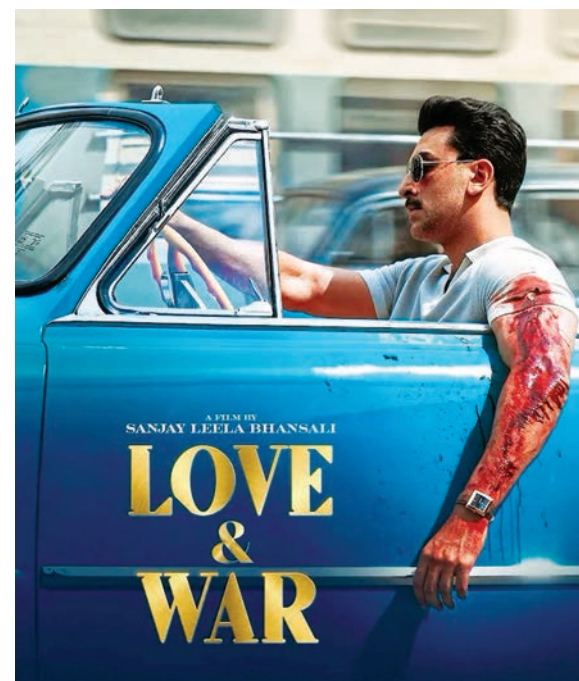
Actor Ranbir Kapoor's first look from Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Love & War* is out. The poster features the actor in a vintage avatar, with a bruised and bloodied arm adding a gritty touch to his otherwise composed look. The film is set to release on January 21, 2027.

In the poster, Ranbir is seen sitting in the driver's seat of a vintage turquoise convertible. He sports slicked-back hair, a pencil moustache and round sunglasses, while wearing a light-coloured knit polo shirt. His calm appearance contrasts with his bruised and bloodied left arm resting outside the car. The poster has a distinctly retro setting, with vintage architecture and cars in the background. The poster also confirms the film's release date. Sharing the poster, the makers wrote, "Woh rutba, woh raub, woh junoon!" They also announced that *Love & War* will release in theatres on January 21, 2027.

Love & War stars Ranbir Kapoor alongside Alia Bhatt and Vicky Kaushal. The film marks Ranbir's reunion with Bhansali after *Saawariya* (2007), which was the actor's debut film. Bhansali is directing and producing the project.

The film is scheduled to release worldwide in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu on January 21, 2027. Netflix is listed as the streaming partner, while IMAX is among the film's partners.

The first look comes as the makers begin introducing the world of *Love & War* ahead of its theatrical release.





Appalling: Orlando Bloom's threesome scene with Mara sisters sparks backlash

Actor Orlando Bloom's forthcoming film, *Bucking Fastard*, has drawn strong reactions online after the actor spoke about a threesome scene featuring real-life sisters, Rooney and Kate Mara, at the San Sebastian Film Festival in Spain over the weekend. Some viewers criticised the scene as "appalling", "disgusting" and "weird", while others defended it as part of the actors' work and pointed out that the film is based on a true story.

Bloom, 49, described the scene with Rooney, 41, and Kate, 43, as "sincere", while director Werner Herzog said it was a moment in which he had to step back. *Bucking Fastard* had its world premiere at the Venice Film Festival on September 3. Several viewers expressed discomfort with the premise on Reddit. Some called the scene "appalling" and "disgusting", while others described it as bizarre and questioned why the Mara sisters had agreed to take part.

The reaction, however, was not entirely negative. Other viewers defended the actors, arguing that Rooney and Kate are portraying fictional characters and that intimate scenes are part of their profession. Some also noted that the film is based on a true story.

Bloom plays Gareth Mulroney, a man caught between twin sisters Joan and Jean Holbrooke, portrayed by Rooney and Kate respectively. Speaking about the intimate sequence, the actor said there was "such simplicity" to the characters and their desires, while also pointing to the innocence he saw in the sisters.

Bloom described the threesome as a "very sincere sort of moment" created by the three actors. At the San Sebastian Film Festival, Bloom said as quoted by *Variety*, "[There is] such simplicity to the characters and [their] carnal desires, but also an innocence to the sisters."

Herzog recalled the conversation he had with Bloom before the filming of the scene and said, "You are in bed, and you have two women in your arms. How you deal with it, I cannot give instructions." He described the resulting sequence as "beautiful" and said it had "charm and depth". *Bucking Fastard* premiered at the Venice Film Festival on September 3 before screening at San Sebastian. Bloom plays Gareth Mulroney, while Rooney and Kate Mara portray twin sisters Joan and Jean Holbrooke.

The Love Hypothesis: BookTok romcom lacks spark on screen

Popular on BookTok and seemingly packed with all the ingredients of a crowd-pleasing romantic comedy, *The Love Hypothesis* arrives on screen with plenty of expectations - but struggles to generate the chemistry its premise demands.

Based on Ali Hazelwood's bestselling novel, the film stars Lili Reinhart as Olive Smith, a brilliant but awkward biology PhD student at Stanford. Olive is devoted to her research into pancreatic cancer detection, a subject linked to the death of her mother. Her carefully ordered academic life is disrupted when she enters a fake relationship with Dr Adam Carlsen (Tom Bateman), an intimidating scientist known to students as "Dr Evil".

The setup is classic romcom territory. Olive needs to convince her friend Anh that she has moved on from Jeremy, while Adam needs a pretend girlfriend to reassure university administrators that he plans to stay at Stanford and protect his research funding. Their staged romance, inevitably, begins to develop into something real.

Yet the transition from fake dating to genuine attraction feels rushed. The screenplay moves quickly through familiar enemies-to-lovers beats, leaving little room for the emotional connection that could make the romance convincing. What works effortlessly on the page often feels mechanical on screen.

Reinhart, however, gives the film much of its charm. She plays Olive with



warmth, awkwardness and strong comic timing, making even some of the film's clunky dialogue work. Her expressive performance helps keep the character engaging when the story itself loses momentum.

Bateman's Adam is less successful. His character shifts between a cold, intimidating academic and a conventional romantic hero, making the transformation feel uneven. The two leads have moments of chemistry, but not enough to sustain the film's central

love story. Directed by Claire Scanlon and adapted by Sarah Rothschild, *The Love Hypothesis* also arrives amid a growing wave of BookTok adaptations. Unlike some of its predecessors, however, it rarely finds a distinctive voice of its own.

The film has the right ingredients - a popular novel, an appealing cast, fake dating and an enemies-to-lovers romance. But on screen, the formula produces more familiarity than fireworks.

Brad Pitt says dog co-star in Heart of the beast would 'do things not in the script'

Brad Pitt is all praises for his new co-star. The unique thing about this co-star is that he is canine rather than human. The actor is set to appear in *Heart of the Beast*, a survival drama directed by David Ayer that follows a man and his dog as they try to make their way out of the Alaskan wilderness.

In a recent press conference promoting the film, Brad said that co-starring with a dog was "a really moving experience".

Heart of the Beast is screening out of competition at Spain's San Sebastian Film Festival. On Wednesday, Brad addressed a press conference ahead of the screening, where he opened up about his experience of working on the film, particularly acting with Uber, the dog.

"I did have a really moving experience with Uber, who plays Odin, who our dog whisperer found in New Zealand, and we bonded quickly. There were times he would do things that were just amazing, that were not in the script that you see in the film, and his expressions, they really moved me with him in the close-up," the 62-year-old Oscar winner told the reporters.

San Sebastian, the highest-profile film festival in the Spanish-speaking world, wraps up on Saturday. A total of 17 films are vying for the top awards in the official section, with a jury presided over by US director Ira Sachs.



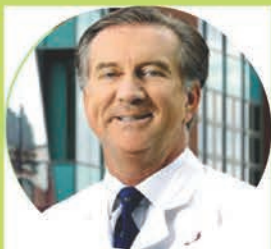
Uber, a German shepherd, plays the combat dog Odin in *Heart of the Beast*. Three of his puppies play Odin in flashback scenes, showing the dog at various ages. However, Uber appears in the majority of the film, alongside Brad Pitt. Directed by David Ayer, the film explores the deep bond between a military officer and his combat dog, Odin, who survive an air crash and become trapped in the wilderness of Alaska.



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Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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