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Indian parliamentarians engage diaspora at the Indian Consulate, New York

India's development ambitions, regional disparities, youth opportunities and Punjab's drug menace feature in community interaction



The 17-member Indian Parliamentary delegation at the Indian Consulate, New York on October 7, 2026 -Photo/ Jay Mandal-on assignment

**OCTOBER 7, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)**

An all-party delegation of Indian parliamentarians met members of the Indian diaspora at the Consulate General of India in New York on October 7, bringing elected representatives from different states and political parties together for an exchange on the community's achievements abroad and

its concerns about developments in India. Consul General Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan extended a warm welcome to the visiting lawmakers. Before his opening remarks, a Consulate official introduced the delegation members, outlining their parliamentary responsibilities and backgrounds in public life.

In his welcome address, Pradhan

described the Consulate's historical significance and its engagement with the Indian community across the northeastern United States. He said it was the first Indian consulate opened after independence and had occupied its present building since May 1948.

CONTD ON PAGE 3

Veteran Actor Nana Patekar has Died: Tributes Pour in; Goa Police Register Unnatural Death Case



An artist painting Nana's picture
Pic/ PTI

**OCTOBER 8, 2026
PANAJI, GOA (TIP)**

Veteran actor Nana Patekar who died on Thursday, October 8, 2026, was cremated with full state honors at his Donje farmhouse in Pune on Thursday night.

(ALSO READ TRIBUTE TO NANA ON PAGE 26)

Meanwhile, Goa Police have registered an Unnatural Death (UD) case following his death. Panaji Police registered the case under Section 194 of the Bharatiya

CONTD ON PAGE 48

2026 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Navi Pillay

**OCTOBER 9, 2026
OSLO (TIP)**

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has awarded the 2026 Nobel Peace Prize to Navanethem "Navi" Pillay, Al Jazeera reports. The announcement, made on Friday, October 9, in Oslo, said that the prestigious award would go to the former South African jurist for her work to promote peace and international law.

The committee said in a statement that Pillay had been instrumental in ensuring that



The 2026 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Navanethem (Navi) Pillay. /OHCHR

war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide are prosecuted.

The committee received nominations for 287 candidates for this year's prize. Other mooted contenders had included the International Space Station, emergency teams in Sudan, children's advocates in Ukraine and two top international courts.

United States President Donald Trump has long coveted the prize and repeatedly said he deserves it, despite his ongoing war in Iran.

Trump officials block Microsoft's access to program for employee green cards

**OCTOBER 8, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)**

The Trump administration is suspending Microsoft's access to a program that allows skilled foreign workers to apply for permanent residency in the United States, saying the company is under investigation for its hiring practices.



known as green cards.

Vance framed the move as necessary to protect U.S. workers from unfair wage competition.

CONTD ON PAGE 48



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COMMENT

Public Welfare or Electoral Inducement? Where Democracy Must Draw the Line

BY INDRAJIT
SALUJA

If public assistance is justified because citizens need it, why should its availability depend on which political party wins an election?

That question has acquired fresh relevance following President Donald Trump's promise of a \$5,000 payment to every adult American citizen if Republicans retain control of both chambers of Congress in the November 3 midterm elections.

Announced at the Republican convention in Dallas on September 9, the proposed "Trump dividend" has been repeated in subsequent campaign appearances. The President has suggested that tariff revenues could help finance the payments. Yet the proposal remains without congressional authorization, and independent estimates put its cost at approximately \$1.2 trillion or more.

The controversy raises questions extending beyond the approaching election. What distinguishes a legitimate promise of public assistance from an electoral inducement? Who has the authority to commit public resources? And what obligations do political leaders owe citizens whose votes they may never receive?

These questions deserve consideration without presuming that every election promise is improper or that every proposed financial benefit is a disguised attempt to purchase political support.

THE PURPOSE OF PUBLIC WELFARE

Governments routinely provide assistance to citizens. Social Security, Medicare, unemployment insurance, food assistance, tax credits, and emergency relief programs reflect different judgments about the responsibilities of the state. Such programs can be debated on their merits. Some are universal; others are directed toward particular groups. Their effectiveness and affordability remain legitimate subjects of political disagreement.

Nor is it unusual for candidates to promise economic benefits. Elections allow citizens to choose between competing proposals for taxation, public expenditure, healthcare, education, and social protection.

A political party may reasonably explain that implementing its proposals requires legislative support. Voters, in turn, may reasonably consider the financial consequences of those proposals.

The more difficult question arises when a payment is expressly described as dependent upon the electoral victory of a particular party.

Supporters may regard such a statement as an ordinary explanation of how political power enables policy. Critics may regard it as an inappropriate connection between public financial assistance and partisan electoral success.

The distinction cannot be resolved merely by attaching a label to the promise.

IS IT BRIBERY?

The word bribery carries serious legal implications. Federal law prohibits certain expenditures intended to influence voting, but applying those provisions to a broadly offered payment contingent on an election result presents disputed legal questions.

A universal payment promised to citizens regardless of their individual votes is materially different from money offered to a particular person in exchange for voting for a candidate. **That distinction matters.**

Nevertheless, legality is not the only standard by which public conduct is examined. A proposal may raise ethical or institutional concerns without constituting a proven criminal offense.

The appropriate questions include whether a financial commitment is presented as a public policy requiring lawful authorization, whether its electoral conditions are clearly explained, and whether its costs are disclosed.

The answers require evidence, not assumptions about political motives.

PUBLIC MONEY AND PUBLIC AUTHORITY

Public funds are administered through institutions

established by law. They are not the personal property of presidents, legislators, or political parties.

In the American constitutional system, Congress exercises the power of appropriation. A president may propose expenditures and advocate legislation, but a presidential announcement does not itself create an entitlement to receive money from the Treasury.

That constitutional distinction is especially relevant to a proposed payment of such magnitude.

The estimated cost of the \$5,000 dividend raises substantial questions. Would it be financed through tariffs, borrowing, taxation, or reductions in other expenditures? What would be its effects on inflation, federal debt, and household finances? Would the payment be universal, and what conditions would govern eligibility?

The answers matter as much as the promised amount.



A benefit financed through public borrowing, for example, may provide immediate relief while imposing future obligations on taxpayers. Tariff revenue, meanwhile, is not an unlimited source of funds, and tariffs can also increase costs for American consumers and businesses.

A serious policy proposal should therefore be accompanied by a credible explanation of its financing and implementation.

A BROADER ELECTION-TIME DEBATE

The current controversy is not confined to the proposed dividend.

In early October, the administration announced \$90 payments to approximately 20.8 million Medicare Part B enrollees to offset part of their premiums. Separate \$500 payments to certain healthcare.gov users were also reported.

The administration presents these measures as financial assistance, while critics question their timing and political presentation.

These programs are distinct from the proposed \$5,000 dividend. Their legal authority, eligibility rules, financing, and implementation must be examined separately.

The distinction is important because the timing of public expenditure, by itself, does not establish wrongdoing. Governments continue to administer programs during election campaigns, and citizens do not lose their need for assistance simply because an election approaches.

At the same time, election proximity can make transparency especially important.

A CHALLENGE SHARED BY DEMOCRACIES

Similar debates arise in India, where political parties frequently promise free electricity, subsidized

transportation, direct cash transfers, agricultural assistance, and other benefits.

Supporters describe many such measures as instruments of social justice and economic inclusion. Critics question whether some promises are financially sustainable or primarily designed to attract electoral support. Neither description can fairly be applied to every program.

A carefully designed welfare measure may address genuine hardship. An expensive election promise may lack a credible financing plan. The distinction depends on evidence concerning need, eligibility, cost, implementation, and public benefit.

These standards should apply consistently across political parties and countries.

Democratic accountability requires more than asking who proposed a benefit. It requires asking what the benefit is intended to achieve and whether the government can responsibly deliver it.

THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE VOTER

The secret ballot protects the citizen's freedom to choose without coercion or improper interference.

Citizens are entitled to evaluate governments according to their records. A voter may support an administration because its policies have improved employment, reduced costs, or provided effective assistance. That is an ordinary and legitimate expression of democratic accountability.

Yet a fundamental distinction remains between appreciating a government's performance and feeling personally indebted to a political party for benefits financed by public resources.

Once a public benefit is lawfully established, eligible citizens ordinarily receive it according to the program's rules, not according to their political preferences.

The citizen who votes against the government remains entitled to the protection of its laws and the services for which that citizen qualifies.

Government does not cease to serve those who disagree with it.

PEOPLE BEFORE POLITICS

Democracy gives political parties the opportunity to compete for power. It gives governments the responsibility to exercise that power within constitutional limits and for public purposes.

Financial promises made during election campaigns deserve neither automatic condemnation nor unquestioning acceptance.

They deserve scrutiny.

Are they lawful? Are they affordable? Are they designed to meet identifiable public needs? Are their eligibility conditions transparent? Can their financing withstand independent examination?

And perhaps most importantly, can the public purpose of the promised assistance be explained independently of the political advantage its announcement may produce?

The controversy over President Trump's proposed dividend offers an opportunity to examine these questions with the seriousness they deserve.

The underlying principle is straightforward: the ballot determines who governs; it should not determine whose needs deserve recognition. Political parties may disagree about the extent of government's obligations. Citizens may disagree about the wisdom of particular expenditures. Such disagreements are natural in a democracy.

But whatever policies emerge from those disagreements must ultimately be administered under law, through accountable institutions, and with respect for the equal citizenship of those they serve.

People before politics is therefore not merely an appealing phrase. It is a standard by which public promises, public expenditure, and public accountability may be examined.

The dignity of the voter lies in the freedom to choose. The responsibility of government lies in serving citizens regardless of the choice they make.

Indian parliamentarians engage diaspora at the Indian Consulate, New York

CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Pradhan placed the Indian diaspora within the Consulate's region at approximately 2.2 million. His presentation outlined the scale of the community's presence and the breadth of its contributions to American life.

He highlighted Indian-origin leadership in technology, finance and business, alongside achievements in medicine, scientific research, higher education and the arts. He also drew attention to the substantial number of Indian students in the United States and the economic connections maintained with India through remittances.

His remarks extended beyond professional accomplishments to India's cultural influence, including the popularity of yoga and interest in Ayurveda. Together, these examples illustrated the community's participation in American society while maintaining connections with India.

Pradhan explained that the delegation had requested a program emphasizing direct engagement rather than formal speeches by every parliamentarian. Following his welcome, he invited Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, leader of the Parliamentary delegation, to address the gathering before opening the floor for questions.

Speaking in Hindi, Shri Joshi praised Indians abroad for distinguishing themselves in the professions and businesses they pursued. He said their success raised their own standing while enhancing India's reputation in the countries where they lived.

Turning to India's development, Joshi described the country's rapid progress and credited initiatives of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government with advancing prosperity. He discussed the ambition to achieve Viksit Bharat, or a developed India, by 2047, when India completes a century of independence.

A substantial part of his address concerned young people. He emphasized the importance of improved educational facilities and expanded employment avenues, linking India's development ambitions with opportunities for the next generation.

Apart from Joshi, the delegation members did not deliver separate formal



Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India at New York welcoming the delegation and the guests.

Photo/ Jay Mandal-on assignment

speeches. They participated in the question-and-answer session, with most



Prof. Indrajit S Saluja, editor of The Indian Panorama made an impassioned plea to the Parliamentarians to save Punjab and the Punjabis from the drug menace, which, if unchecked, may pose a threat for the entire nation. -Photo/ Jay Mandal-on assignment

speaking in Hindi.

Audience interventions brought attention to disparities in development, including concerns about Bihar and Jharkhand. Alok Kumar, who comes from Bihar, questioned the state's slow economic progress and raised the problems of poverty and unemployment. He asked what the government proposed

to do to accelerate economic growth and improve opportunities for its people.

Prof. Indrajit Saluja, publisher and chief editor of The Indian Panorama, made an impassioned plea for stronger action against the drug menace in Punjab. He described the problem as a grave threat whose consequences extended beyond the state and posed concerns for India as a whole.

Other participants questioned whether Hindi was receiving its due place and recognition in India.

The interaction gave community members an opportunity to place their concerns directly before elected representatives from different political backgrounds. Appreciation of the diaspora's accomplishments and discussion of India's development ambitions were accompanied by questions about regional inequality,



Shri Chandra Prakash Joshi, leader of the Parliamentary delegation sharing his thoughts with the gathering

Photo/ Jay Mandal-on assignment

she entered the Lok Sabha following the 2024 election); Dr. Gumma Thanuja Rani (YSR Congress Party Lok Sabha member from Araku, Andhra Pradesh. A medical

employment, language and drug abuse.

The visiting delegation included:

C. P. Joshi (BJP Lok Sabha member from Chittorgarh, Rajasthan; a third-term parliamentarian and chairperson of the Lok Sabha Committee on Petitions); Rahul Kaswan (Congress Lok Sabha member from Churu, Rajasthan. He has represented the constituency in the 16th, 17th and 18th Lok Sabhas); Lovely Anand (Janata Dal (United) Lok Sabha member from Sheohar, Bihar; serving her second Lok Sabha term, following an earlier parliamentary tenure in the 1990s); Asit Kumar Mal (Lok Sabha member from Bolpur, West Bengal, elected on a Trinamool Congress ticket. Published reporting identifies him as a second-term MP); Biplob Kumar Deb (BJP Lok Sabha member from Tripura West; a former chief minister of Tripura, bringing state executive experience to the delegation); Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri (BJP Lok Sabha member from Uttara Kannada, Karnataka; a former Karnataka Assembly Speaker and former minister for primary and secondary education); Priya Saroj (Samajwadi Party Lok Sabha member from Machhlishahr, Uttar Pradesh. A lawyer by profession,

doctor with experience in epidemiology, she was elected in 2024); Rajabhau Parag Prakash Waje (Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray Lok Sabha member from Nashik, Maharashtra; serving his first term in the Lower House); Mahima Kumari Mewar (BJP Lok Sabha member from Rajsamand, Rajasthan; a first-term parliamentarian elected in 2024); Dr. Sikander Kumar (BJP Rajya Sabha member representing Himachal Pradesh. An economist and academic, he previously served as vice-chancellor of Himachal Pradesh University); Anil Kumar Yadav Mandadi (Congress Rajya Sabha member representing Telangana; one of the five Upper House members identified in the visiting delegation); Banshilal Gurjar (BJP Rajya Sabha member representing Madhya Pradesh; serving his first term in the Upper House); Sanjay Yadav (Rashtriya Janata Dal Rajya Sabha member representing Bihar; contributing another regional-party perspective to the delegation); and L. K. Sudhish (Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK) Rajya Sabha member representing Tamil Nadu; identified in current delegation reporting as a first-term MP).



A View of the distinguished gathering

Photo/ Jay Mandal-on assignment

Marriage Green Card in 2026: Process, Timeline, and Cost

SEPTEMBER 30, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

A wedding, on its own, does not change anyone's status with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It creates the possibility of a green card, but reaching that green card still runs through the right paperwork in the right sequence, real proof that the marriage is genuine, and a fork in the road that depends on where the foreign spouse currently lives. This guide lays out both branches as they work in 2026 - eligibility, the filing sequence, current costs, and realistic timing. For background on how marriage-based cases fit into the broader family immigration system, see our overview of family-based immigrant visas.

WHO QUALIFIES

Where the couple stands in line depends entirely on the U.S. spouse's own status. Spouses of U.S. citizens fall under the "immediate relative" classification, which Congress exempted from the annual green card ceiling entirely, so there is no numerical backlog to wait through. Spouses of lawful permanent residents fall instead into the F2A preference category, which does carry a yearly cap and can involve a genuine wait even when the category is close to current. In both situations, immigration officers are ultimately checking for the same thing: that the marriage is legally valid under the law of the place it happened, and that the couple entered into it as a real relationship rather than as a shortcut to a green card. That determination usually rests on ordinary proof of shared life - commingled finances, a common address, a history of photos and communication, and statements from people who know the couple personally.

TWO PATHS: ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS OR CONSULAR PROCESSING

The green card process always begins with the U.S. spouse submitting Form I-130 to document that the marriage exists and is genuine. From that point, the route diverges based on geography.

A foreign spouse who is physically present in the United States following a lawful admission is generally eligible to pursue adjustment of status rather than leaving the country. Where the sponsor is a U.S. citizen, Form I-485 can be submitted at the same time as the I-130 instead of waiting for a separate approval - one of the few instances in immigration practice where two significant filings move in tandem. A spouse of a permanent resident becomes eligible to file concurrently only once the F2A cutoff date in the Visa Bulletin reaches their priority date. The adjustment track requires a medical examination on Form I-693, and nearly every applicant today is called in for biometrics and a face-to-face interview before a decision issues.

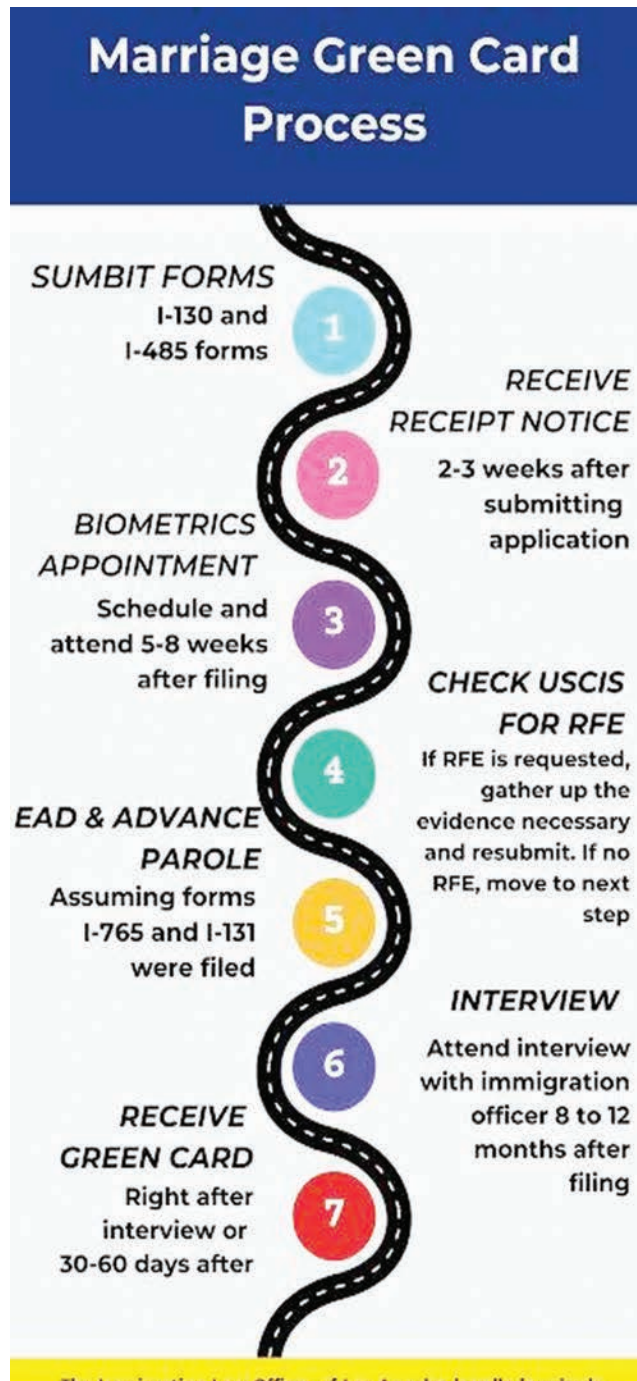
A foreign spouse living abroad instead follows consular processing. Once USCIS signs off on the I-130, the file moves to the National Visa Center, which collects civil documents and the online DS-260 application, and the case concludes with an immigrant visa interview conducted at a U.S. embassy or consulate in the spouse's home country.

THE TWO-YEAR RULE: CONDITIONAL VS. PERMANENT RESIDENCE

Timing the marriage against the approval date matters more than most applicants expect. When the marriage is under two years old at the moment the green card is granted, USCIS issues a conditional card good for only two years rather than the usual decade. Clearing that condition requires the couple to jointly submit Form I-751 during the 90 days immediately before the card's expiration; letting that window pass without a solid explanation can put the foreign spouse's lawful status in real jeopardy. Couples who have already been married two years or longer by the time of approval skip this step entirely and receive a full ten-year card.

WHAT IT COSTS IN 2026

Government filing fees are set by USCIS and change



periodically, so it's worth confirming the current amount on USCIS's Form G-1055 fee schedule before filing. As of September 2026, the figures for a typical adjustment-of-status case are:

- Filing Step Form 2026 USCIS Fee
- Petition for Alien Relative I-130 \$675 by mail / \$625 online
- Adjustment of Status (if in the U.S.) I-485 \$1,440 (includes biometrics)
- Removing Conditions (if married under 2 years at approval) I-751 \$750
- Immigrant Fee (consular cases, paid before the green card is mailed) N/A \$235

Consular processing follows a different fee track: the State Department's immigrant visa application fee and the USCIS Immigrant Fee replace the I-485 charge. Either path can also involve optional forms filed alongside the I-485, such as Form I-765 for a work permit or Form I-131 for travel authorization, each with its own separate fee since 2024.

HOW LONG IT TAKES

Timelines depend heavily on the spouse's status and the service center or embassy handling the case, and they move often enough that any specific number is a snapshot rather than a guarantee. In general, adjustment of status for the spouse of a U.S. citizen is currently running in the range of eight months to over a year from filing to interview, while consular processing for spouses abroad commonly takes longer once National Visa Center document review and interview scheduling are factored in. Spouses of green card holders in the F2A category should also check the current Visa Bulletin before assuming a number is immediately available.

Nearly all marriage-based cases now include an in-person interview; waivers have become uncommon in 2026, so couples should plan for one regardless of how straightforward the case looks on paper.

COMMON PLACES CASES GO WRONG

Filing options and required documentation for cases involving an unlawful entry, a prior overstay, or other admissibility complications differ significantly from the straightforward scenario described above, so those circumstances are worth a direct conversation with an attorney before anything gets filed. In the ordinary case, though, the biggest practical driver of delay isn't eligibility itself but how completely and accurately the initial package is put together.

Filing the I-130 and I-485 together when the underlying preference category doesn't actually permit concurrent filing, letting the I-751 deadline pass, submitting a form edition USCIS no longer accepts, and underestimating the volume of proof needed to show the marriage is real - these are the recurring reasons a routine filing turns into a delayed or denied one. Even a package that appears thorough can still draw a Request for Evidence or a Notice of Intent to Deny if the documentation doesn't clearly establish eligibility, which is why a second set of eyes before submission tends to be worth more than a second set of eyes after USCIS responds.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN WE FILE THE GREEN CARD APPLICATION BEFORE WE'RE MARRIED?

No. The marriage has to be legally valid before Form I-130 is filed. Couples who are engaged rather than married may be able to use the K-1 fiancé(e) visa process instead, which is a different pathway.

WHAT IF THE FOREIGN SPOUSE ENTERED THE U.S. ILLEGALLY?

It depends on the entry. Someone who came in without inspection generally can't use the standard adjustment-of-status route no matter how strong the marriage is, though certain narrow exceptions and waivers may still apply. This is exactly the kind of fact pattern where a consultation before filing anything is worth having.

DO WE NEED A LAWYER TO FILE A MARRIAGE-BASED GREEN CARD CASE?

It isn't legally required, but the paperwork punishes small mistakes, and 2026 has brought closer scrutiny along with far more in-person interviews than in past years. A lot of couples handle most of the preparation on their own and still bring in an attorney to check everything before it's mailed.

WHAT HAPPENS IF OUR I-751 IS FILED LATE?

Filing outside the 90-day window can be excused for good cause, but it isn't automatic, and a late or missing I-751 can put the foreign spouse's status in jeopardy. It's best to calendar the deadline as soon as the conditional card is issued.

DOES THE PROCESS CHANGE IF THE COUPLE HAS CHILDREN TOGETHER?

Children under 21 and unmarried can often be included as derivative beneficiaries on the same case, which is generally more efficient than filing separate petitions later.

If you or your family members have questions about how this or other immigration and nationality matters may affect you, please do not hesitate to contact the immigration and nationality lawyers at NPZ Law Group. You can reach us by emailing info@visaserve.com or by visiting our website at www.visaserve.com for more information.

The content on this website is provided for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Viewing this website or contacting our office does not create an attorney-client relationship.

(Source: NPZ Law Group)

State Department Targets Birth Tourism Networks with New Visa Restrictions



Image For representation only

**SEPTEMBER 29, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)**

On September 23, 2026, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced a new visa restriction policy aimed at the people who organize and profit from birth tourism, rather than at expectant travelers alone. The policy relies on Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, a provision the Secretary can invoke when a foreign national's presence in the United States would have serious adverse foreign policy consequences, and it marks a shift toward enforcement against the commercial infrastructure behind birth tourism rather than the individual travelers who use it.

A DIFFERENT TOOL THAN AUGUST 2026 EXECUTIVE ORDERS

This announcement builds on, but is legally distinct from, the birth tourism executive order signed on August 6, 2026, which directed the State Department and DHS to deny visas and entry to individuals suspected of traveling to the United States primarily to give birth here. For background on that order and the companion birthright citizenship order signed the same day, see our earlier post, *After Supreme Court Defeat, Trump Signs Two New, Narrower Birthright Citizenship Orders*. The August order focused on the travelers themselves. The new policy instead uses a foreign-policy-based inadmissibility ground to reach the operators, coaches, and enablers who run birth tourism as a business.

WHO THE POLICY TARGETS

According to the State Department's press statement, the policy applies to anyone who knowingly engages in, has engaged in, or facilitates commercial birth tourism to the United States. That includes owners, operators, and managers of birth tourism facilitation networks; visa "fixers" who coach applicants to misrepresent the purpose of their travel; and foreign medical providers who knowingly assist such travel, including conduct the State Department characterizes as facilitating fraudulent use of the U.S. Medicaid system. The announcement

also states that certain family members of a targeted individual may be covered by the same restrictions.

WHAT MEANS GOING FORWARD

Practically, this gives consular officers a basis to deny visas to people connected to birth tourism operations even where the individual applicant is not the one traveling to give birth. Secretary Rubio framed the move as protecting the integrity of U.S. citizenship and shielding public benefits programs and taxpayers from exploitation. Because Section 212(a)(3)(C) determinations rest heavily on consular and State Department discretion, they can be difficult to anticipate or challenge, which makes early legal guidance important for anyone connected to maternity or medical tourism businesses catering to foreign nationals.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM THE AUGUST 2026 BIRTH TOURISM EXECUTIVE ORDER?

The August 6 order directed agencies to deny visas and entry to travelers suspected of coming to the U.S. primarily to give birth. This September policy instead targets the people who organize, coach, or profit from birth tourism as a commercial enterprise, using a separate inadmissibility ground aimed at facilitators rather than the travelers themselves.

WHAT IS INA SECTION 212(A)(3)(C)?

It is a foreign policy-based ground of inadmissibility that allows the Secretary of State to deem a foreign national inadmissible when their entry or presence in the United States would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences. It is a discretionary tool rather than a fraud- or crime-based finding.

DOES THIS AFFECT ORDINARY INTERNATIONAL VISITORS OR EXPECTANT PARENTS TRAVELING FOR UNRELATED REASONS?

The policy as announced is directed at individuals connected to organized, commercial birth tourism networks, not at international travelers generally.

However, because consular officers retain broad discretion in visa adjudications, anyone whose travel history or documentation could be misread should be prepared to explain the purpose of their trip clearly.

CAN A FAMILY MEMBER LOSE VISA ELIGIBILITY BECAUSE OF SOMEONE ELSE'S CONDUCT?

The State Department's announcement states that certain family members of a targeted facilitator

may also be covered by these restrictions. The scope of that family coverage was not fully detailed in the press statement, which is one of several points likely to be clarified through State Department guidance in the coming weeks.

WHAT SHOULD SOMEONE DO IF THEY BELIEVE THEY MAY BE AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY?

Anyone connected to a maternity tourism, medical tourism, or related travel-facilitation business serving foreign nationals, or anyone who believes a visa application may be scrutinized under this policy, should speak with an experienced immigration attorney before applying for or renewing a visa. An attorney can help assess exposure, gather supporting documentation, and respond if a visa is denied or a consular officer raises questions under Section 212(a)(3)(C).

If you or your family members have questions about how this or other immigration and nationality matters may affect you, please do not hesitate to contact the immigration and nationality lawyers at NPZ Law Group. You can reach us by emailing info@visaserve.com or by visiting our website at www.visaserve.com for more information.

(Source: NPZ Law Group)

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SAGA HOLDS 22ND ANNUAL GOLF OUTING AND EXPANDS COMMUNITY IMPACT

Dr. Anil and Mrs. Anju Joshi contributed \$150,000 to the SAGA Foundation, helping inspire new donor support for scholarships and junior girls' golf.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2026
LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ (TIP)

The South Asian Golf Association (SAGA) held its 22nd Open Annual Golf Outing at the Cobblestone Creek Country Club on September 19, bringing together members, families, guests, sponsors and volunteers for a day that celebrated golf, community and philanthropy.

SAGA has grown from a circle of golf-loving friends into an organization with more than 100 members. This year's program attracted more youth, students, junior golfers, and women.

All proceeds from SAGA activities now benefit the SAGA Foundation, a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, which advances the organization's mission of promoting health, life skills and inclusion through golf, with a particular focus on youth and women.

\$150,000 GIFT STRENGTHENS THE SAGA FOUNDATION

A centerpiece of the evening was the recognition of longtime supporters Dr. Anil Joshi and Mrs. Anju Joshi, parents of the late Anish Joshi, whose love of golf helped inspire SAGA to think beyond simply playing the game and toward giving back to the community.

The Joshi family has supported the SAGA Tour for over a decade by providing the championship vacation and cash prizes associated with the Anish Joshi Memorial Trophy. They also made SAGA's college scholarship program possible through annual support of \$5,000 for the past nine years, benefiting two dozen students.



SAGA golfers at the 2026 SAGA Open Annual Golf Outing

"The Joshis' generosity has helped us turn SAGA into something much larger than a golf organization. It is allowing us to create opportunities for young people, support students and grow the game in our community while keeping Anish's legacy alive," said SAGA Founder and President Mahesh Yadav.

Besides Mahesh Yadav, the Board of Trustees that are the driving force behind SAGA Foundation are: Uday Patel, Sanjay Seth, Paresh Desai & Vinay Bahuguna.

GENEROSITY INSPIRES NEW SUPPORT FOR JUNIOR GIRLS' GOLF

The impact of the Joshi family's support is already encouraging other donors to step forward. Longtime



(From right) Deep Thapliyal - SAGA Tour Champion, Dr. Anil Joshi - Donor, and Mahesh Yadav, SAGA Founder & President



United Healthcare Cup presented by UHC's Theresa Lee & Madhura Inamdar to the winning team captained by Amit Parekh.

During the past year, Dr. and Mrs. Joshi made an additional \$150,000 contribution to the SAGA Foundation. The gift will help SAGA expand its charitable mission while honoring Anish Joshi's memory and his love for the game of golf.

SAGA supporter Rajiv Rudra of Long Island has committed funding for a new incentive program designed to encourage junior girls from the tri-state area to compete at a higher level.

Beginning in 2027, eligible girls aged 18 and under will be able to earn awards of \$1,000 for winning a recognized 36-hole tournament, \$1,500 for winning a high school county championship, and \$2,000 for winning a state championship. As the initiative begins to take shape, Vidhi Lakhawala received the \$1,000 Rajiv Rudra / SAGA Award, recognizing her achievement and supporting SAGA's growing commitment to junior girls' competitive golf.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND A GROWING NEXT GENERATION

SAGA awarded 2026 college scholarships to Vidhi Lakhawala (\$2,000), a University of North Carolina student, and Nesa Shah (\$1,000), a University of Pennsylvania student. The awards continue SAGA's commitment to helping young people pursue their education while remaining connected to the game of golf.



SAGA Board of Trustees (from left) Vinay Bahuguna, Sanjay Seth, Mahesh Yadav, and Paresh Desai.

A YEAR OF GROWTH ON AND OFF THE COURSE

The 2026 season also included SAGA's first two-day Ryder Cup and continued competition through the UHC Cup, SAGA Open and year-long SAGA Tour. The annual awards program recognized tournament winners, flight winners, low-gross performance and the 2026 SAGA Tour Champion, who received the Anish Joshi Memorial Trophy.

SAGA also celebrated greater participation by women, including its first women's foursome earlier in the season and another women's foursome at the SAGA Open, as part of a broader effort to make golf more welcoming and accessible across the community.

2026 SAGA Open and SAGA Tour Winners

Deep Thapliyal captured the 2026 SAGA Tour Championship and the Anish Joshi Memorial Trophy. The championship prize includes a one-week vacation anywhere in the world, sponsored by Dr. Anil and Mrs. Anju Joshi. Faisal Ali was named Most Improved Golfer after lowering his handicap from 9.9 to 3.8.

At the 2026 SAGA Open, Jacob McGill posted the low gross score with an even par 70, while Bharat Khambadkone recorded the highest Stableford total with 39 points.

Closest-to-the-pin honors went to Faisal Ali on No. 2 (14 ft. 4 in.), Anish Batki on No. 4 (3 ft.), Daljit Behl on No. 7 (2 ft. 8 in.), Varun Malhotra on No. 11 (1 ft. 3 in.), and Priti Shetty on No. 14 (7.5 in.).

The UnitedHealthcare Cup was won by Gate Squad, captained by Amit Parekh. The winning team also included Deep Thapliyal, Deepak Chandrashekhar, Jayesh Parikh, Richie Bhojani, Rishi Bunsee, Sanjay Seth, Varun Malhotra and Anil Parikh.

ABOUT SAGA

Founded in 2004, the South Asian Golf Association brings golfers together through competition, friendship and community service. Over 22 years, SAGA has grown to more than 100 members while expanding its focus on youth, women, scholarships and charitable initiatives through the SAGA Foundation.

For more information: www.sagagolf.com | sagaevents@sagagolf.com

Mahalaya and Durga Puja Festival Returns to Times Square on October 10-11

- Two-Day Celebration of Bengali Culture Featuring Puja, Gita Recitation, Dance, Music and Concerts by Renowned Artists
- Supported by Desi Natural Dahi and Willow Cricket

OCTOBER 6, 2026
NEW YORK, NY (TIP)

The spirit and traditions of Bengali culture will once again take center stage at the iconic Times Square in New York as the Mahalaya and Durga Puja Festival returns for its second annual celebration on October 10 and 11.

The two-day celebration will feature Mahalaya Chandipath, Durga Puja rituals, Gita recitation by children and teenagers, traditional music and dance performances, Dhunuchi dance, and concerts featuring renowned artists from the United States, Bangladesh and West Bengal.

The festival is proudly supported by Desi Natural Dahi and Willow Cricket, brands that share a strong connection with South Asian communities and celebrate culture, tradition and community engagement. Desi Natural Dahi brings authentic Indian style dahi to families across North America, while Willow Cricket connects cricket fans across the U.S. and Canada through premier cricket programming and digital experiences.

Organized as a celebration of Bengali heritage and community, the Times Square festival brings together families,



The Organizers held a press conference to give out information about the event.

artists and cultural organizations to showcase the richness of Bengali traditions on a global stage.

The Mahalaya program will begin at 11:00 AM on Saturday, October 10, with Chandipath by Satyam Roy Chowdhury.

A special Gita recitation by children and teenagers raised in New York, directed by Sutipa Chowdhury, will highlight the importance of preserving cultural and spiritual traditions among younger generations.

The opening day will feature a musical presentation by Sangeet Sadhana Academy under the direction of Malabika Chatterjee, along with a major dance showcase featuring more than 60 artists from Nrityanjali Academy, directed by Chandra Banerjee. Performances by artists from BAFA and Adda Academy will also be featured.

The first day will include performances by Shah Mahbub, a popular artist from Bangladesh and New

York, as well as renowned West Bengal artist Meghla Das Gupta in a special concert.

On Sunday, October 11, Durga Puja ceremonies will begin at 10:00 AM, followed by Anjali at 3:00 PM. The cultural program will include a special Dhunuchi dance presentation by Nrityanjali artists.

The second day will feature performances by West Bengal artist Diyasini Roy and a special concert by Jojo Mukherjee and his band. Renowned artist Riddhi Bandyopadhyay will also participate as a special guest.

Shashadhar Howlader, president of the organizing committee, said the Times Square Durga Puja celebration has become an important gathering place for Bengalis from different regions and backgrounds, creating an opportunity to celebrate heritage while welcoming the broader community.

The organizers expressed hope that this year's festival will further strengthen cultural connections among Bengali communities in New York while introducing the traditions, music and spirit of Durga Puja to an international audience.

(Based on a Press Release issue by Media Morphosis)

Immigration agents shoot a man during arrest in New York City: Protests erupt



Protesters converge on West 225th Street in Marble Hill after a person was shot by federal officers, Oct. 8, 2026.

OCTOBER 8, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

According to an AP report, Federal immigration agents shot and wounded a Dominican man while arresting him in New York City on Thursday, October 8, in what the Department of Homeland Security called a "targeted enforcement operation." Protesters decried it as an example of the dangers of the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

The man survived and is being treated at a hospital, the agency said. It did not describe exactly what led to the

shooting, saying only that "during the incident, an ICE officer discharged his weapon" and that the man was injured.

The agency described the man as a "criminal illegal alien" with a prior grand larceny conviction and a history of other arrests. He was arrested in December 2023 but was released, the agency said, blaming "reckless" policies in Democrat-led cities, such as New York.

Mayor Zohran Mamdani called in a statement for an end to all Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids in the city. Demonstrators at the scene chanted, "ICE off our streets now!"

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India at the Crossroads: Strategic Autonomy or Strategic Isolation?

BY GEORGE
ABRAHAM



An important development is taking place in international politics. The United States and China remain major strategic competitors, but at the same time they are talking, negotiating, and finding ways to reduce tensions when it serves their interests. They understand that rivalry does not prevent engagement. As a matter of fact, powerful nations know how to compete and cooperate simultaneously.

The question before us is where India stands in all this? External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has said that India is pursuing a policy of multi-engagement rather than relying on a single superpower. On the surface, that sounds sensible. India should not surrender its independence to Washington, Beijing, Moscow or anyone else. Strategic autonomy through non-alignment has always been part of India's foreign policy tradition since the Nehruvian days.

However, there is a difference between strategic autonomy and strategic isolation. There is a difference between having many relationships and having dependable friends. And today, India must seriously ask whether its foreign policy has produced real influence or left the country trying to balance too many contradictory relationships.

If we take a look at our own neck of the woods, Pakistan remains openly hostile. Bangladesh, which once enjoyed a much warmer relationship with India, has seen that relationship become increasingly complicated. Nepal is carefully balancing India against China. China itself remains India's biggest long-term strategic challenge. If a country aspiring to become a major global power cannot maintain stable and trusted relations even in its own neighborhood, then something has clearly gone wrong, and the situation is deeply troubling.

In addition, if we look at the BRICS, India sits alongside China, Russia, and other countries that openly advocate for a more multipolar world. BRICS is encouraging greater trade in national currencies and looking for ways to reduce dependence on the U.S. dollar. There is no common BRICS currency at present, but the political direction is obvious. The group wants to reduce the overwhelming influence of the dollar-centered international financial system.

Naturally, Washington watches this closely. At the same time, India is also a member of the Quad with the United States, Japan and Australia. The Quad is concerned with security in the Indo-Pacific and, whether openly stated or not, much of its strategic importance comes from the rise of China.

Therefore, the contradiction here is that India sits with China in BRICS talking about a multipolar world and reducing Western financial dominance. Then India sits with the United States, Japan, and Australia in the Quad, discussing how to address China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific.

How long can India successfully remain on both sides of that equation? This becomes even more important when we ask a hypothetical question. If there were ever a serious military conflict between the United States and China, would India stand with the United States?

Most foreign-policy analysts would say no. India would most likely remain on the sidelines unless its own direct security interests were at stake, especially given that it shares a 2,167-mile border with China. There is nothing wrong with India asserting that right. But then America also has every right to ask what kind of strategic partner India really is.

India wants American technology, American investment, defense cooperation, intelligence sharing, access to universities, and economic opportunity. The Indian diaspora in America has become one of the strongest bridges between the two countries. Yet when Washington looks at India strategically, it cannot ignore the possibility that in a major confrontation with China, India may stand still. The truth of the matter is that one cannot expect all the benefits of a close strategic partnership while remaining completely free from the responsibilities that may come with it.

Then there is China. China can never be treated as an



India faces diplomatic isolation.

Photo / Tribune Express

ordinary partner by India. The two countries fought a war in 1962. Indian soldiers were killed in Galwan in 2020. The border dispute remains unresolved. China continues to make territorial claims that India rejects. And China's deep military and economic relationship with Pakistan is another permanent source of concern. Moreover, there were allegations that certain leftist parties in India encouraged disruptive labor strikes, contributing to India's image as an unreliable destination for foreign investment.

So, what kind of friend is China to India? India may need to talk with China, and the geography gives India no other choice. But talking with China is very different from trusting China. China has spent decades building manufacturing capacity, infrastructure, technological strength and economic leverage. India, meanwhile, has remained heavily dependent on Chinese imports in important sectors. That imbalance itself should tell us something about how far India still has to go.

Russia presents another problem. India greatly increased its purchases of discounted Russian oil after the war in Ukraine began. It defended those purchases on the grounds of national interest and affordable energy. That was understandable, but when pressure from Washington increased, India's room for maneuver became much more visible. China also maintained deep economic ties with Russia, but Washington treated China differently because China has far greater economic leverage.

The real lesson here is that strategic autonomy does not come from speeches. It comes from national power. A country that wants freedom in foreign policy must first build the economic, technological, and military strength necessary to resist pressure from others.

The Middle East presents yet another balancing problem. India's relationship with Israel has grown much closer, especially in defense and technology. At the same time, India depends heavily on the Gulf states for energy, trade and the livelihood of millions of Indians working in that region. Again, India is attempting to remain close to every side. That works when the region is relatively peaceful. But when tensions rise, neutrality becomes much harder.

And then there is the most serious long-term issue of all: technology. The twenty-first century may be defined by artificial intelligence more than by almost anything else. The United States and China have already emerged as the two major competitors in this field. Let us ask a simple question. Where is India in all this?

India has enormous human talent. Indians are running some of the world's greatest technology companies. Indian engineers and scientists are found in every developed country. But that may also expose one of India's greatest policy failures.

For decades, India celebrated the success of sending its brightest young people abroad. H-1B visas became almost a symbol of achievement. Talented Indians went to America, built companies, joined research institutions and strengthened the American innovation system.

Meanwhile, China concentrated on building its innovation machine at home. China invested heavily in universities, manufacturing, research laboratories, artificial intelligence, semiconductors and industrial technology. It created an environment where national technological capacity became part of national power.

India should ask itself a painful question: why did so many brilliant Indians have to leave the country to reach their full potential? Why couldn't India create the right ecosystem for the next Google, Nvidia, OpenAI or DeepSeek to emerge from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai or Delhi? Sending talent abroad is not a technology policy, but building institutions at home definitely is!

This is why India's present foreign-policy position deserves much more serious examination. For the last ten years, we have heard endlessly that India's global prestige has never been higher. If India's global prestige has risen, much of it is due to the achievements of its diaspora. We have heard about India becoming a Vishwaguru. We have seen massive diaspora events, international summits, ceremonial embraces and carefully staged photographs with world leaders.

But foreign policy cannot be measured by photographs. It must be measured by results. We must ask ourselves a series of questions to assess ourselves. Are India's neighbors closer today? Is China less threatening? Is Pakistan less hostile? Can India make its energy decisions without external pressure? Does America see India as a dependable strategic partner? Does China see India as a genuine technological and economic competitor? Is India leading in artificial intelligence?

And most importantly, if India faces a major international crisis tomorrow, which powerful country will unquestionably stand with India? These are the questions that matter. The Pulwama-Balakot crisis of 2019 offered a glimpse of this vulnerability.

India is not literally without friends. It has important relationships with the United States, France, Japan, Australia, Israel, Russia, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and many others. But relationships are not the same as alliances. Diplomatic photographs are not the same as strategic guarantees. India has deliberately avoided formal alliances for decades, and that has given the country freedom of action. But freedom without sufficient national strength can slowly turn into isolation.

That is where the danger lies. India today finds itself balancing BRICS against the Quad, America against Russia, China against the Indo-Pacific strategy, Israel against its interests in the Arab world, and strategic autonomy against growing dependence on foreign technology and capital.

At some point, a country must decide what its core interests are and who genuinely shares them. India does not have to become an American satellite. It certainly should not become dependent on China. It does not have to abandon Russia or the Global South. But it must stop pretending that simply maintaining relationships with everyone automatically amounts to a successful foreign policy.

The foreign policy of the last decade was built on the belief that India could engage with everyone, commit fully to no one, and still gain maximum advantage from all sides. That assumption is now being tested. And the results are not very encouraging.

Multi-engagement can be useful. Strategic autonomy can be valuable. But if neither produces dependable partnerships, technological strength, economic leverage or security in India's own neighborhood, then we must ask whether the policy has really succeeded.

India today may have many acquaintances. But when the next great international crisis comes, the real question will be much simpler: Who are India's genuine friends? That is a question New Delhi can no longer afford to avoid!

(The writer is a former Chief Technology Officer at the United Nations and Vice-Chairman of the Indian Overseas Congress, USA)

India's election model loses its sheen

The only recent election in the South Asian region perceived by voters to have been free and fair was the 2024 Sri Lankan polls

BY NIRUPAMA
SUBRAMANIAN



As young Indians take to the streets to protest the alleged illegality of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and demand the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, the sound of "Gyanu you're done, bro" is surely being heard across the South Asian region and beyond. The management of the 'Great Indian Election' has long been an object of admiration worldwide and has been no less a source of India's soft power, especially in the neighborhood.

Take, for example, Sri Lanka's former Election Commissioner Mahinda Deshapriya. In 2015, he won much praise for his impartial conduct in both the presidential and parliamentary elections. "His steely resolve brings to mind that redoubtable Indian Election Commissioner TN Seshan who regularly locked horns with India's politicians and vigorously campaigned against electoral corruption," a columnist in the Sri Lankan newspaper *The Sunday Times* wrote then.

The comparison with Seshan was not an exaggeration. Just five years earlier, his predecessor Dayananda Dissanayake had broken down on TV while announcing President Mahinda Rajapaksa's re-election, accusing government institutions of misusing their powers to ensure a favorable result for the incumbent, such that he was unable to ensure the safety of even a single ballot box. Between tears, he requested his "immediate release" from the post.

The ECI and election commissioners (ECs) have long been held up in India's neighborhood for their courage in standing up to politicians during election time. This is especially true of TN Seshan. In Pakistan, where election results have been fought over since 2013, Seshan is considered the gold standard for the conduct of free and fair elections. Many Pakistani commentators have made the case for Pakistan to stop appointing judges as ECs and emulate the Indian practice of selecting people with administrative experience.

In Bangladesh, where election results have been fiercely rejected by the losing side for decades, one commentator said there were "chief election commissions and election commissioners, but what the country needs is a change-maker" and that India's former Chief Election Commissioner fell in this category.

In Nepal, during the recent parliamentary committee hearings that preceded the appointment of an MP from the opposition Nepali Congress, Guruprasad Wagle, as the Chief Election Commissioner, it was stressed that those in charge of the Election Commission should be as fearless and bold as Seshan.

In 2011, when SY Quraishi was India's Chief Election Commissioner, the ECI set up the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM). Writing about the IIIDEM in an article in 2021,



Reputation : The comparison with TN Seshan was not an exaggeration. -Photo / PTI

Quraishi noted that it "was envisioned to be an advanced resource center for learning, training, research and extension on participatory democracy and election management in South Asia and Africa."

He recalled that most of the commissioners from these regions who participated in the ECI's diamond jubilee celebration in January 2010 were of the view that India should share its experience and expertise internationally.

The next year, meeting in New Delhi, the heads of election commissions from SAARC countries established a Forum of Election Management Bodies of South Asia (FEMBoSA). The IIIDEM is now a key institution for FEMBoSA, providing training and capacity-building programs for election officials. All countries in the region, with the exception of Pakistan, and including pre-Taliban Afghanistan, have sent teams of election officials to the IIIDEM. As recently as November 2025, a press note from the Indian High Commission in Colombo announced that a group of 40 Sri Lankan election officials had participated in a course at the IIIDEM.

On the IIIDEM page of the ECI site, India's current chairship of International IDEA, an intergovernmental body founded in 1995 to promote democracy, is announced with much fanfare: "With its vast electoral experience, strong democratic institutions, and global credibility, India is uniquely positioned to lead International IDEA in 2026. India's chairship will show how democracy delivers, deepen

collaboration with Election Management Bodies worldwide and amplify knowledge that supports emerging democracies, especially in the Global South."

A 74-page booklet, available on the site, outlines India's themes for its one-year leadership of the organization as "Democracy for an inclusive, peaceful, resilient and sustainable world" and "thematic priorities" for the year. Among the "key deliverables" are the development of "model international electoral standards", including free media, voter registration and maintaining electoral rolls.

"Transparency in (voter) eligibility determination builds public confidence," it says, killing irony in the gap between preaching and practice. "When citizens understand the criteria, can verify their registration status, and have access to straightforward dispute resolution processes, they trust that the system operates fairly."

The rotating one-year chair of International IDEA is India's until December 2026. India was one of the 14 founding members of the organization and has always been represented by the CEC. Today, India's face at the forum is Gyanesh Kumar, architect of the controversial SIR that has disenfranchised over 130 million voters.

Accusations of bias and constitutional violations against him have given rise to the ECI's most serious credibility crisis in memory. Word travels fast in the region and around the world. An institution once admired for its autonomy and looked up to is at risk of losing its international reputation fast. With results of many elections in

India already suspect in the eyes of many Indian voters for reasons ranging from the alleged EVM fraud to the SIR, it can be assumed in the light of the new revelations about the unsavory goings-on in the ECI that results henceforth would be more fiercely contested, just as they are in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

It is noteworthy that the only recent election in the region perceived by voters to have been free, fair and impartially managed was the 2024 Sri Lankan polls, in which the JVP-led National People's Power won a majority in Parliament and its candidate Anura Kumara Disanayake was elected President.

In 2006, the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) praised India as a "mature democracy", which, unlike Pakistan and Bangladesh, did not require a "caretaker government" to ensure a free and fair election. "India is one good example of such democracies where the Election Commission becomes a virtual caretaker government during election time and no neutral caretaker government is inducted for the election," says a PILDAT study of the system of caretaker administrations in the region.

Two decades after these words were written, it should surprise no one if the demand for a caretaker administration is raised in India too.

(Nirupama Subramanian is an independent journalist with over 36 years of experience in print media)

AN OPEN LETTER TO EXXONMOBIL

EXXON, GUYANA IS A NATION-NOT MERELY AN OILFIELD

BY ALBERT
BALDEO



DEAR MR. ROUTLEDGE:

Your reported declaration that "it's not our job" to help build Guyana because Guyanese "didn't vote for us" and ExxonMobil officials "are not representatives of the people" was inhumane, insensitive, ungrateful and beneath the standard expected from the head of a corporation extracting extraordinary wealth from a developing country.

Guyana is an exceptionally profitable asset on ExxonMobil's balance sheet, but, more so, it is our homeland, our mother. Your home country, the great USA, cannot, and does not, come close to such largesse and hospitality. After all, our oil belongs to the Guyanese people, and our national territory, institutions, workers and sovereign protections made, and continue to make, ExxonMobil's success, and all those connected thereto, like yourself, and others, possible.

Whereas, you may be correct in one narrow respect, that the primary constitutional duty to govern and build Guyana belongs to its elected government, political representatives and people, and cannot be delegated to ExxonMobil, your perverse attempt to detach ExxonMobil's enormous profits from any meaningful commitment to the Guyanese people that make your success possible, is morally indefensible.

ExxonMobil repeatedly describes itself as Guyana's "partner." Partnership cannot mean that Guyana supplies the petroleum, territory, legal protection and generous fiscal concessions while ExxonMobil takes the dominant benefits and disclaims responsibility for the country's development.

If ExxonMobil does not consider itself a partner in Guyana's progress, you should candidly describe yourself as an extractor and profit-taker operating under an extraordinarily favorable contract. You reported approximately US\$4.67 billion in profit from Guyana during 2025 alone, and reportedly recovered approximately US\$55 billion in development investment two years earlier than expected, while projecting that your Guyana free cash flow could double by 2030 compared with 2025.

Those staggering gains did not materialize in a vacuum. They came from resources belonging to our country where our developing nation is trying, concurrently, to rise above poverty, blackouts, inadequate infrastructure, unemployment, high living costs and unequal access to quality healthcare, education, housing and clean water.

Against that background, your words did not sound like a technical explanation of corporate and governmental responsibilities, but more like contempt for the people whose patrimony is substantially enriching your company.

ExxonMobil's privileged position rests substantially upon the deeply unequal



2016 Production Sharing Agreement, including its two-percent royalty, provision allowing up to 75 percent of production for cost recovery, extensive tax concessions and Article 32 stability provisions.

Article 32 purports to prevent Guyana from altering the agreement without the contractors' consent and seeks to protect the consortium against additional fiscal burdens, which constitute exceptional restraints created by that provision.

But "sanctity of contract" must not be transformed into an unlawful doctrine of corporate supremacy. No private agreement should be treated as though it stands above Guyana's Constitution, Parliament, environmental laws, public policy, sovereign regulatory authority or the fundamental rights and welfare of the Guyanese people. Contractual stability is not perpetual immunity from transparency, accountability, lawful regulation or mutually negotiated reform. A decent partner would voluntarily return to the negotiating table when it becomes undeniable that an agreement produces an unconscionably imbalanced result, as here.

Your company should not bask in the false glow of permanent immunity from political pressure, financial demands, lawful taxation, regulatory enforcement, renegotiation or national sovereign action. ExxonMobil's own history in Venezuela demonstrates that neither contracts nor corporate size can eliminate geopolitical and sovereign risk.

We reserve arbitrary nationalization, confiscation or unlawful financial punishment, and advocate lawful, peaceful and good-faith renegotiation so

that Guyana receives a fairer share of its patrimony, for now. Even President Donald Trump-hardly an opponent of the petroleum industry-publicly rebuked ExxonMobil and Chevron in August 2026 for making "too much money" and demanded relief for consumers.

Earlier, after ExxonMobil CEO Darren Woods described Venezuela as "uninvestable," President Trump called the company's position "too cute" and said he was inclined to exclude ExxonMobil from future Venezuelan opportunities.

The lesson is plain: corporations do not vote, but governments and citizens retain the authority to demand responsibility, fairness and respect. No oil company is more sovereign than the country whose resources it extracts.

Your observation that Guyanese did not vote for ExxonMobil is moot, and we did not invite ExxonMobil to behave as though the company's only obligations are to its shareholders. Corporate responsibility does not arise from an election. It arises from law, contract, social license, environmental duty, moral responsibility and the immense benefits a corporation receives from its host country.

ExxonMobil uses Guyana's natural resources, benefits from its laws and institutions, depends upon its security and political stability, and earns billions from assets belonging to its people. Those benefits carry reciprocal responsibilities.

A GENUINE PARTNER SHOULD:

- Support a voluntary and transparent review of the 2016

agreement to achieve a fairer sharing of future benefits;

- Publish comprehensive production, cost-recovery, audit, insurance and environmental-liability information;
- Increase investment in Guyanese education, healthcare, technical training, infrastructure and community development;
- Expand genuine local ownership, procurement, employment and management opportunities-not merely statistical local-content compliance;
- Provide enforceable protection against oil spills and environmental destruction;
- Respect workers, fishermen, Indigenous communities and citizens affected by petroleum operations;
- Refrain from exploiting political division or governmental weakness; and
- Speak about Guyana and Guyanese people with humility, gratitude and respect.

These measures would not make ExxonMobil the elected government, but a more responsible corporate citizen. Every foreign investor operating in Guyana must understand that our country is not merely a market, concession, mineral deposit, timber reserve or oilfield. Guyanese are human beings entitled to dignity, justice and a fair share of the wealth extracted from their homeland. Investors are welcome, profits are expected, but exploitation is not.

We call upon ExxonMobil, Chevron, CNOOC and every overseas investor to treat Guyanese more fairly, humanely and compassionately, to respect our sovereignty, to contribute meaningfully to national development, and to recognize that corporate prosperity cannot be sustainably built upon public deprivation.

"Partnership" is more than a public-relations slogan. Return to the negotiating table, share more fairly, disclose more fully, invest more deeply in the people and communities whose resources have enriched your corporation, Mr. Routledge.

Anyone extracting billions from Guyana has no moral right to wash his hands of Guyana's future. Overseas investors were not elected to govern us, but were permitted to operate among us, which must never be mistaken for ownership of our sovereignty, permanent immunity from accountability or freedom from the human duty to give back.

Respectfully,

Hon. Albert Baldeo

Former Magistrate, Senior State Counsel and State Prosecutor of Guyana President, Guyana Beyond Borders

TOM SUOZZI AND THE PRACTICE OF BIPARTISAN GOVERNMENT

BY PROF.
INDRAJIT S
SALUJA



In a Congress frequently defined by confrontation, Tom Suozzi has made cooperation a central part of his political identity. The Democratic representative from New York's Third Congressional District argues that government must bring competing interests together to solve problems. His record provides a useful opportunity to examine what that approach means in practice: where it has produced legislative progress, where proposals remain unfinished, and how national responsibilities connect with the everyday concerns of Long Island and Queens.

Suozzi's experience began in local government. He served as mayor of Glen Cove from 1994 through 2001 and as Nassau County executive from 2002 through 2009. First elected to Congress in 2016, he subsequently returned to the House following the February 2024 special election. An attorney and certified public accountant by training, he brings a background spanning municipal administration, county government, law and finance. That experience helps explain his emphasis on administration and negotiation alongside the larger political arguments that dominate Washington.

Today, Suozzi serves on the House Ways and Means Committee and co-chairs the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus. Ways and Means places him within congressional deliberations on taxation, trade and major social insurance programs. The caucus gives him a forum for working with Republicans on issues where party leaderships may struggle to agree. These positions describe responsibilities and opportunities, rather than guaranteeing outcomes. Their significance lies in the proposals advanced, the partnerships sustained and the decisions ultimately taken.

Immigration offers one of the clearest tests of his approach. It combines border control, asylum, labor needs, public safety and the treatment of people who have established lives in the United States. Each element raises difficult questions. Enforcement without attention to legal safeguards can cause serious harm; reform without workable administration can fail to earn public confidence. A durable settlement must confront those tensions rather than reduce the entire subject to campaign language.

In January 2026, Suozzi and Republican Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick renewed a request to meet President Donald Trump about immigration and border security. Their joint letter proposed securing the border, changing asylum procedures, providing legal protection for millions of immigrants and improving standards governing federal enforcement. It also called for stronger police-community relations. The document demonstrates an attempt to assemble a negotiating framework across party lines. A request for a meeting, however, is a step toward policymaking, not proof that the proposed settlement has been achieved.



Congressman Tom Suozzi - Credit: Tom Suozzi's Office

Their cooperation continued in April, when they announced the Reforming ICE and Protecting America Act. According to the announcement, the proposal combined funding for the Department of Homeland Security with reforms to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. The underlying argument was that the government should maintain essential security operations while addressing concerns about enforcement practices. The legislation should be evaluated as a proposal, with its provisions and subsequent progress examined separately. Bipartisan sponsorship establishes cooperation; enactment and implementation determine what the public ultimately receives.



Tom Suozzi with Republican Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick speaking on immigration reforms

Credit: Tom Suozzi's Congressional Office

There is also a concrete example of legislative progress in his work on financial fraud. On September 15, 2026, the House passed the Tax Relief for Fraud Victims Act, a bipartisan measure associated with Suozzi and Republican Congressman Max Miller. The legislation addresses the tax consequences facing people whose money has been stolen through scams. Its approach includes relief involving qualifying theft losses and retirement-account penalties. The congressional debate records members from both parties explaining why victims should receive fairer treatment under the tax code.

The distinction between House

passage and a completed law matters. The verified milestone here is approval by the House; it should not be described as relief already available to every affected taxpayer. Nevertheless, the measure illustrates how a specific hardship can generate agreement across party lines. Someone who has lost savings to fraud needs clear rules and practical assistance. That problem does not become less urgent because its solution requires legislators who disagree on many other subjects to work together.

Suozzi's tax-policy interests also include the state and local tax deduction, commonly called SALT. For residents in areas with substantial property and income taxes, the

obtained in 2022. The reported total was divided equally among the three bays. Such projects connect federal appropriations with the condition of nearby waters. Their lasting value must be assessed through ecological results and continued stewardship, rather than the announcement alone. They also demonstrate why congressional work extends beyond the arguments seen on national television.

Other district concerns are less dramatic but directly affect daily life. In September, Suozzi's office reported another appeal to federal transportation officials over persistent aircraft noise around Kennedy and LaGuardia airports. An intervention of that kind does not establish that the noise problem has been resolved. It identifies an issue being pursued through agencies with relevant authority. Residents can reasonably ask what response followed, which measures were adopted and whether conditions improved. Follow-through is an essential part of representation.

A balanced assessment must also recognize the limits of bipartisanship. Agreement between parties can produce a weak policy as readily as a strong one. Negotiation deserves scrutiny for what it preserves, what it concedes and who bears the consequences. Legislators must retain the freedom to oppose proposals they consider damaging. Cooperation is most useful when it improves legislation while preserving constitutional protections and public accountability. It should be judged by the quality of the work, not simply by the presence of two-party labels beside a bill.

For a district encompassing varied communities and competing priorities, representation requires both responsiveness at home and judgment in Washington. Constituents need help navigating federal institutions, while national policy requires choices about taxation, security and the proper exercise of government power. These duties overlap but are not interchangeable. A record of local advocacy cannot answer every question about national policy; a national profile cannot substitute for attending to district concerns. Evaluating a representative means examining both with the same care.

Suozzi's record presents a politician who has repeatedly sought partners across the aisle while pursuing issues affecting his district and the country. Some efforts have reached identifiable milestones; others remain proposals or requests requiring further action. That distinction allows readers to consider his work without confusing intention with accomplishment. The larger question his approach raises is valuable beyond any individual career: whether Congress can sustain serious disagreement while still producing workable decisions. The answer depends on evidence, continued scrutiny and the practical results that Americans experience.

39th Annual Deepavali Festival Brings Indian Culture, Music, Community and Fireworks to Long Island

More than 10,000 visitors gather at Overlook Beach for AIA-NY's celebration of the Festival of Lights

**OCTOBER 3, 2026
BABYLON, NY**

More than 10,000 people gathered at Overlook Beach on Saturday, October 3, for the **39th Annual Deepavali Festival**, presented by the **Association of Indians in America - New York (AIA-NY)**.

Held under bright autumn skies along the Long Island shoreline, the free, family-friendly celebration brought together families, children, community leaders, elected officials, performers, volunteers, sponsors, vendors and supporters from across Long Island and beyond.

The day-long celebration featured Indian music, dance, devotion, art, food, children's activities, cultural performances, community honors and a spectacular oceanfront fireworks finale.

The 2026 festival marked the **second year at Overlook Beach**, following 37 years of Deepavali celebrations at Manhattan's South Street Seaport.

"WAVES OF CHANGE - BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH LIGHT"

This year's theme, **"Waves of Change - Building Bridges Through Light,"** reflected AIA-NY's vision of connecting generations, cultures and communities through Indian heritage and shared American values.

"As Lord Rama built the legendary Ram Setu - a bridge of faith and unity - we too are building bridges across communities, generations and cultures," said **Beena Kothari, President of AIA-NY**.

The celebration opened with a Ganesh Yatra and procession, honoring Lord Ganesha, traditionally worshipped first as the remover of obstacles, or Vighnaharta, and Pratham Puja, the first to be worshipped. The procession set a spiritual and auspicious tone for the day's festivities.

A DAY FILLED WITH CULTURE, CREATIVITY AND CELEBRATION

The 39th Annual Deepavali Festival offered a diverse program designed to celebrate Indian heritage while engaging visitors of all ages.

Festival Highlights included:

- Children's Art and Ram Setu Rock Painting, connecting young participants with creativity and the timeless story and symbolism of Ram Setu.
- Tesla Art Painting Experience, giving children and families an opportunity to express their creativity through a unique painting experience on a Tesla Cybertruck.
- Face Painting and Balloon Twisting, bringing colorful entertainment and excitement to the festival's youngest guests.
- Rangoli and Art Competitions, celebrating traditional Indian artistic expression.



AIA-NY president Beena Kothari presented a plaque to Arjun, the British Indian singer who traveled from the United Kingdom to perform for the Long Island, NY and the Tristate community. His nearly hour-long performance brought tremendous energy to the festival and was enjoyed by audiences of all ages

- Classical and Folk-Dance Performances, featuring Bharatanatyam, Odissi, Garba, Bhangra, Ghoomar and performances by talented children and young artists.
- Ramayana Live Musical Dance Drama and Kathak Performances, presenting the timeless story of Lord Rama and the triumph of good over evil, featuring Pandit S.N. Charka and the East-West School of Dance.
- Meena Bazaar and Food Village, offering Indian cuisine, traditional clothing, shopping and cultural experiences.
- Indian Golgappa and Pani Puri Competition, bringing participants and spectators together for a spirited celebration of Indian street food.
- Community Felicitations and Honors, recognizing distinguished leaders and individuals whose contributions strengthen the community.
- Special Performance by British-Indian Singer Arjun, who traveled from the United Kingdom and captivated audiences for nearly an hour with his

- Hindi-English R&B and pop music.
- Lakshmi Aarti, bringing the community together in prayer for prosperity, peace and the wellbeing of all.
- Grand Oceanfront Fireworks Finale, featuring an approximately 30-minute fireworks display that illuminated the Long Island sky and brought the celebration to a memorable close.

CELEBRATING THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE OF DEEPAVALI

Throughout the day, families had opportunities to experience the richness of Indian culture while creating memories together. The festival placed a special emphasis on children and young people, encouraging them to participate, perform, create and take pride in their heritage.

Deepavali carries a universal message that extends across communities and traditions: the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance and good over evil.

For Hindus, Deepavali commemorates Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya. For Jains, it marks Bhagwan Mahavira's liberation, Sikhs celebrate Bandi Chhor Divas, associated with Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, while Deepavali also holds significance within other Indian traditions.

"This festival is for everyone," Beena Kothari, President, said. "We celebrate not only as Indians, but as global citizens - united by the light of hope, compassion, courage and community."

SENATOR CHUCK SCHUMER SENDS SPECIAL DIWALI MESSAGE

Although U.S. Senator **Chuck Schumer** was unable to attend the festival in person, he sent AIA-NY and the Indian-American community a special video message extending his warm Diwali greetings and congratulating AIA-NY on its 39th Annual Deepavali Celebration.



AIA presented a memento to Rich Schaffer, Town of Babylon Supervisor in appreciation of his co-operation.

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Ambassador's Visit to Târgoviste and Gorj County Strengthens India-Romania Cooperation in Critical Minerals, Energy, Technology and Education



Ambassador participates in Cultural Exchange and People-to-People Connections in Târgoviste



Ambassador meets with Mayor of Baia de Fier Mr. Dumitru Turbaceanu

**OCTOBER 1, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

Dr. Manoj Mohapatra, Ambassador of India to Romania, undertook an official visit to Târgoviste and Gorj County on 28-29 September 2026. During the visit, the Ambassador held meetings with local and regional authorities, university representatives and business stakeholders to explore opportunities for strengthening India-Romania cooperation in critical raw materials, energy, advanced manufacturing, technology, research and innovation, investment and technical education. The visit also included a cultural engagement highlighting the importance of people-to-people contacts in further strengthening bilateral relations.

CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE TIES IN TÂRGOVISTE

On 28 September, the Ambassador attended a cultural programme in Târgoviste in the presence of Mr. Daniel-Cristian Stan, Mayor of Târgoviste; Mr. Corneliu Stefan,

President of the Dâmbovită County Council; and Mr. Ioan Corneliu Sslisteau, Rector of Valahia University.

Indian exchange students participated in the programme and presented traditional Indian dances, providing an opportunity for the local community and Indian students to interact through cultural exchange. The programme highlighted the contribution of academic and student exchanges to promoting greater mutual understanding and strengthening people-to-people ties between India and Romania.

The Ambassador appreciated the support extended by the local authorities and the university community towards promoting cultural and educational exchanges and noted the importance of such linkages alongside the expanding economic and institutional partnership between India and Romania.

COOPERATION IN CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS AND INVESTMENT IN BAIJA DE FIER

During his visit to Baia de Fier, the Ambassador met Mr. Dumitru Turbaceanu, Mayor of Baia de Fier, and discussed the economic potential of the area and avenues for cooperation with India. The discussions included the potential of the region's graphite resources in the context of growing global attention to critical raw materials. Opportunities for Indian investment, technology cooperation and engagement between Indian companies and local stakeholders were also discussed.

The Ambassador highlighted India's interest in strengthening cooperation with Romania in critical raw materials and associated value chains, including processing, technology, manufacturing and investment. The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss strengthening institutional and people-to-people linkages between India and Baia de Fier.

ADVANCING INDIA-GORJ COOPERATION IN STRATEGIC SECTORS

On 29 September, the Ambassador continued his engagements in Târgu Jiu and met Ms. Luminita Georgeta Popescu, Rector of Constantin Brâncuși University; Mr. Cosmin Mihai Popescu, President of the Gorj County Council; Mr. Marcel-Laurentiu Romanescu, Mayor of Târgu Jiu; and Mr. Dumitru Turbaceanu, Mayor of Baia de Fier.

The discussions covered opportunities for India-Gorj cooperation in strategic sectors, including energy, critical raw materials, advanced manufacturing, technology, research and innovation, investment and technical education. The participants explored possibilities for greater engagement between Indian companies, Romanian institutions and businesses in Gorj County.

The discussions also focused on leveraging the industrial capabilities and natural resources of Gorj County through partnerships with Indian companies and institutions. The

participation of business representatives provided an opportunity to identify potential avenues for business-to-business cooperation.

The Ambassador highlighted the scope for strengthening cooperation between universities and technical institutions in India and Romania, particularly in research and innovation, skills development and technical education. Such cooperation could contribute to capacity building and the development of skills and technological capabilities relevant to the region's future industrial development.

The Ambassador thanked Ms. Ana Maria for facilitating the Embassy's engagement with Gorj County and for her contribution towards strengthening institutional and people-to-people linkages between India and the region.

Strengthening Regional and Economic Partnerships

The Ambassador's engagements in Târgoviste, Baia de Fier and Târgu Jiu highlighted the potential for strengthening India-Romania cooperation at the regional level through greater engagement among local authorities, academic institutions, businesses and other stakeholders.

The visit focused on practical opportunities for cooperation in critical raw materials, energy, advanced manufacturing, technology, research and innovation, investment and technical education, while also underscoring the importance of cultural and educational exchanges in deepening bilateral relations.

The Embassy of India will continue to engage with Romanian regions and institutions to facilitate partnerships and promote greater cooperation in areas of mutual interest, including investment, technology, innovation, skills development and people-to-people exchanges.

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



Embassy of India Participates in the 4th Asia Cultural Festival in Bucharest

**OCTOBER 3, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

The 4th Asia Cultural Festival was held at the Dimitrie Gusti National Village Museum, Bucharest, bringing together participating Asian countries on a common platform to celebrate and showcase the rich cultural diversity, traditions, cuisine and heritage of Asia. The festival was coordinated by the Embassy of Indonesia, which took the lead in organising the event.

The festival brought together Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, the



Counter of the Indian Embassy at the 4th Asia Cultural Festival 2026



The Ambassador of India among other Asian Ambassadors



Group photograph of the performers

Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkmenistan and Viet Nam, providing a vibrant platform for cultural exchange and interaction among the participating countries.

The Embassy of India, Bucharest actively participated in the festival and presented India's rich and diverse cultural heritage to the Romanian public. The Indian pavilion featured One District One Product (ODOP) items,



Photographs of the officials involved in coordinating the 4th Asia Cultural Festival



Cultural performance by the Indian Embassy in the 4th Asia Cultural Festival



Group photograph of the Chief Guest with the Asian Ambassadors

highlighting India's traditional craftsmanship, distinctive products and diverse cultural traditions. The display provided visitors with an opportunity to learn about India's rich artisanal heritage and the diversity of its traditional products.

Indian culinary traditions also formed an important part of India's participation. In keeping with the festival's focus on showcasing the cuisines of participating countries, the Embassy presented Indian cuisine to visitors, offering an opportunity for the Romanian public and other participants to experience the diversity and richness of Indian culinary traditions.

The festival featured cultural performances, traditional products, cuisine, handicrafts and other cultural displays by the participating Embassies. It attracted enthusiastic participation from members of the diplomatic community, Romanian visitors, Friends

of Asia and members of the respective diaspora communities.

The event served as an effective platform for cultural diplomacy and people-to-people engagement, providing opportunities for greater interaction between the participating Asian countries and Romanian society. It also contributed to promoting greater awareness and appreciation of the rich cultural diversity of Asia.

India's participation in the 4th Asia Cultural Festival reaffirmed the Embassy's commitment to promoting Indian culture, traditional products, cuisine and cultural heritage in Romania, while strengthening friendship, mutual understanding and people-to-people ties between India and Romania.

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

Ambassador's Engagements with Romanian Regional Leadership Strengthen India-Romania Cooperation



Ambassador's interaction with the Mayors across Romania



Ambassador's interactions with the County Council Presidents and Prefects across Romania.

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

The Ambassador of India to Romania, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, undertook a series of engagements with Romania's regional leadership on 17 and 22 September 2026, meeting County Council Presidents, Prefects and Mayors of different municipalities to strengthen India-Romania relations at the regional and grassroots levels.

The engagements focused on translating the strong bilateral relationship into concrete opportunities for trade, investment, business partnerships and people-to-people connections, with particular attention to linking Indian companies and institutions with Romania's regions and municipalities.

**BUILDING ON THE MOMENTUM OF THE HON'BLE
PRESIDENT OF INDIA'S VISIT**

The engagements followed the State Visit of the Hon'ble President of India to Romania in July 2026, which provided fresh impetus to bilateral relations. During the visit, India and Romania committed to doubling bilateral trade within two years. The

Ambassador emphasised that achieving this objective would require stronger connections not only between national institutions, but also among businesses, regional administrations, municipalities and communities. Such engagement can help identify concrete projects, facilitate investment and create new business and development partnerships.

EXPANDING TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Discussions highlighted the economic potential of Romania's regions and opportunities for Indian companies to contribute to regional development through investment, technology, manufacturing, infrastructure, agriculture, tourism and services. At the same time, Romanian companies and investors were encouraged to explore opportunities in India. Greater interaction between businesses and regional authorities can facilitate investment, strengthen supply chains and create new avenues for two-way trade.

The Ambassador also highlighted Romania's strategic location, infrastructure and access to the wider European market, including the opportunities arising from the India-EU Free Trade Agreement.

Stronger India-Romania economic linkages can position Romania as an important partner and gateway for Indian businesses seeking to expand their presence in the European Union.

**STRENGTHENING PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE
CONNECTIONS**

The engagements underscored that a strong economic partnership is complemented by deeper people-to-people ties. Greater exchanges among municipalities, universities, educational and cultural institutions, businesses and professional communities can build lasting connections and strengthen mutual understanding between the peoples of India and Romania.

The Ambassador reaffirmed India's commitment to working with Romania's national, regional and local leadership to translate the strong bilateral relationship into practical partnerships that benefit businesses, communities and people.

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

Strengthening India-Romania Cooperation in Timisoara

**OCTOBER 2, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)**

During his visit to Timisoara, Ambassador of India to Romania and the Republic of Moldova, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, held a series of meetings with the city and county leadership, academic institutions and representatives of the business community, with a focus on further strengthening India-Romania cooperation at the regional and local levels.

The engagements highlighted the strong economic, industrial, technological and academic potential of Timisoara and Timis County and their importance as major centers of innovation, investment and international business in western Romania. Discussions covered opportunities to deepen cooperation in trade, investment, manufacturing, technology, education, research, renewable energy and supply chains, while encouraging greater interaction between Indian companies, Romanian authorities, universities and local businesses.

The Ambassador highlighted the important contribution of Indian companies operating in Timisoara and Timis County to the local economy, employment and technological development, and encouraged further Indian business engagement with the region. The meetings also provided an opportunity to identify new avenues for institutional cooperation, academic exchanges, research partnerships and investment, contributing to the broader objective of expanding and diversifying India-Romania economic and people-to-



Meeting with Mr. Dominic Fritz, Mayor of Timisoara

people relations.

MEETING WITH THE MAYOR OF TIMISOARA

The Ambassador met with the Mayor of Timisoara, Mr. Dominic Fritz, and discussed opportunities to further strengthen India-Romania cooperation in trade, investment and regional economic development. The discussions focused on Timisoara's dynamic economic environment and its potential to attract further Indian investment and business partnerships. The Ambassador highlighted the valuable contribution of Indian companies, including Wipro, Tech Mahindra and Varroc Romania, to the city's economy and local employment.



Meeting with Mr. Alfred-Robert Simonis, President of the Timis County

The meeting explored opportunities to build on the existing presence of Indian companies by encouraging greater engagement between Indian businesses and Timisoara's business community, particularly in technology, manufacturing, services and innovation. The importance of strengthening direct links between Indian investors, local institutions and businesses was also emphasized, with a view to identifying new opportunities for investment and expanding economic cooperation.

**MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE TIMIS
COUNTY COUNCIL**

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Ambassador met with Prof. Marilen Gabriel Pirtea, Rector of the West University of Timisoara

The Ambassador met with Mr. Alfred-Robert Simonis, President of the Timis County Council, to discuss

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opportunities to further expand India-Romania economic cooperation at the regional level. Discussions focused on the strong industrial, economic and technological base of Timis County and its potential to attract further Indian investment and develop new avenues for commercial cooperation. The Ambassador emphasized the importance of strengthening direct engagement between Indian businesses and regional authorities and encouraged the identification of opportunities for investment and partnerships in areas including manufacturing, technology, supply chains, renewable energy and infrastructure.

The existing presence of leading Indian companies such as Wipro and Tech Mahindra, alongside Varroc Romania, was noted as an important foundation for further expanding India-Romania business relations in the region. Their contribution to the local economy, employment and technological development demonstrates the potential for deeper engagement by Indian companies in Timis County.

The discussions also explored opportunities to connect Indian investors with local economic ecosystems, facilitate greater business-to-business engagement and encourage new investment partnerships. The Ambassador emphasized the importance of continued dialogue between Indian companies and regional authorities in identifying mutually beneficial areas of cooperation.

MEETING WITH THE PREFECT OF TIMIS COUNTY

The Ambassador met with Mr. Paul Finta, Prefect of Timis County, to discuss opportunities to further strengthen India-Romania cooperation at the regional and



Ambassador met with Mr. Paul Finta, Prefect of Timis County

local levels.

The discussions focused on Timis County's dynamic economic environment, strong industrial and business base, and potential to attract greater Indian investment and develop stronger institutional and commercial linkages.

The Ambassador highlighted the growing presence of Indian companies in the region and their contribution to the local economy and employment, as well as opportunities to further expand cooperation in manufacturing, technology, infrastructure, renewable energy, trade and supply chains. Views were exchanged on ways to facilitate greater engagement between Indian businesses, local authorities and the wider regional economic community, including through investment partnerships and business-to-business interactions.

The discussions also emphasized the importance of creating an enabling environment for foreign investment and strengthening dialogue between regional institutions and international business partners. The Ambassador encouraged continued engagement with local authorities and stakeholders to identify new avenues for investment, economic partnerships and institutional cooperation, while promoting greater people-to-people exchanges and contributing to the further deepening of India-Romania relations.

The visit reaffirmed the importance of Timisoara and Timis County as important partners in India-Romania cooperation and underscored the potential for stronger regional-level engagement across economic, technological, educational and institutional domains.



The Ambassador received a traditional Indian welcome with Aarti and Tilak upon his arrival at Tech Mahindra Timisoara

MEETING WITH THE RECTOR OF THE WEST UNIVERSITY OF TIMISOARA

The Ambassador met with Prof. Marilen Gabriel Pirtea, Rector of the West University of Timisoara and Honorary Adviser to the Prime Minister of Romania on Education and Research, to discuss opportunities to further advance India-Romania cooperation in higher education, research, innovation and academic exchanges.

The discussions focused on strengthening institutional partnerships between Indian and Romanian universities and research institutions, promoting greater academic mobility and exchanges, and exploring opportunities for joint initiatives in research and innovation.

Particular attention was given to cooperation in emerging areas of technology and research and to creating new opportunities for students, academics and researchers from both countries.

The Ambassador highlighted the important role of higher education institutions in fostering long-term people-to-people connections and contributing to a broader and more dynamic India-Romania partnership. He also emphasized the potential of universities to serve as platforms linking education, research, technology and innovation with wider economic and institutional engagement.

Prof. Pirtea, who also serves as Vice-President of the National Council of Rectors of Romania, invited the Ambassador to participate in the Council's meeting in Sibiu in October, dedicated to strengthening India-Romania cooperation in education and research. The forthcoming meeting will provide an additional opportunity to continue institutional dialogue and explore new avenues of cooperation between Indian and Romanian higher education and research institutions.

AMBASSADOR'S INTERACTIONS WITH SENIOR EXECUTIVES OF INDIAN COMPANIES

The Ambassador visited Tech Mahindra, Wipro and Varroc in Timisoara, three leading Indian companies that have established a significant presence in the municipality and contributed to the creation of thousands of jobs. The visits highlighted the growing contribution of Indian companies to Timisoara's technology, engineering and manufacturing ecosystem, as well as their role in strengthening economic and people-to-people links between India and Romania. Discussions covered opportunities for further investment, technology and skills development, innovation and stronger partnerships with local businesses, universities and other institutions.

The Ambassador appreciated the contribution of Tech Mahindra, Wipro and Varroc to the local economy and highlighted the potential for Indian investment to generate further opportunities across Romania's regions and municipalities. The engagements also underscored the importance of building stronger connections between Indian companies and Romania's local business, academic and innovation ecosystems. The Ambassador noted that such partnerships can support the shared objective of expanding bilateral trade and investment, creating skilled employment and fostering sustained economic cooperation between India and Romania.



The Ambassador participating in the ceremonial lighting of the lamp (Deep Prajwalan), marking a bright start to the discussions at Tech Mahindra Timisoara



Ambassador's meeting with the Tech Mahindra team in Timisoara



Ambassador's meeting with the Wipro team in Timisoara



Diwali

at Times Square

October 24, 2026

11 A.M. TO 9 P.M.



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Robert Vadra Supports World Food Movement's Student Meal Program in New Jersey

OCTOBER 6, 2026
EDISON, N.J.(TIP)

World Food Movement (WFM), a U.S.-based nonprofit working to expand access to nutritious meals for students and food-insecure communities, conducted a student meal program at Essex County College in New Jersey on October 6.

As part of the program, entrepreneur and philanthropist Robert Vadra served meals to students and interacted with members of the college community, bringing attention to the importance of food access and nutrition support for students pursuing their education.

World Food Movement was established in 2025 to provide food assistance to students and communities across the United States. The organization was inspired by the experience of The Akshaya Patra Foundation and has drawn on more than 25 years of experience in large-scale meal service to develop its programs in the United States.

Since its inception, WFM had served more than 70,000 meals to students and food-insecure individuals across communities in New Jersey, New York, the San Francisco Bay Area, Boston, Dallas and Washington, D.C.

The Essex County College program provided



Dr. Boakye, Naveena Neerada Das, Robert Vadra, and Rajender Dichpally in conversation at the Essex County College Student Meal Program

students with fresh, nutritious meals while creating an opportunity for interaction and conversation around the challenges faced by students



Robert Vadra Supports World Food Movement's Student Meal Program in New Jersey

experiencing food insecurity.

"When students had access to a nutritious meal, they could focus more fully on their education and future. The program at Essex County College reflected our commitment to supporting students and communities through access to nutritious food," said Naveena Neerada Dasa, Executive Director - Strategy and International Relations, World Food Movement.

During the visit, Robert Vadra accompanied by community leader Rajender Dichpally served meals to students and interacted with them. He said, "Serving food is one of the best things we can do. Seeing students smile and knowing that a meal can give them the energy to move forward was truly meaningful to me. I'm happy to be part of World Food Movement, and I'll help out as much as I can wherever I go."

Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, President of Essex County College, said, "There are many barriers between a student and a college degree, and food is one of them. By removing that barrier, this program is helping students move forward toward their degrees. That is truly amazing to us, and we really appreciate it. Today, this may be a small project, but in a very short time, students who have benefited from this program will be able to say, 'Because of this program, I was able to finish my degree.'"

World Food Movement had established meal-serving initiatives in several U.S. communities and had been working to expand its reach to additional locations. The organization had set a goal of serving 1 million meals in the United States by 2030.



Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, President of Essex County College welcoming Robert Vadra. Also seen are Naveena Neerada Dasa, Executive Director - Strategy and International Relations, World Food Movement, and Rajender Dichpally



Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, President of Essex County College presenting the college flag by way of a memento to Robert Vadra. Also seen in the picture are Naveena Neerada Das and Rajender Dichpally

The organization's programs had particularly focused on students at community colleges and on food-insecure individuals, with the aim of helping people pursue their education and daily lives without the added burden of worrying about their next meal.

The October 6 program at Essex County College was part of WFM's broader effort to build awareness around food insecurity and expand community-based access to nutritious meals.

Students-centric Hindi Diwas Celebration at Stony Brook University

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026
STONY BROOK, NY (TIP)

On September 14, 2026, Vishwa Hindi Diwas (Hindi Language Day) was celebrated for the first time at the Mattoo Center for India Studies at Stony Brook University. The evening featured six student poster presentations on various topics related to Hindi. The presenters were Intermediate level learners of Hindi who have been taking Hindi as their foreign language course for the past one year at Stony Brook University.

Presentations covered a diverse range of topics, including:

The History and Significance of Hindi, The Speech Sounds of Hindi, Representation of Hindi Media in New York, Learning Hindi as a Japanese-American, The Culture related to Hindi, and How AI understands Hindi.

These presentations sparked vibrant



Hindi enthusiasts at Stony Brook University celebrating Hindi Divas

conversations among the visitors and inspired new Hindi enthusiasts to consider next year's courses! The evening was accompanied by delicious Indian snacks, beverages, and popular Hindi music. As a souvenir, every visitor received a personalized bookmark with their name written in the Devanagari script and decorated with Indian crafts.

In all, it was a unique, student-centric celebration of Hindi filled with food, music, and engaging conversation. While this marks the launch of a new event at tradition, enter, we look forward to making it an annual tradition-providing a stage for students to showcase their progress and encouraging them to continue their journey with the Hindi language.

(Based on a press release issued by Sreeparna Sarkar)

BJP fires 'Mr Surrender Gandhi' salvo at Rahul for support to Elon Musk

OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): In the first reaction after SpaceX founder Elon Musk went public to blame Indian oligarchy for delays in the entry of Starlink to India, the ruling BJP said the American entrepreneur must remember he was dealing with a strong sovereign republic not a Banana Republic.

"Elon Musk must remember he is not dealing with a Banana Republic. He is dealing with a big country respected globally. He should also be respectful towards this country and its leadership. Here there is a proper non-discriminatory system to allocate spectrum and those he is seeking to ridicule as oligarchs are also waiting in the list. Both Jio and Airtel are waiting," BJP national vice-president Ram Madhav said. He said the government would take its decision in a non-discriminatory way and at an appropriate time. Madhav went on to describe as most surprising Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's sudden "U turn" on the issue of India's ties with the US.

"Rahul Gandhi earlier used to accuse us of surrendering Indian interests to the US and before Musk and today he is championing the cause of Musk," said Madhav, calling Rahul "surrender Gandhi". What happened for him to become "Surrender Gandhi" overnight? His own advisors like Jairam Ramesh earlier described STarlink as a national security risk. What transpired in between. What made Mr Surrender Gandhi to today become a big champion of Musk's cause. The country wants to know what happened between Rahul and Musk overnight? As for allocation of Spectrum, we have seen the massive corruption in spectrum allocation under Congress-led UPA times.

OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): At least four fresh FIRs were filed by the Delhi Police against Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and other leaders for allegedly assaulting police personnel during the two-day anti-Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) protests by the Opposition INDIA bloc in Lutyens Delhi, sources said on Thursday, Oct 8.

The development came a day after an FIR was registered against Rahul and Priyanka for allegedly entering the Akashvani Bhawan premises by force.

According to sources, the FIRs were registered under sections relating to assault, obstructing officials in the discharge of their duties and violation of Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

The police said a total of 91 people were detained during the protest on Wednesday, including several MPs and leaders.

Delhi Police deny permission for CJP's October 10 protest at Jantar Mantar, impose prohibitory orders

OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Delhi Police have denied permission for the Cockroach Janata Party's (CJP) proposed protest at Jantar Mantar on October 10 and imposed prohibitory orders in the New Delhi district ahead of the demonstration over alleged "vote theft", says PTI.

In view of the proposed protest and the possibility of crowds moving towards sensitive locations, the police have also requested the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to consider closing entry and exit gates at 57 metro stations across the national capital and reducing train frequency at these stations.

According to an official communication dated Thursday, the proposed restrictions are to begin at 9 pm on Friday and remain in force on Saturday until the situation normalises. However, the communication only records the police's request and does not confirm that the DMRC has approved or implemented the measures.

The stations identified include Rajiv Chowk, Central Secretariat, Patel Chowk, Janpath, New Delhi, Mandi House, ITO, Supreme Court, Indraprastha, Kashmere Gate, Karol Bagh, INA, Hauz Khas, Lajpat Nagar, Jamia Millia Islamia, Seelampur, Welcome, Shahdara, Rithala, Rohini East and Rohini West, among others.

The CJP has called for a youth-led demonstration at Jantar Mantar against alleged electoral irregularities.

Meanwhile, CJP activist Abhijeet Dipke alleged that several activists had been detained across the country ahead of the protest and vowed to proceed with the demonstration.



The CJP has called for a youth-led demonstration at Jantar Mantar against alleged electoral irregularities.

"Thousands of youngsters have been detained across country by the BJP Govt ahead of our October 10 protest. This intimidation is not going to work, Modi. The youth of this country are no longer scared of you. I'll be landing in Delhi tomorrow and will march to Jantar Mantar, come what may," he posted on X.

In a separate development, the Delhi High Court on Friday declined to urgently list a petition filed by the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) challenging the Delhi Police's refusal to grant permission for a proposed protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar at Jantar Mantar. The court said it would hear the matter on Monday.

Senior advocate Sanjay Ghose mentioned the plea before a division bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Nitin Wasudeo Sambre, seeking an urgent hearing. He submitted that the

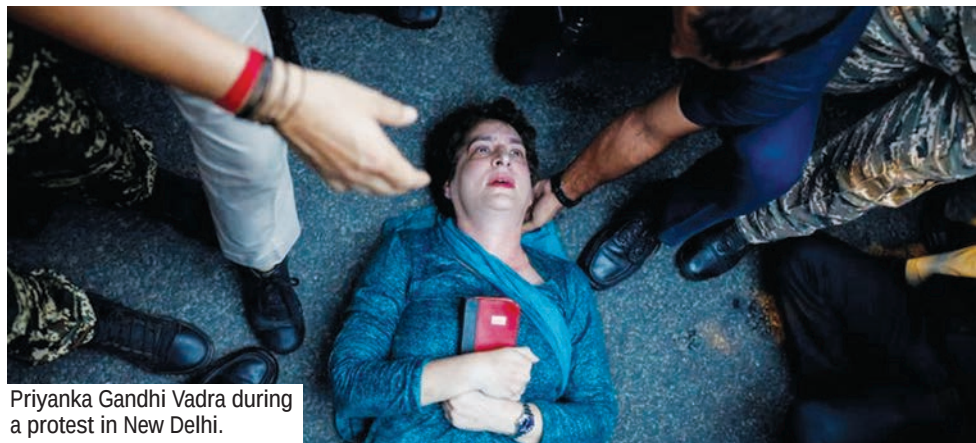
petition had been filed two days earlier.

"What is the urgency? We will hear it on Monday," the Acting Chief Justice said.

The petition, filed by IYC national president Uday Bhanu Chib, challenges a police order dated October 1 rejecting the organisation's request to hold a demonstration. The IYC said it had sought permission on September 25 for a peaceful protest involving around 100-150 people and was willing to comply with security, traffic management and public-order requirements.

The organisation argued that the refusal violated its fundamental rights to freedom of speech and expression and peaceful assembly under Articles 19(1)(a) and 19(1)(b) of the Constitution. It also challenged what it described as the mechanical application of guidelines governing public gatherings.

Four more FIRs against Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka for 'assaulting cops' during anti-CEC protests



Priyanka Gandhi Vadra during a protest in New Delhi.

The police stopped the protesters midway while they were travelling by buses to Jantar Mantar for a surprise sit-in after a lunch

meeting at a South Indian restaurant on Janpath, leading to an intense face-off.

Priyanka and other women leaders lay flat on the road, clutching copies of the

Constitution, until they were forcibly removed and taken to police buses amid loud sloganeering by Opposition members demanding the resignation of CEC Gyanesh Kumar.

MPs of the Congress, TMC, CPM, CPI, RJD, IUML and some other parties were among the protesters. The police said the protesters were asked to vacate the premises, but refused to do so. Rahul, along with other Opposition leaders, remained seated under a banyan tree and insisted that they would leave only after a delegation of MPs was given an appointment to meet Election Commission officials.

The police said the action was taken after repeated disregard of lawful directions and with the objective of maintaining law and order.

2 Mumbai-based firms, 5 Indian nationals face US sanctions over Iran oil trade

OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The US on Thursday, Oct 8, imposed sanctions on two Mumbai-based firms and five Indian nationals associated with them over allegations of being involved in the trade of petroleum products from Iran. The US Department of State action targeted SSPL Solutions Private Limited and Samudra Marine Services Private Limited for facilitating the import of petroleum products from Iran.

Two people associated with SSPL Solutions – Dhvani and Nisarg Vora, and three people related to Samudra Marine Services – Ketan Kochikar, Bhupendrasingh Sahu and Harishyam Hariharan Chundakattil -- have also been blocked from performing any transactions related to their respective firms.

The action against the Indian entities and individuals is part of the US crackdown against Iran under Operation Economic Outcast.

"The Department of State is sanctioning 10 entities, six individuals, and five vessels in connection with trade in Iranian-origin petroleum, petroleum products, and petrochemical products," an official statement said.

PDP leader arrested for calling slain Hizbul commander Burhan Wani 'martyr'

Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday arrested PDP leader Abdul Kabir following his statement where he called slain Hizbul Mujahideen commander Burhan Wani 'martyr' at a party programme in Kishtwar, according to PTI.

Kabir claimed that BJP leaders had visited Wani's family and offered compensation after his death.

Responding to questions from reporters about referring to the designated terrorist as a martyr, Kabir defended his choice of words, saying he was free to use the term in a democratic country.

Asked whether it was appropriate to call Burhan Wani, a militant, a martyr, Kabir said the terminology used to describe a person was a separate matter. "It is our own saying. Whether we call someone a martyr, say they were killed, or use some other term is a separate matter. What is that? We have freedom. We live in a democratic country," he said.

Deeply offensive: India shreds JD Vance's 'indentured servants' remark for H1-Bs

OCTOBER 9, 2026

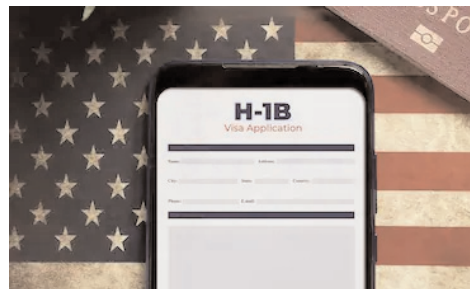
NEW DELHI (TIP): India on Friday strongly objected to US Vice-President JD Vance's description of foreign professionals working in the United States on H-1B visas as "indentured servants", calling his remarks "deeply offensive" and "unwarranted", as New Delhi also criticized Washington's suspension of several major technology companies from a key Green Card program.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the US administration's latest measures did not advance the shared ambitions of India and the United States, while emphasizing that the movement of skilled professionals benefits both economies. The remarks came a day after the Donald Trump administration announced the suspension of several technology companies from the US Permanent Labor Certification (PERM) program, which enables employers to sponsor eligible foreign workers for permanent residency.

Vance made the controversial remarks on Thursday while announcing the suspension of Microsoft's participation in the program. He alleged that the technology giant had laid off American employees while continuing to hire foreign professionals, arguing that companies were using overseas workers to undercut domestic wages.

"In other words, if you do the math, for every worker that Microsoft laid off, they replaced that worker with one and a half foreign indentured servants," Vance said at a White House news conference.

He argued that H-1B workers were vulnerable because their immigration status was tied to their employment



and that losing a job could force them to leave the country. He also accused companies of exploiting the system to reduce labor costs and called on Congress to reform the program.

However, the allegations concerning Microsoft's hiring practices were not accompanied by detailed evidence at the news conference demonstrating that the company had directly replaced the laid-off American employees with H-1B workers.

Responding to the developments, the MEA stressed that the PERM program was distinct from the H-1B visa system and that the suspension did not automatically invalidate existing visas or alter the immigration status of current H-1B holders and their dependants.

"It should be noted that PERM is distinct from the H-1B visa program. The suspension of PERM applications does not, by itself, affect the validity of existing H-1B visas or the status of H-1B visa holders and their dependants, though there could be some impact on the permanent-residency/Green Card process of eligible employees of the affected companies," the ministry said.

The government's clarification is significant for Indian professionals already employed in the US technology sector. While the latest restrictions do not automatically cancel their existing H-1B visas, they could delay the Green Card process for eligible employees

whose employers are unable to file new labor-certification applications during the suspension.

The MEA also underlined the economic value of skilled-worker mobility, signaling India's concern that restrictions on foreign professionals could affect the technology industry's ability to recruit and retain talent.

The US Department of Labor announced that it was suspending Microsoft, Adobe, Cognizant, Infosys, Tata, Wipro, HCL and Capgemini from the PERM program. The administration cited ongoing investigations and alleged misuse of employment-based immigration processes as the basis for its action.

US Labor Secretary Keith Sonderling said the government was acting against what it described as systemic fraud and the displacement of American workers. The administration has argued that companies should prioritize domestic recruitment and ensure that foreign-worker programs are not used to suppress wages.

The restrictions mark a broader expansion of the Trump administration's scrutiny of employment-based immigration, particularly in the technology and outsourcing industries, where Indian companies have a substantial presence. PERM is an important stage in the employment-based Green Card process. Employers generally must obtain labor certification from the Department of Labor before proceeding with sponsorship for permanent residency. The process is intended to establish that employing a foreign worker permanently will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed US workers.

PM under 'GyaneshGate' siege, will not retaliate to US visa crackdown: Congress

OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): Attacking the government over the US government's actions affecting Indian IT professionals, the Congress on Friday, Oct 9, said India has a number of options to retaliate but a "thoroughly compromised" Prime Minister Narendra Modi, now under "siege" on "GyaneshGate", will not do so.

The opposition party said the appeasement of bullies never pays.

In a post on X, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said, "That appeasement of bullies never pays is once again proven by the US Govt's actions yesterday targeted directly against Indian IT professionals."



Jairam Ramesh

This has come shortly after the Modi government went out of its way to please US President Donald Trump by imposing UPI MDR charges that will clearly and directly benefit American companies,

Ramesh claimed.

"India has a number of options to retaliate under laws already passed by Parliament like the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, and its Rules. But a thoroughly compromised PM now under siege on GyaneshGate will not do so," the Congress leader said in a reference to the opposition's push for Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation over alleged SIR irregularities. The US on Thursday suspended eight IT firms, including Microsoft, Tata, Infosys and Wipro, from a programme to apply for green cards for foreign workers, contending that the practice has shut out Americans from the job market.

India in history this Week

OCTOBER 9 TO OCTOBER 15

OCTOBER 9

1949 - Territorial Army inaugurated



The Territorial Army was formally inaugurated on October 9, 1949, after its earlier origins under the Indian Territorial Act of 1920. October 9 is observed as Territorial Army Day.

1929 - Mahatma Gandhi's Uttar Pradesh tour

Gandhi travelled through parts of the United Provinces in October 1929 as the national movement gathered momentum ahead of the Lahore Congress.

1877 - Birth of Gopabandhu Das

Freedom fighter, journalist, poet and social reformer Gopabandhu Das was born on this day. He became an important figure in Odisha's nationalist movement.

1945 - Birth of Amjad Ali Khan



The renowned sarod maestro was born on October 9, 1945. He later became one of India's best-known classical musicians.

OCTOBER 10

1946 - Noakhali violence begins

Severe communal violence erupted in Noakhali and adjoining areas of East Bengal on October 10, 1946. Mahatma Gandhi later travelled to Noakhali in an effort to restore communal harmony. The Gandhi chronology maintained by the Government of India records the outbreak of atrocities on this date.

October 11

1902 - Birth of Jayaprakash Narayan



Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan was born at Sitabdiara in Bihar. He became an important figure in India's freedom struggle and later emerged as a major political and social leader.

1916 - Birth of Nanaji Deshmukh



Social reformer and political leader Nanaji Deshmukh was born on October 11, 1916. He later received the Bharat Ratna posthumously.

1973 - Death of Barkatullah Khan

Rajasthan's first Muslim chief minister died in office on October 11, 1973.

1949 - Jawaharlal Nehru's US visit

In 1949, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru arrived in Washington for a three-week visit to the United States.

OCTOBER 12

1932 - Birth of Vijay Merchant



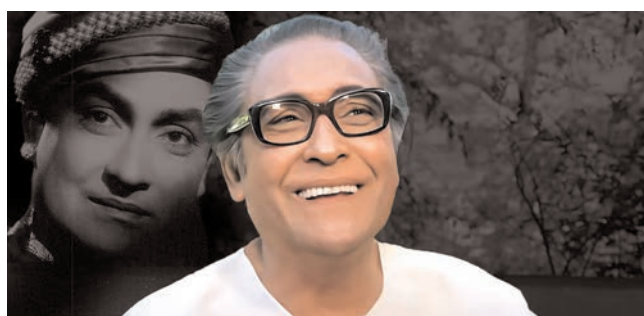
Legendary Indian cricketer Vijay Merchant, one of India's outstanding batsmen before and after independence, was born on October 12, 1911.

2018 - Death of G.D. Agrawal

Environmentalist and former IIT professor G.D. Agrawal, also known as Swami Gyan Swarup Sanand, died after a prolonged fast demanding measures to protect the Ganga.

OCTOBER 13

1911 - Birth of Ashok Kumar



Veteran actor Ashok Kumar, born Kumudlal Ganguly, was born in Bhagalpur on October 13, 1911. He became one of the earliest major stars of Hindi cinema and was

affectionately known as Dadamoni.

1987 - Death of Kishore Kumar



One of India's most influential playback singers, Kishore Kumar died in Mumbai on October 13, 1987. His death occurred on the same date as his elder brother Ashok Kumar's birthday. Hindustan Times has noted that Ashok Kumar subsequently stopped celebrating his birthday because of Kishore Kumar's death.

1929 - Gandhi in Moradabad

During his extensive United Provinces tour, Gandhi visited Moradabad and addressed public gatherings as the freedom movement moved towards a decisive phase.

2019 - Mariam Thresia canonised

Kerala-born nun Mariam Thresia was declared a saint by Pope Francis at St Peter's Basilica in Rome. She became the fourth member of Kerala's Syro-Malabar Church to be canonised.

OCTOBER 14

1929 - Gandhi reaches Haridwar

Gandhi arrived in Haridwar during his 1929 tour of northern India, part of his wider political and social mobilisation before the Lahore Congress.

1973 - Barkatullah Khan dies

Rajasthan Chief Minister Barkatullah Khan died in Jaipur on October 11, 1973-not October 14. This should therefore be kept under October 11.

Historical significance of 1929

The period is important because Congress was moving towards the demand for complete independence, which was formally adopted at the Lahore Congress in December 1929.

OCTOBER 15

1931 - Birth of Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

India's former President and celebrated scientist was born in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu. He later played a major role in India's space and missile programmes and served as India's 11th President from 2002 to 2007.

1949 - Tripura merges with India

The erstwhile princely state of Tripura formally became part of the Indian Union on October 15, 1949, following the merger agreement.

1932 - J.R.D. Tata's historic flight

J.R.D. Tata piloted the first mail service by an Indian company from Karachi to Bombay on October 15, 1932. The flight laid the foundation for what became Air India.

1918 - Sai Baba of Shirdi dies

Sai Baba died at Shirdi on Vijayadashami, October 15, 1918. His shrine at Shirdi subsequently became one of India's major pilgrimage centres.

THE DODGE POETRY FESTIVAL WILL CELEBRATE ACROSS SEVEN STAGES IN DOWNTOWN NEWARK



Elizabeth Acevedo



Tyehimba Jess



Marc Bamuthi Joseph



Aja Monet



Danez Smith



Patti Smith

(left to right) - 2026 Dodge Poetry participants - Elizabeth Acevedo, Tyehimba Jess, Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Aja Monet, Danez Smith, Patti Smith -Credit : <https://njpac.org>

BY MABEL PAIS

The biennial Dodge Poetry Festival, a collaboration of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC - <https://njpac.org>) and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (<https://grdodge.org>), featuring programming across seven stages throughout downtown Newark will take place, October 15-17, 2026.

The biennial festival, staged at NJPAC since 2010, celebrates poetry as a performing art, a community resource, and a catalyst for social justice. This year's festival features poet and punk rock icon Patti Smith, 2025-2026 U.S. Poet Laureate Arthur Sze, best-selling novelist and poet Elizabeth Acevedo, Pulitzer Prize winner Tyehimba Jess, Def Poetry Jam alumni and dozens of acclaimed and more emerging poets.

Highlights include "Patti Smith: Songs and Stories"; a Def Poetry Reunion; readings connected to Cave Canem, Kundiman, CantoMundo, Lampblack and the New Jeru Slam Team; Fine-Tune Your Craft, a writers' day presented in partnership with the Academy of American Poets; Newark's EvoluCulture Open Mic & Mixer; Young Artist Day for high school students and teachers; a Source of Knowledge pop-up bookstore and book signings; and a free Family Fun Day on Chambers Plaza of NJPAC.

Thursday, October 15

Newly added programming includes EvoluCulture's Open Mic & Mixer on Thursday, October 15, hosted by Sean Battle with DJ The IZM, headlining poet Kendee Love and spotlight poet Talena Lachelle Queen. The free event begins at 7 p.m.; early arrival is encouraged for open mic sign-ups.

Young Artist Day returns Friday, October 16, offering free daytime festival programming for high school groups. Teachers and administrators may register online for student access to readings, performances and events tailored to teen audiences.

On Saturday, October 17, "Do the Write Thing" will spotlight Brooklyn's Black bohemian arts movement with Nelson George, Carl Hancock Rux, Jessica Care Moore, Tracie Morris, DJ Spinna, Vernon Reid and more in a multimedia conversation inspired by George's forthcoming book, "Brooklyn Bohemians."

"Since 1986, the Dodge Poetry Festival has brought audiences together to experience the power of poetry," said David Rodriguez, Executive Producer of Dodge Poetry Festival "From celebrated poets laureate and Pulitzer Prize winners to the discoveries awaiting audiences at Family Fun Day and Young Artist Day, the festival offers something for everyone — whether poetry is a lifelong passion or a new discovery."

"The Dodge Poetry Festival welcomes people of all ages to discover new voices and experience the power of poetry," said Ysabel Y. Gonzalez, Producer, Poetry and Social Impact. "For students in particular, it's an opportunity to see how poetry comes alive across the arts — from spoken word and hip-hop to songwriting — and how their own words can connect, inspire and create change."

Over the course of more than 40 years, the biennial Dodge Poetry Festival has welcomed more than



A poet speaks -Credit : <https://njpac.org>

150,000 people to spend three days reading, writing and listening to poetry, in the company of poets and spoken word artists from across the nation. The 2026 festival will feature many special events, including:

- "Patti Smith: Songs and Stories," a performance by the revered "punk poet laureate;"
- Def Poetry "Reunion," featuring a lineup of accomplished poets who were part of the original "Def Poetry Jam," Russell Simmons' groundbreaking spoken word HBO series;
- Special readings by poets affiliated with Cave Canem (a literary organization dedicated to the growth of poets in the African diaspora), Kundiman (an organization that cultivates Asian American creative writing), and CantoMundo (a national organization devoted to fostering a community of Latinx poets);

Festival attendees can also participate in:

- "Young Artist Day," when thousands of high school students from across the country will attend the festival for readings, performances and more events geared to teen audiences;
- "Fine-Tune Your Craft," a day for writers that includes workshops and events designed to offer poets and authors resources for honing their craft and skills in poetry, created in partnership with the Academy of American Poets;
- A celebration and open mic poetry reading hosted by Newark's EvoluCulture poetry collective, where festival-goers can network, socialize, listen in or sign up to read verses of their own;
- FREE "Family Fun Day," when NJPAC's Chambers Plaza will become a poetry-infused play space, featuring poets reading on the Community Catalyst Stage, drumming and dancing workshops, and more;

TICKETS, PASSES AND MORE INFORMATION

Three-day and one-day passes can be purchased. Festival passes do not include special ticketed events, which must be purchased separately. To purchase passes and tickets to special events visit



Festival attendees. -Credit : <https://njpac.org>

<https://njpac.org>

For updates and more, visit <https://njpac.org/series/dodgepoetry>

THE GERALDINE R. DODGE FOUNDATION

Established in 1974, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation envisions a just and equitable New Jersey where people of all races and communities have equitable access to opportunities to thrive. Over its 50-year history, the Dodge Foundation has distributed more than \$500 million in grants and technical support to New Jersey nonprofits. Today, building on decades of learning, the organization focuses its support on those who are directly addressing the root causes and repair of structural racism and inequity to transform lives in New Jersey.

THE NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER (NJPAC)

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

Through real estate development, NJPAC advances Newark's economic growth and cultural vitality.

In addition, the Arts Center collaborates with local partners to deliver social impact initiatives that nurture the well-being and creativity of the communities it serves. These offerings include arts education and career development opportunities for students and educators, programs that support community health and well-being through the arts and free creative experiences in neighborhoods across Newark and throughout the state.

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

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

THE CULTURE TREE CELEBRATES ITS ANNUAL NAVARATRI AT NYC'S SEAPORT

BY MABEL PAIS

The South Street Seaport Museum with the Culture Tree opens to the public the celebration of Navaratri on Saturday, October 10 at the South Street Seaport. From 2pm to 5pm attendees will experience a vibrant and energetic Raas-Garba celebration aboard the historic 1885 tall ship Wavertree.

Anu Sehgal, founder and CEO of The Culture Tree, will initiate the afternoon festivities with an introduction to Navratri, the Hindu festival honoring the divine feminine.

Attendees will also learn the meaningful connections between Wavertree and India before picking up their dandiya sticks and dancing to the beats of traditional Gujarati music from DJ Magic Mike. Head dancer Meha Sedana and her troupe will guide guests through basic Raas-Garba dance steps before leading everyone in a lively dance-along to popular songs. The vibrant dance performance and workshop will bring this beautiful celebration to life with the stunning costumes and amazing choreography.

This is an experience for everyone: whether a first time or a seasoned dancer. This event is open to everyone and welcomes those who want to learn. Delicious Indian food and drinks will be available for purchase. Dressing in your best traditional attire is recommended to join this unforgettable celebration on the main deck of this iron-hulled cargo ship.

The Museum will have a limited number of dandiya sticks available on a first-come, first-served basis. But



Navaratri dancers. -Credit: Emma Fisher/<https://theculturetree.com>/<https://southstreetseaportmuseum.org>

attendees are encouraged to bring your own to join the fun.

THE CULTURE TREE

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

THE 1885 TALL SHIP WAVERTREE

Wavertree was built at Southampton, England, in 1885 and, after a 24-year sailing career and circumnavigating the globe at least three times, is now the last remaining iron-hulled three-masted full-rigged cargo

ship. Today, Wavertree is visited by guests of all ages from around the globe and serves as the centerpiece of the "Street of Ships" at the Seaport Museum.

She was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on June 13, 1978 and symbolizes the profound influence of sailing ships, their intrepid sailors, and the bustling waterfront in shaping New York City into a modern metropolis. As a historic vessel with a fascinating past, Wavertree embodies the rich maritime heritage that played a pivotal role in transforming South Street into the vibrant heart of "Where New York Begins." seaportmuseum.org/about-wavertree

Enjoy More That the Museum Offers
General Admission to the historic ships and three exhibitions is included in the ticket to this event! Attendees are welcome to explore them anytime

between 11am and 5pm on the day of their visit. The last entry is at 4:30pm. The day's ticket brings attendees aboard the 1885 tall ship Wavertree and 1908 lightship Ambrose at Pier 16, and into both exhibitions on view in the first-floor Schermerhorn Row galleries at 12 Fulton Street. General Admission also sets attendees on course to explore Maritime City, the Museum's immersive, three-floor exhibition at A.A. Thomson & Co., located at 213 Water Street. Learn more at <https://seaportmuseum.org/admission>

THE SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM

The South Street Seaport Museum, located in the heart of the historic seaport district in New York City, preserves and interprets the history of New York as a great port city.

Founded in 1967, the Museum houses an extensive collection of works of art and artifacts, a maritime reference library, exhibition galleries and education spaces, working 19th century print shops, and an active fleet of historic vessels that all work to tell the story of "Where New York Begins." Learn more at <https://seaportmuseum.org>

CONNECT ONLINE TO SEAPORT MUSEUM @

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@seaportmuseum - X
@seaportmuseum - TikTok

KAMALA SAKARA AND MINITA GANDHI COLLABORATE FOR MINNESOTA THEATER'S "LAILA STARR"

BY MABEL PAIS

Composer Kamala Sankara and Librettist Minita Gandhi collaborate on Minnesota Opera's "The Many Deaths of Laila Starr," a presentation by Works and Process, on Monday, October 12 at 7 pm at the Peter B. Lewis Theater, 1071 Fifth Avenue (at 89th Street), New York, NY, 10128.

Studios' acclaimed graphic novel trans "The Many Deaths of Laila Starr" by Ram V. and Filipe Andrade into a vivid and transporting tale for the operatic stage by composer Kamala Sankaram and librettist Minita Gandhi. Commissioned and developed by Minnesota Opera's groundbreaking New Works Initiative, the opera explores the blurred boundary between divine and human through the lens of magical realism when the goddess of Death is cast down to Earth to live as a mortal named Laila Starr.

Ahead of the world premiere in Saint Paul, Minnesota, join Ram V., Sankaram, Gandhi, and members of the opera's creative team - including director Mary Birnbaum, scenic designer Mimi Lien, costume designer Oana Botez, and choreographer Rohit Gijare - for a conversation about their collaborative process, interwoven with cast members performing excerpts. Infused with elements of Konnakol, Raga, and EDM (electronic dance music), this fantasy on purpose and impermanence unfolds with both kinetic energy and striking clarity, as a god made mortal begins to see



Collaborators Kamala Sankaran, Joshua DeVries & Mario Antonio Marra in rehearsal. -Credit: Tim Evans.

the world – and life itself - through fresh eyes. All are invited to continue the conversation at a reception in the rotunda.

Minnesota Opera's New Works Initiative is a groundbreaking commissioning program aimed at invigorating the operatic canon with an infusion of contemporary works. Launched in 2008, it has resulted in the premiere of nine new operas including "Silent Night," "The Shining," "Doubt," "Edward Tulane," "The Song Poet," and more. The

initiative is centered around a six-person creative cohort of three composers and three librettists who work in different pairings to collectively create three full-scale operas, three chamber operas, and three song cycles.

"The Many Deaths of Laila Starr" is the second opera from the current cohort— composers Kamala Sankaram, David Hanlon, and B.E. Boykin and librettists Minita Gandhi, John de los Santos, and Harrison David Rivers - to premiere, following Boykin and Rivers' "My Name is Florence" in January 2026.

TICKETS

Purchase tickets @ <https://tix.com/ticket-sales/guggenheim/3515/event/1476994>

WORKS & PROCESS

Works & Process supports creative process from studio to stage so that performing artists can create with dignity. We produce fully funded residencies and present behind-the-scenes events that blend artist discussion and performance highlights. Our events go beyond the stage, so that audiences can spectate, participate, and continue the conversation at hosted receptions.

Stay connected: @worksandprocess

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

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE SELECTS RECIPIENTS OF 2026 DOCUMENTARY FUND GRANTS

BY MABEL PAIS

The Sundance Institute (<https://sundance.org>) on September 29, 2026 announced the recipients of their 2026 Documentary Fund grants. The fund supports nonfiction storytellers from across the globe in the creation of feature-length documentaries that drive cultural and social impact. This year, 19 projects were selected to receive over \$1 million in unrestricted funding. Four of the grants are for projects in development, 12 of them are in production, and three are in post-production. The Documentary Film Program (DFP) will celebrate its 25th anniversary next year.

Almost 65% of grant proposals came from outside the U.S. for this funding cycle, marking an increase from last year. The 19 projects receiving grants have roots in 14 countries, including Canada, Denmark, France, India, Iran, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Qatar, Romania, Tunisia, the United Kingdom, the United States, and South Korea.

Among the 2026 Documentary Fund Grantees are film makers connected to India or of Indian origin:

DEVELOPMENT

“Alcatraz Is An Idea” USA

Co-producer: Alpita Patel

In November 1969, a scrappy band of Natives seized Alcatraz Island from the most powerful government on Earth. Confronting the Nixon administration, the activists held the notorious former prison for 19 months, igniting a movement — America’s greatest civil rights story never told.

Shape of Silence (Canada)

Director & Producer: Varun Trikha

Amid changing forests, a blind Polish linguist searches for sounds that might heal what human language cannot.

PRODUCTION

God of the In-Between (India, U.S.A.)

Director: Archana Phadke

Producers: Aman Mann, Shaunak Sen

A fabled island of ruins has been sustained for generations by an unlikely savior: seaweed. Panchavarnam and her “seaweed sisters” have spent a lifetime collecting this treasure. Panchavarnam now fights to preserve the sisterhood, even as her daughter chooses a different life.

Supported by the Sundance Institute | Free People Creative Spirit Fund

POST PRODUCTION

Nine (U.S.A.)

Co-Producer: Rajal Pitroda

After being sent to prison at 18, Gerald met Henry, who raised him into the man he is today. Now Gerald is on a mission to bring his 83-year-old “Pops” home from prison while there’s still time. Nine is a poetic exploration of the enduring bonds of friendship forged across generations and decades.

For the complete list of grantees, visit <https://sundance.org>

“This season holds profound significance for us in the Documentary Film Program as we prepare to celebrate our 25th anniversary next year. As we reflect on how far we have come over the past two and a half decades, we feel immense gratitude to the valued partners who have sustained our program throughout its history, with a special mention to our founding partner Open Society Foundations,” said Paola Mottura, Director, Documentary Film Fund, and Kristin Feeley, Director, Documentary Film & Artist Programs. “This year’s group of grantees is a beautiful reflection of the inventive and varied nonfiction work that continues to push the form forward. We continue to be inspired by their work



Varun Trikha. Credit : <https://sundance.org>

and feel fortunate to advocate for their projects and help bring them to the screen. We congratulate the teams behind these 19 projects and look forward to seeing where their journeys will lead.”

While exploring a wide range of topics and themes, the 2026 Documentary Fund grantees are united by a shared interrogation of how history is constructed, knowledge is preserved, and boundaries are drawn. A central theme across several projects is the infrastructure of memory, questioning who controls the public record and what narratives are considered worthy of remembering. In reclaiming suppressed histories, these films treat archives as vital spaces where truth and power are actively negotiated. Other projects investigate constructed social and physical borders alongside systemic exclusion, as well as the intersection of modern-day colonialism and environmental collapse. Several filmmakers delve into the complexities of generational dynamics and the struggle of carrying ancestral legacies while forging individual identities. Finally, a significant number of projects leverages science to challenge traditional definitions of where humanity ends and the natural world begins.

As always, Documentary Fund grantees represent a broad spectrum of experience and filmmaking achievement. Thirty-seven percent of grantees this cycle are first-time feature directors. Among the notable filmmakers is “Alcatraz is an Idea” director Julian Brave NoiseCat, who previously co-directed the 2024 Sundance Film Festival premiere “Sugarcane,” which won NoiseCat and co-director Emily Kassie the Directing Award in the U.S. Documentary Competition and went on to be nominated for the Best Documentary Feature Academy Award, making history for becoming the first Oscar-nominated documentary feature directed by a North American Indigenous filmmaker.

Documentary Film Program (DFP)

Founded in 2002, the program is a vibrant global resource for independent nonfiction storytelling rooted in eliminating barriers to entry and increasing opportunities for connection, collaboration, and cultural exchange in the field. Through various mechanisms, the Documentary Film Program uplifts nonfiction filmmakers at all stages of their projects and careers via financial, creative, and strategic support. The DFP comprises three main pillars: the Documentary Fund, providing unrestricted and non-recoupable project grants that serve as the main entry point into the program; lab and artist support, offering the expertise and



Archana Phadke. Credit : <https://sundance.org>

resources for artists to develop their projects and sharpen their craft (including the Documentary Producers Lab and the Documentary Edit and Story Lab); and partnerships with artist support organizations and research institutions in the United States and around the world to contribute to a flourishing global independent nonfiction ecosystem, encouraging audience development and building pathways for nonfiction filmmakers to navigate challenges to freedom of expression and technological change.

Sundance Collab (<https://collab.sundance.org>), a digital community platform, brings a global cohort of working artists together to learn from Sundance Institute advisors and connect with each other in a creative space, developing and sharing works in progress.

Sundance Film Festival

The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences and artists to ignite new ideas, discover original voices, and build a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Learn more @ <https://festival.sundance.org>

Sundance Institute

As a champion and curator of independent stories, the nonprofit Sundance Institute provides and preserves the space for artists across storytelling media to create and thrive.

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, the Institute’s signature labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally.

Join Sundance Institute on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, X, and Bluesky.

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



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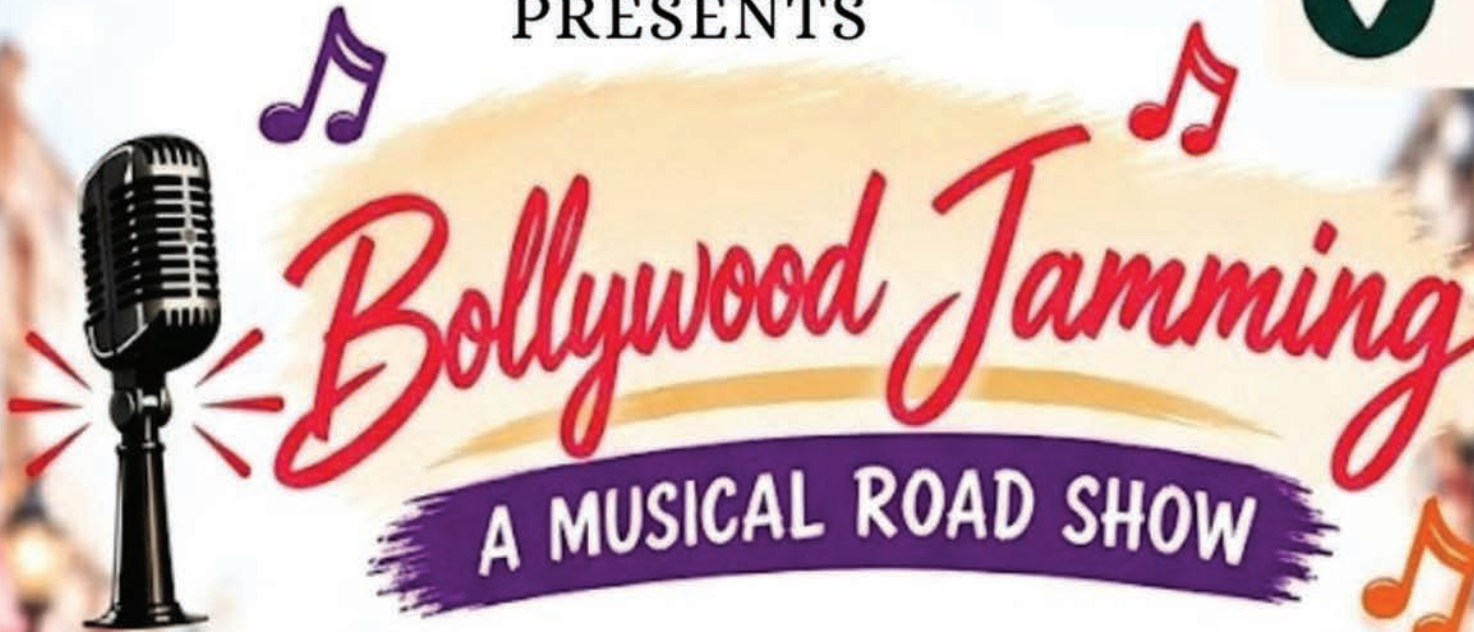
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1951-2026 | ACTOR • DIRECTOR • THEATRE ARTISTE • SOCIAL WORKER

NANA PATEKAR: THE VOICE THAT WILL ECHO FOREVER

From theatre's raw intimacy to Bollywood's biggest screens, he built a career on intensity, authenticity and unforgettable characters.



NANA PATEKAR | AT A GLANCE

Born: January 1, 1951, Maharashtra

Died: October 8, 2026, Goa

Profession: Actor, theatre artiste, director, writer

Film debut: Gaman (1978)

Breakthrough: Salaam Bombay! / Parinda

National Film Awards: 3

Padma Shri: 2013

Directorial debut: Pahaar: The Final Attack (1991)

Iconic roles: Parinda, Krantiveer, Tirangaa, Agni Sakshi, Khamoshi: The Musical, Ab Tak Chhappan, Welcome, Natsamrat, Kaala

Social work: NAAM Foundation and support for farmers and drought-affected communities



Indian cinema has lost one of its most distinctive voices. Nana Patekar, the actor whose eyes could intimidate, whose silences could speak and whose dialogue delivery could turn a scene into an event, died on October 8, 2026, at the age of 75. He suffered a cardiac arrest at his residence in Goa and was declared dead at 5.20 am after doctors attempted to revive him.

Born Vishwanath Patekar on January 1, 1951, in Maharashtra, Nana came to cinema through theatre and a life marked by struggle rather than privilege. His early years helped shape the rawness and authenticity that would eventually become the hallmark of his performances. He made his Hindi-film debut with Gaman in 1978, beginning a career that would span nearly five decades and encompass Hindi and Marathi cinema, theatre, direction and writing.

He was never a conventional Bollywood hero. Nana did not need romantic songs, glamorous costumes or elaborate entrances to command attention. His greatest weapon was his ability to inhabit complicated men - angry, wounded, patriotic, ruthless, vulnerable, comic and deeply human.

His breakthrough came with Salaam Bombay! (1988), followed by his unforgettable performance as the underworld figure Anna in Vidhu Vinod Chopra's Parinda (1989). The role won him the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actor and a Filmfare Award, establishing him as one of the most formidable performers of his generation.

Then came a run of performances that became part of Indian popular culture: Angaar, Tirangaa, Krantiveer, Agni Sakshi, Khamoshi: The Musical, Yeshwant and Ab Tak Chhappan.

A KRANTIVEER ON SCREEN

If one performance came to define Nana's volcanic screen presence, it was Pratap Narayan Tilak in Krantiveer (1994). His performance earned him the National Film Award for Best Actor. The National Film Awards' citation praised his portrayal of a man who lives life on his own terms and awakens the hidden strength of the common person.

Nana's acting was instinctive, but never careless. His pauses, expressions, body language and distinctive voice gave his characters an individuality that

could not easily be imitated.

He was equally convincing as a soldier in Pahaar: The Final Attack, which also marked his directorial debut in 1991. His commitment to the film's military setting extended beyond acting: he underwent military training and later served with the Territorial Army.

THREE NATIONAL AWARDS — AND COUNTLESS CHARACTERS

Nana became a three-time National Film Award winner: Best Supporting Actor for Parinda, Best Actor for Krantiveer, and Best Supporting Actor for Agni Sakshi. He also won multiple Filmfare awards, including recognition for Best Supporting Actor, Best Actor and Best Villain. His range was extraordinary. The man who could play a

terrifying criminal could also make audiences laugh. That side of Nana exploded into popular consciousness with Welcome (2007), where his portrayal of Uday Shetty transformed him into a comedy favourite for a new generation. The character's bluster, insecurity and impeccable comic timing became instantly memorable. He later reprised the role in Welcome Back. Nana Patekar's genius was that he could move from gravitas to comedy without losing himself. Whether playing a cop, gangster, soldier, politician, father or ageing stage actor, he brought the same uncompromising honesty.

FROM NAT SAMRAT TO THE HEART OF RURAL INDIA

Nana's later career showed that his artistry had not diminished with age. In Natsamrat (2016), the Marathi adaptation of V. V. Shirwadkar's celebrated play, he delivered one of the most acclaimed performances of his later years. He also acted in films such as Aapla Manus, Kaala, The Vaccine War, Vanvaas and Housefull 5, continuing to move between serious drama and mainstream entertainment.

His association with the stage remained important throughout his life. The theatre artiste in him was always visible on screen: he understood pauses, space, silence and the emotional weight of a single line.

But Nana's legacy extended beyond cinema.

He was known for his commitment to social causes, particularly the plight of farmers and rural communities.



From Page 26



Along with actor Makarand Anaspure, he co-founded the NAAM Foundation, which worked with drought-affected communities in Maharashtra, supporting farmers and families and promoting water conservation and rural development.

That public service sat comfortably alongside the simplicity for which he was known. Nana often seemed more comfortable away from the machinery of celebrity - farming, spending time in rural Maharashtra and speaking bluntly about issues that mattered to him.

He was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2013 for his contribution to cinema and the arts.

THE FINAL GOODBYE

News of his death brought an immediate wave of grief across politics and the film industry.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described Nana as an actor with "intensity, individuality and unmistakable presence", adding that his contribution to Hindi and Marathi cinema was immense and that his passing had left a deep void.

Union minister Nitin Gadkari, who shared a close friendship with the actor, remembered him with an emotional tribute and wrote, "Om Shanti."

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis recalled Nana's forthright personality and his social work, particularly his efforts for farmers through NAAM Foundation.

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar remembered his "extraordinary talent" and powerful screen presence, while highlighting his compassion for farmers and commitment

to society.

West Bengal Chief Minister Suwendu Adhikari called him one of Indian cinema's "fiercest, most genuine and irreplaceable voices".

From the film fraternity, Rajinikanth mourned the death of his Kaala co-star and friend, expressing disbelief that his "dear friend" was no longer with them.

Akshay Kumar, who worked with Nana in Welcome and Housefull 5, remembered him as an actor who never needed to do too much to command attention. He praised Nana's "voice", "intensity" and "honesty" in performance and said it was hard to believe he was gone.

Riteish Deshmukh, among others, also expressed shock and grief, while casting director Mukesh Chhabra remembered the actor as "Nana Bhai" and said he was "just shocked" by the news.

THE LASTING LEGACY

Nana Patekar leaves behind more than a filmography.

He leaves behind a style of acting that was impossible to manufacture - fierce but vulnerable, explosive but controlled, theatrical yet startlingly real.

He proved that an actor did not have to conform to the traditional idea of a leading man to become unforgettable. He could be the villain, the revolutionary, the soldier, the cop, the ageing actor, the gangster or the comic anti-hero - and somehow, Nana Patekar remained unmistakably Nana Patekar.

His characters will continue to speak.

His voice will continue to echo.

And Indian cinema will continue to measure intensity against the standard he set.

THE MANY FACES OF NANA

ANNA - PARINDA

A performance built on menace and restraint. Anna became one of Hindi cinema's most memorable gangsters.

PRATAP NARAYAN TILAK - KRANTIVEER

The role that showcased his ability to combine anger, vulnerability and social commentary.

Uday Shetty - WELCOME

Perhaps the most surprising reinvention of his career. His comic timing introduced Nana to an entirely new generation.

GANPAT BELWALKAR - NAT SAMRAT

A late-career masterpiece. As the ageing theatre legend confronting loneliness and loss, Nana delivered a performance of enormous emotional depth.

THE COMIC GENIUS

- One of the most fascinating chapters of Nana's career was his transition into comedy.
- Before Welcome, audiences largely associated him with intense dramas, criminals, policemen, soldiers and morally complicated men. Then came Uday Shetty.
- The character's combination of aggression, insecurity, innocence and comic frustration became one of the film's biggest attractions.
- It also demonstrated something important about Nana: he was never trapped by the image of the serious actor.
- He could make audiences uncomfortable in one film and laugh uncontrollably in another.

THEATRE NEVER LEFT HIM

For Nana, cinema was only one part of acting.

Theatre remained his artistic home - a space where an actor cannot depend on editing, music, camera angles or visual effects. The performer has to hold the audience's attention directly.

This theatrical foundation was particularly evident in Natsamrat, in which Nana played Ganpat Belwalkar, a retired stage actor whose life begins to unravel after he leaves the theatre.

The film allowed him to bring together almost every dimension of his craft - rage, humour, pride, loneliness, love and despair.

BEYOND CINEMA

THE ACTOR WHO BECAME A FARMERS' FRIEND

Away from the camera, Nana was deeply involved with rural and social causes.

His work with NAAM Foundation, established with actor Makarand Anaspure, focused particularly on farmers and drought-affected communities in Maharashtra.

The organisation worked on areas including assistance to farmers' families, water conservation and rural development.

For a celebrity who could have remained comfortably within the film industry's orbit, Nana repeatedly chose to speak about farmers, drought, indebtedness and rural distress.

That side of his life added another dimension to his public image.

He was not interested only in playing the angry man on screen. He was often angry about real problems outside it.

A FILMOGRAPHY WORTH REMEMBERING



1978 - Gaman
1986 - Ankush
1987 - Pratighaat
1988 - Salaam Bombay!
1989 - Parinda
1991 - Prahaar: The Final Attack
1994 - Krantiveer
1996 - Agni Sakshi
1996 - Khamoshi: The Musical
2004 - Ab Tak Chhappan
2007 - Welcome
2013 - The Attacks of 26/11
2016 - Natsamrat
2018 - Kaala
2023 - The Vaccine War
2024 - Vanvaas
2025 - Housefull 5



Aap budhau nahi hain: Ayushmann Khurrana apologises to Amitabh Bachchan on KBC 18

Amitabh Bachchan and Ayushmann Khurrana went down memory lane on Kaun Banega Crorepati 18 as they revisited their 2019 film Gulabo Sitabo. During the conversation, Ayushmann jokingly apologised to the veteran actor for calling him 'budhau' (old man) in the film. Ayushmann appeared on the October 5 episode of KBC 18 with Sara Ali Khan. The actors were on the show to promote their upcoming film Udta Teer. The money they won on the quiz will be donated to charity, with the actors choosing different causes.

While talking about Gulabo Sitabo, Ayushmann turned to Amitabh and said, "Aapko film mein budhau kaha, I am sorry. Aap budhau nahi hain. Really life mein aap mein 84 wali koi harkat nahi hai, aap 28 hain (I called you budhau in the film, I am sorry. You are not old. In real life, there is nothing about you that suggests you are 84; you are 28)."

Amitabh, who is 84, immediately joined in on the joke and asked, "84 wali kya harkatein hoti hain (What are the things that an 84-year-old does)?"

The exchange brought back memories of their first film together. Amitabh also praised Ayushmann during their conversation.

Sara Ali Khan revealed that she was a little jealous of Ayushmann for having already worked with Amitabh Bachchan. She pointed out that several members of her family, including her mother Amrita Singh and grandmother Sharmila Tagore, have shared screen space with the actor, but she is yet to work with him.

Amitabh, meanwhile, complimented Sara's family and spoke about the Pataudi family's striking eyes. He also recalled seeing Sara's grandfather, former cricketer Mansoor Ali Khan Pataudi's mother, driving an open Jaguar in Delhi.

The episode also featured a special KBC Radio segment dedicated to Amitabh. Ayushmann spoke about the veteran actor in a radio-style tribute and sang one of his songs during his birthday week.

'Dancing with the Stars' recap: Mariah Carey Night ends with another big shocker

Dancing with the Stars Season 35's highly anticipated "Mariah Carey Night" delivered stunning ballroom performances and an outcome that left audiences stunned. During the live broadcast on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, Summer House star Ciara Miller and her professional partner Brandon Armstrong became the latest casualties of the ballroom, despite delivering what judges called their best performance of the season.

The evening celebrated the catalog of the pop icon, who kicked off the episode with a special pre-recorded video message. "What an honor to have an entire evening dedicated to my music," Carey told the 12 remaining couples. "I can't wait to see how these fabulous couples bring my songs to life. I wish I could be there tonight, but I'll be watching and cheering you on from afar". Miller and Armstrong opened the episode with an energetic jazz routine set to Carey's hit "Emotions." The performance was highly praised by the judges, with Carrie Ann Inaba declaring it Miller's best dance of the competition. The duo earned a solid score of 21 out of 30, placing them



safely in the middle of the leaderboard.

However, as audience votes were factored in, Miller and Armstrong found themselves eliminated. The result shocked fans, especially since lower-scoring competitors managed to survive the week. Late-night sidekick Guillermo Rodriguez and his partner Witney Carson earned the lowest score of the night with just 13 out of 30 points for their "Obsessed" samba. Similarly, comedian Connor Wood and Rylee Arnold avoided elimination

despite earning a 19 out of 30 for their "Touch My Body" rumba.

"I'm so grateful for Brandon," Miller said following her elimination. "This experience has been the moment of a lifetime, and there's no one else I would rather have had this moment with".

While the elimination brought a somber note to the end of the show, the night was otherwise filled with breakthrough performances. Reality television star Maura Higgins and Mark Ballas claimed the top spot on the leaderboard.

Cricketers not invited: KJo sets strict rules for Koffee With Karan Season Finale

Filmmaker-host Karan Johar has officially set the stage for the final chapter of his long-running celebrity talk show, Koffee With Karan, dropping a teaser for its upcoming ninth and concluding season.

In the newly released promo, the filmmaker addresses the camera directly while taking phone calls, confirming that the show is drawing to a permanent close.

"You heard it right. It is going to be my last season of Koffee With Karan. I'm not acting, I'm not pretending. It is my last," Johar says in the video.

Replying to a cheeky caller suggesting the show should have ended a decade ago, Johar adds, "Thank you for asking, but I haven't invited you for eight seasons, so I don't plan to invite you for the ninth."

Addressing speculation regarding the guest line-up, the Koffee With Karan host clarifies another key exclusion and says, "No, no, no, cricketers are not invited. They are also not coming."

The statement directly references the fallout from Hardik Pandya and K L Rahul's infamous 2019 appearance, which triggered widespread backlash and brief suspensions for the cricketers.

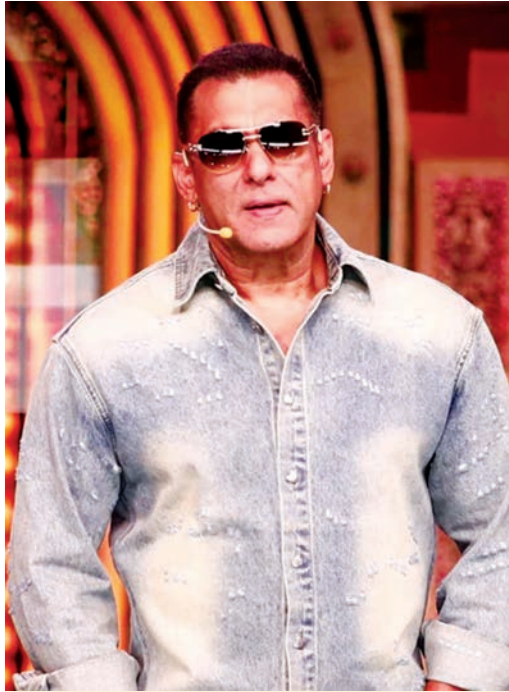
Closing the teaser on a tongue-in-cheek note, the host concludes, "Darling, it's my last season of Koffee With Karan. Why would I do anything controversial?"

Premiering in November 2004, Koffee With Karan is host Karan Johar's flagship celebrity chat show. Built on an intimate, couch-style format, the series blends high-society gossip and unvarnished industry confessions with signature segments like the "Rapid Fire Round".



Across its 22-year run—spanning cable television before shifting to digital streaming—the show has repeatedly driven entertainment headlines and sparked broader industry debates. From launching national conversations around nepotism to triggering cricketer suspensions following controversial remarks, Koffee With Karan remains a defining pop-culture touchstone for Hindi cinema.

While the makers have kept the official guest list strictly under wraps, Koffee With Karan Season 9 is set to begin streaming from October 14 on JioHotstar.



Salman Khan vs Kala Hiran: Delhi High Court seeks actor's response in legal battle

In a latest update in the legal dispute between Bollywood actor Salman Khan and the makers of the upcoming movie Kala Hiran: The Battle for Legacy, the Delhi High Court has sought the actor's response to a plea seeking to put his case against the film's release on hold.

According to PTI, Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani issued a notice to Khan on Tuesday. The filmmakers argued that the dispute is already being heard in an earlier case filed by the actor, and that the new proceedings amount to parallel litigation over the same film.

Producer Amit Jani opposed Khan's plea to stop the release of Kala Hiran. The makers argued that Khan is seeking similar relief in two separate proceedings, including a ban on the film's release and its promotional material.

Khan had earlier filed a suit seeking protection of his personality rights. An interim order was passed in his favour in December 2025. He later sought specific protection against the proposed film, an application that is still pending.

The dispute intensified in July, when the High Court ordered the removal of the film's teaser and related social media posts after Khan objected to them. The makers told the court that the film wasn't ready for release and had not yet received certification from the censor board.

The makers have maintained that Kala Hiran isn't a biopic of Khan and that he cannot use personality rights to prevent public events connected to the blackbuck case from being depicted.

Speaking exclusively to India Today, Jani said the notice was premature and maintained that the film is "not a biopic on Salman Khan." Calling the legal action "unnecessary", the producer added that apart from a poster, nothing about the film has been revealed so far.

Source: India Today

Kiara Advani, Sidharth Malhotra announce second pregnancy: 'Blessed once again'

Bollywood power couple Kiara Advani and Sidharth Malhotra have ignited social media following the surprise announcement that they are expecting their second child together. The news came via a joint Instagram post on October 7, 2026, catching fans and industry insiders alike by surprise.

The couple shared a stylized portrait alongside their one-year-old daughter, Saraayah, who was seen holding a pair of hand-knitted beige baby booties. Accompanying the photograph was a succinct caption: "Blessed once again with the greatest gift of all .. Our hearts are so full of love and gratitude "

Within minutes of posting, the announcement crossed millions of likes, triggering a massive wave of congratulations from the Indian film fraternity. Longtime mentor and filmmaker Karan Johar—who played a pivotal role in launching both actors' careers—was among the first to comment, posting, "So much love for this gorgeous expanding family! Heart is bursting!" Other prominent industry figures, including Athiya Shetty, Bhumi Pednekar, Parineeti Chopra, and celebrity designer Manish Malhotra, also shared heartfelt wishes.

Advani and Malhotra's relationship began on the sets of the acclaimed 2021 biographical war film Shershaah, where they portrayed real-life hero Captain Vikram Batra and his partner Dimple Cheema. Although the duo kept their romance private for nearly



two years, their onscreen chemistry and frequent public appearances sparked widespread media speculation. Despite balancing parenthood, both actors have maintained active filming schedules over the past year. Advani recently completed principal photography on her upcoming action thriller and featured in high-profile brand endorsements, while Malhotra has been preparing for his

next directorial collaboration following his recent OTT and theatrical releases.

Sources close to the couple indicate that Advani will wrap up her remaining promotional commitments over the coming weeks before taking a temporary hiatus ahead of the baby's arrival. Representatives for both actors have expressed gratitude to fans for the outpouring of love and requested privacy during this time.

Drishyam 3: Ajay Devgn film marches towards Rs 400 crore globally

Drishyam 3: The Conclusion has hit another major box-office milestone, crossing Rs 230 crore in India nett and Rs 365 crore worldwide within six days of its release. The Ajay Devgn-led franchise finale earned Rs 15.50 crore on Day 6, taking its domestic net collection to Rs 232.50 crore and worldwide gross to Rs 366.50 crore.

According to trade website Sacnilk, Drishyam 3 earned Rs 15.50 crore nett in India on Day 6 from 15,953 shows. With this, its total domestic nett collection stands at Rs 232.50 crore. The film's India gross has reached Rs 279 crore.

The film also maintained its momentum overseas, earning Rs 6 crore on Day 6. Its overseas gross collection now stands at Rs 87.50 crore, taking its worldwide gross to Rs 366.50 crore.

The film's sustained momentum has turned its theatrical run into a major success, with audiences continuing to show up for the final chapter of Vijay Salgaonkar's story.

The film is now within touching distance of the Rs 400 crore worldwide mark.

With this, Drishyam 3 has entered the top four highest-grossing Hindi films of 2026, joining Dhurandhar 2, Border



2 and Hanuman Ansh. The film reached the spot after its worldwide gross climbed to Rs 366.50 crore, putting it ahead of the other Hindi releases that had been occupying the fourth position.



How Tom Cruise's Digger became the biggest box office disaster of 2026

When a high-concept satire pairs A-list actor Tom Cruise with Oscar-winning director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, box-office fireworks are expected. But with a dismal \$8 million domestic start and \$12 million internationally, the \$20 million global debut for Digger transformed Warner Bros' \$150 million gamble into the year's biggest box-office crater.

Released on over 3,300 North American screens on October 2, the dark eco-satire crashed overseas across 74 territories. For a mid-budget indie, these numbers would be worrisome. But for a project with an estimated \$125 million to \$150 million production tag - plus a reported \$100 million marketing blitz - they represent a total catastrophe. A report in Deadline estimated that the studio could end up losing as much as \$150 million overall, sealing the film as 2026's top box-office failure.

The film's story centres on Cruise's Digger Rockwell, an unhinged, billionaire oil tycoon whose risky drilling operation accidentally triggers a global ecological disaster in Greenland. Rather than accepting blame, Rockwell embarks on a frantic, manipulative campaign to manipulate media narratives and convince the world that he is its ultimate saviour.

On paper, the pedigree was undeniable. Co-written by Irritu alongside Alexander Dinclaris Jr, Nicolas Giacobone, and Sabina Berman, the project assembled a formidable supporting cast. Alongside Riz Ahmed, Sandra Huller, John Goodman, Michael Stuhlbarg, and Jesse Plemons, the ensemble features Emma D'Arcy as Rockwell's assistant, Robert John Burke as the Military Chief of Staff, Burn Gorman as the Defense Secretary, and Sophie Wilde as a theatre director within the film's meta-narrative.

To understand the scale of the collapse, Digger marks Cruise's lowest 3-day domestic opening in nearly two decades. According to Deadline, the film falls far behind his tentpole blockbusters and even underperforming mid-budget experimental dramas like actor-director Robert Redford's Lions for Lambs (\$6.8 million in 2007) when adjusted for inflation.

The Social Reckoning: Aaron Sorkin's film called 'brutally important'

Director-screenwriter Aaron Sorkin's *The Social Reckoning* explores Big Tech accountability and the dark side of social media. Produced by Todd Black and Peter Rice, the political drama stars Jeremy Strong, Jeremy Allen White, and Mikey Madison. Adapted from The Wall Street Journal's 2021 series *The Facebook Files*, it examines the fallout behind Meta's flagship platform. Ahead of its theatrical release in India, early international reviews have positioned the film as a major awards contender.

Describing the release as "a true return to form for Aaron Sorkin and easily his best film," critic Scott Menzel mentioned that the narrative serves as a stark reminder of "how far technology has come," while praising the lead ensemble for delivering "fantastic" performances.

Echoing similar sentiments, commentator Jeff Conway called the project a "thoughtful, uncomfortable yet brutally important true story" about digital communication and the rise of misinformation, while highlighting Jeremy Strong's "polarising" portrayal of Mark Zuckerberg.

Taking a more measured view, critic Daniel Howat termed it a "capable journalism drama about the social cancer we already know," observing that while the story is informative rather than compelling, it is ultimately elevated by "a classic, rhythmic script from Sorkin" and solid lead performances.

Calling the film an "absolute horrifying retelling of Facebook weaponising hatred for profit," reviewer Sage Surge argued that the drama merits Academy Award nominations across key categories, including Best Picture, Best Director, and Best Adapted Screenplay.

Highlighting the ensemble dynamics, critic Leo Rydel described the release as a "riveting, slow-burn drama anchored superbly by incredible acting" from Mikey Madison and Jeremy Allen White, adding that Jeremy Strong and Bill Burr uphold a "gripping duel" on screen.

Dramatising the high-stakes clash between tech power and journalistic accountability, *The Social Reckoning* centres on whistle-blower Frances Haugen (Madison) and reporter Jeff Horwitz (White) as they expose internal corporate decisions at Meta, culminating in a tense standoff with Mark



Zuckerberg (Strong).

Distributed by Sony Pictures Entertainment India, *The Social Reckoning* is scheduled for a nationwide theatrical release on October 9, 2026.

The Batman Part II shoot faces another setback as director Matt Reeves takes a break

Production on *The Batman Part II* has been temporarily paused as director Matt Reeves steps away to deal with a family matter. Warner Bros and DC Studios confirmed the development, adding another twist to a sequel that's already had its release date pushed back several times.

Filming had been under way in London when production was put on hold. For now, the film is still scheduled to hit cinemas on February 18, 2028. Sources told The Hollywood Reporter that it's too early to know if the latest pause will affect that date.

The studio said in a statement, "Production on *The Batman Part II* has been temporarily paused while Matt Reeves focusses on a family matter. Matt has the full support of DC Studios, and we look forward to continuing the journey soon."

Robert Pattinson will return as Batman, with Andy Serkis and Colin



Farrell reprising their roles as Alfred and the Penguin. The sequel has also added a new set of faces, including Scarlett Johansson, Sebastian Stan,

Brian Tyree Henry, Jayme Lawson, Charles Dance, Gil Perez-Abraham and Sebastian Koch.

Reeves' first *The Batman*, released in March 2022, marked Pattinson's first outing as the DC superhero. The sequel, however, has taken considerably longer to reach the screen.

It was initially set for October 2, 2026, before being pushed to October 1, 2027. In July this year, Warner Bros delayed it again, moving the release to February 2028.

At the time, DC Studios co-chairman James Gunn defended the longer wait, pointing out that major sequels often take years to arrive. He also said the film's script wasn't finished and that Reeves was committed to getting it right.

Now, with production paused for a personal reason, fans will have to wait a little longer for Gotham's next chapter.

Turkey says it won't send troops to fight Yemen's Houthis despite Saudi defence pact

08 OCT 2026
ANKARA (TIP)

Turkey's foreign minister on Thursday ruled out sending troops to confront Yemen's Houthi forces, despite a defence pact with Saudi Arabia.

The Iran-backed fighters have launched a wave of attacks on Saudi Arabia since they began a major offensive in Yemen against the internationally recognised, Saudi-backed government there.

Turkey signed the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in August, committing the three countries to come to each other's aid in the event one were attacked.

"This is a defence agreement," said Hakan Fidan, adding: "If one of the



countries is attacked, you support its defence. This is not an offensive agreement."

Turkey "will not send its troops to

another country's territory to launch an attack", he stressed.

Fidan said Turkish and Saudi military delegations would work together to assess what defensive measures might be needed, without giving details.

The agreement, which still needs parliamentary ratification in Turkey, links NATO's second-largest army, Gulf oil giant Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, the Muslim world's only nuclear-armed state.

While the renewed violence has raised questions over whether the pact could draw members into the conflict, Turkish officials have repeatedly played that down. "NATO was not built in a day," a Turkish diplomatic source told AFP last month. (AP)

Putin tells Iran leader will 'do everything' to help end war

09 OCT 2026

Russian President Vladimir Putin held talks with Iranian counterpart Masoud Pezeshkian on Thursday and promised to "do everything" to help end the Middle East conflict, Russian news agencies reported.

"We are ready to do everything that is in our power to contribute to the settlement of this situation," said Putin ahead of a regional summit in the Central Asian nation of Turkmenistan, adding that Iran had made "real efforts to end the war" since US-Israeli attacks started on February 28.

Putin noted the "positive evolution" in relations between Iran and Russia.

The two have reinforced diplomatic and military links since Russia launched its offensive in Ukraine in February 2022, becoming increasingly reliant on each other.

Both leaders arrived Thursday evening ahead of the summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) -- a grouping of former Soviet nations -- in the resort of Avaza on the Caspian Sea.

The presidents last met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Kyrgyzstan in September.

Ukraine and Western countries have accused Iran of supplying Russia with Shahed drones and short-range missiles for use in the military campaign.

Russia has been accused of supplying targetting data to Iran for its strikes on US interests in the Middle East.

The meeting came as talks between Tehran and Washington appear to be at an impasse. Pezeshkian said this week that negotiations with Washington were "meaningless". (AFP)

South Korea to recall its ambassador to Ukraine over North Korean POW dispute

08 OCT 2026

SEOUL (TIP): South Korea said Thursday it will recall its ambassador to Ukraine, stepping up its protest against Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's recent revelation of a supposedly secret transfer of two North Korean prisoners of war to South Korea.

The South Korean announcement came days after its President Lee Jae Myung threatened to take unspecified punitive steps if Ukraine refuses to apologize over the revelation.

South Korea's Foreign Ministry didn't say when the ambassador, Park Hee-chang, will be brought back home. A ministry statement said that South Korea will continue consultations with Ukraine, adding it hopes the dispute between the two countries would be resolved smoothly.

South Korea and Ukraine became embroiled in a diplomatic row after Zelenskyy spoke about the transfer of the North Korean soldiers during his U.N. speech on Sept. 23. South Korea has accused Ukraine of violating a nondisclosure agreement on their transfer in mid-September, but Kyiv has denied agreeing to such a deal. (AP)

South Korea test-flies its first domestically developed hypersonic weapon

08 OCT 2026
SEOUL (TIP)

South Korea flight-tested on Thursday its first domestically developed hypersonic weapon, designed to fly at least five times the speed of sound and evade missile defense systems, bringing Seoul closer to what it says could be game-changing weapons capabilities.

There was no immediate response from North Korea, which last week tested its own hypersonic missile that landed in the waters near Japan.

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung attended the test, saying it's a major step in strengthening the country's conventional defense capabilities, according to a statement. It did not elaborate where the test took place.

THE STATEMENT SAID THE WEAPON SEPARATED FROM ITS BOOSTER ROCKET AT THE PLANNED ALTITUDE, THEN DESCENDED AND MANEUVERED BOTH VERTICALLY AND HORIZONTALLY BEFORE HITTING A TEST TARGET. IT SAID ONCE DEVELOPED, THE WEAPON WOULD BE ABLE TO STRIKE KEY TARGETS BY SURPRISE IN THE "KOREAN PENINSULA THEATER OF OPERATIONS."

Lee stressed that South Korea "must secure our security through our own strength," and also inspected the country's most powerful Hyunmoo-5



ballistic missile on Thursday, his office said. It did not mention any direct comments by Lee on the North.

Tensions between the Koreas have increased in recent weeks after three South Korean soldiers were injured in land mine explosions last month near the heavily armed inter-Korean border.

The South's military and the US-led United Nations Command concluded the blasts were caused by devices planted by North Korea, which has denied responsibility and ridiculed the South's demands for an apology.

North Korea has also stepped up weapons testing activity as its leader Kim Jong Un expands his military nuclear program while taking an increasingly hard line toward Seoul.

Kim has so far rebuffed US President Donald Trump's calls to revive their diplomacy that broke down in 2019, with his government demanding that Washington abandon its "hostile" policy toward Pyongyang and drop demands for its denuclearization as a precondition for talks.

The tensions have been a setback for Lee, who favors engagement with North Korea and has tempered his rhetoric toward the North even as

public anger grows over the mine blasts.

Lee has also called for strengthening South Korea's conventional defense capabilities while reducing its reliance on the United States, which unilaterally decided to scale back a major military exercise with the South in August, with Trump citing his "very good relationship" with Kim.

In its latest weapons test on Oct. 3, North Korea launched what it described as a hypersonic intermediate-range missile that it said flew more than 1,000 kilometers (621 miles). Japan said the missile landed in waters outside of its exclusive economic zone.

South Korea said it detected the missile flying more than 700 kilometers (435 miles), while Japan's Defense Ministry said it assessed that the missile flew about 680 kilometers (422 miles).

Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of the North Korean leader, claimed the differing flight estimates by the two US allies showed they are incapable of properly tracking such a missile during its flight and would therefore not be able to intercept it. (AP)

2026 NOBEL PRIZES HONOR REVOLUTIONARY LEAPS IN SCIENCE AND LITERATURE

OCTOBER 9, 2026

STOCKHOLM (TIP): Humanity's collective understanding of the cosmos, the human mind, and molecular architecture has taken a monumental leap forward following the announcement of the 2026 Nobel Prizes. By honoring pioneers who transformed Antarctic ice into a deep-space observatory, transformed light into a switch for brain cells, and unlocked the symmetrical mysteries of life, this year's committees have celebrated the profound power of looking at our world in entirely new ways.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the Nobel Assembly revealed a suite of prizes celebrating decades of persistent curiosity. These awards honor breakthroughs that have fundamentally rewritten their respective fields, bridging the gap between invisible subatomic physics and the fluid boundaries of contemporary poetry.

Medicine: Revolutionizing Neuroscience Through Light



The 2026 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine was awarded jointly to Karl Deisseroth, Peter Hegemann, and Georg Nagel for their revolutionary development of optogenetics.

Optogenetics combines genetic modification and optics to achieve something once thought impossible: controlling the electrical activity of specific neurons in living tissue using light.

- **The Discovery:** Hegemann and Nagel discovered channelrhodopsins—light-gated ion channels found in green algae. Deisseroth then successfully integrated these light-sensitive proteins into mammalian neurons.

- **The Impact:** When exposed to bursts of laser light via fiber-optic cables, the modified neurons switch on or off instantly. This molecular switch allows scientists to map complex brain circuits and study neurological disorders like Parkinson's disease, depression, and blindness with unprecedented precision.

Physics: Catching "Ghost Particles" Under the Antarctic Ice

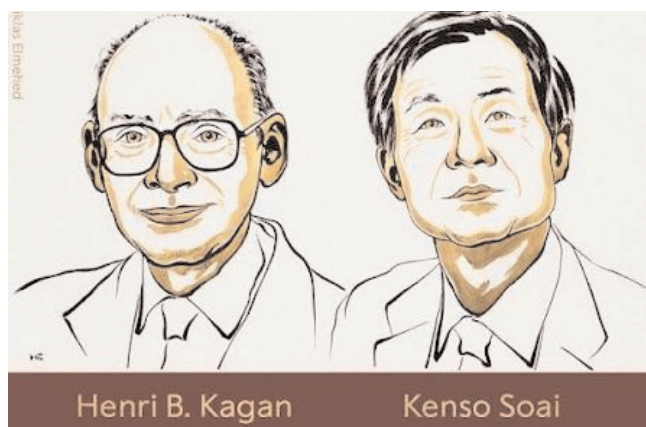


The Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to Francis Halzen for his monumental, decisive contributions to the IceCube Neutrino Observatory.

Halzen, a theoretical physicist, was the visionary driving force behind turning a cubic kilometer of pristine Antarctic ice into the world's largest particle detector.

- **The Discovery:** IceCube was built to capture neutrinos—nearly massless, uncharged "ghost particles" that travel across the universe without stopping.
- **The Impact:** Halzen's work led to the successful detection of high-energy cosmic neutrinos originating from extreme, violent astrophysical sources outside our galaxy, such as blazars and active galactic nuclei. This breakthrough effectively birthed the field of neutrino astronomy, giving humanity a new way to observe the deep universe.

Chemistry: Decoding Nature's Asymmetric Chemistry



The Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded to Henri B. Kagan and Kenso Soai for pioneering discoveries in asymmetric organic synthesis.

Most biological molecules are chiral, meaning they exist in left- and right-handed "mirror-image" forms. In pharmacology, one hand might cure a disease, while the other could be toxic.

- **The Discovery:** Kagan discovered remarkable non-linear effects in asymmetric catalysis, proving that a small amount of a single-handed catalyst could yield an unexpectedly high purity of the desired mirror-image molecule. Soai discovered an extraordinary system of asymmetric autocatalysis—a chemical reaction that acts as its own catalyst, amplifying a tiny initial imbalance into total chiral purity.
- **The Impact:** Their work provides the foundational answers to how biological life became asymmetric. It also provides vital tools for chemical manufacturing, allowing pharmaceutical companies to efficiently synthesize pure, safe, single-handed drugs.

Literature: Unifying the Ancient and Contemporary

The Nobel Prize in Literature was awarded to Canadian poet, essayist, and translator Anne Carson.

Carson has long been celebrated for erasing the lines between poetry, essay, drama, and scholarship.

- **The Academy's Praise:** The Swedish Academy honored Carson for her bold and inventive oeuvre. They noted that her work exists in a



playful, brilliant dialogue with classical tradition while forging entirely new forms for contemporary literature.

- **The Impact:** Renowned for works like *Autobiography of Red*, Carson reimagines ancient Greek myths and literature through a fiercely modern lens. Her writing explores grief, love, and the limits of language, solidifying her status as one of the most structurally innovative writers of our time.

The 2026 Nobel Schedule Continues

The Nobel season is not yet complete. The world's attention now turns to Oslo and Stockholm for the final two prizes of the year:

- **Nobel Peace Prize:** Friday, October 9, 2026
- **Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences:** Monday, October 12, 2026.

The Nobel Prize: How Alfred Nobel Created a Legacy of Excellence

- The Nobel Prize, one of the world's most prestigious international awards, was established by Swedish chemist, engineer and dynamite inventor Alfred Nobel to honor individuals and organizations whose work benefits humanity.
- On November 27, 1895, Nobel signed his last will and testament, directing that approximately 94% of his fortune be used to establish prizes recognising outstanding contributions in five fields: Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature and Peace. His decision is sometimes linked to a premature obituary published in 1888 following the death of his brother, Ludvig Nobel, which reportedly described Alfred as the "merchant of death". However, the extent to which this influenced his decision remains uncertain.
- After Nobel died on December 10, 1896, his will faced legal challenges and opposition from relatives. The Nobel Foundation was eventually established to manage his fortune and administer the awards.
- The first Nobel Prizes were presented on December 10, 1901, marking the fifth anniversary of his death. The awards recognise discoveries, achievements and efforts that advance knowledge, culture and peace.
- An additional prize, the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, was established in 1968 and first awarded in 1969. Unlike the original five categories, it was created through a separate initiative.

Court asks if people can be sent back to Bangladesh based on family's statements

OCTOBER 9, 2026

DHAKA (TIP): The Calcutta High Court on Thursday questioned the West Bengal government on what basis it had since August 8 detained a Murshidabad resident accused of being an illegal Bangladeshi immigrant.

Justice Saugata Bhattacharyya asked the question after the government submitted reports from the Raninagar police station and the superintendent of police stating that Sahidul Sk had been staying illegally without a valid passport or visa.

The high court had earlier asked the government to submit the reports after Sahidul's wife had moved the court claiming that her husband had been detained illegally.

"It (detention order passed by the Foreigners Registration Office) was a conclusive finding that they are Bangladeshi nationals and the detention order was passed. What is the basis?" Justice Bhattacharyya said.

Seeking to justify the detention, Additional Advocate-General Rajdeep Majumdar, appearing for the government, cited "confidential information" collected during a special drive conducted on the instructions of the Union Home Ministry. The government also submitted that Sahidul had admitted to crossing the border and staying illegally.

When the court enquired how a person considered an illegal migrant still had a voter card, Aadhaar, and PAN card, the government said Sahidul had obtained the documents using forged documents.

The government further submitted that the wife of Kalam Sheik, who Sahidul claims is his father, and her daughter both denied knowing him.

The court then observed that their words alone would not prove Sahidul is a Bangladeshi, adding that he was not given any opportunity to present his case before the FRO.

Majumdar argued that forging documents like a PAN number, Aadhaar, and a school certificate raises suspicion and constitutes grounds for deportation.

The court further observed, "In the 1970s, how many people crossed the border? Is it possible to send them back based on certain statements of family members?"

After hearing both sides, the court ordered, "For the ends of justice, the deportation order of September 28 shall be kept in abeyance till the next date of hearing by the appropriate court. Writ petition released and be placed before the appropriate bench on 14 October subject to the convenience of the Bench."

Asim Munir wants to split Pakistan's four provinces into smaller states

OCTOBER 9, 2026

ISLAMABAD (TIP): The biggest change to Pakistan's political map in decades could be under consideration. Pakistan is currently organised around four provinces -- Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan. The Economist reports that army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir now wants to divide these large provinces into smaller states, potentially creating anywhere from 12 to 15 new provinces or even 160 smaller territories.

The proposal would amount to a fundamental overhaul of how power is organised across Pakistan. It would not simply change the names or boundaries on a map. Breaking up Pakistan's giant provinces could weaken alternative centres of power and make the country's administrative structure more responsive to the demands of the military establishment.

On paper, there is a straightforward case for restructuring Pakistan's provinces. The four existing provinces are vastly different in population and size. Punjab, the country's most populous province, has around 128 million people, or more than half of Pakistan's population. Balochistan, despite being the country's largest province by area, has only about 15 million residents.

Governing Punjab's enormous population has produced serious administrative problems. In rural areas, residents can travel for hours to access government services, while fewer than a quarter of Punjabis have reliable access



Asim Munir

to safe drinking water at home, according to the report.

Munir has argued that the provinces are simply too large to be governed effectively and that this contributes to Pakistan's poor performance.

Pakistan's problems are difficult to dispute. The country has struggled with weak growth, high inflation and punishing debt-servicing costs. But the causes run much deeper than the size of Pakistan's provinces.

The military has directly ruled Pakistan for more than two-fifths of the country's history, while elected governments have often operated under its shadow. The Economist argued that the military itself has contributed to many of the problems Munir says smaller provinces could solve. It noted the army's control over valuable land and businesses, as well as its large share of state resources.

That creates the contradiction

surrounding the proposal.

If Pakistan's provincial governments are failing to deliver, breaking them into smaller units could be presented as an attempt to bring government closer to citizens. But if the new units are weaker and more dependent on the centre, the restructuring could also make it easier for the military establishment to exercise influence over them.

Pakistan's four provinces are not simply administrative divisions. They are also major political power bases. Punjab has traditionally been dominated by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz, while Sindh remains the stronghold of the Pakistan Peoples Party.

Both provinces have provided alternative centres of political power even during periods of military rule. That makes the prospect of breaking them into smaller units politically significant. The large provinces have acted as a counterweight to the central government precisely because of their political and electoral strength. Splitting them into smaller units could dilute that influence. The question, therefore, is not only whether smaller provinces would be easier to govern.

It is whether smaller provinces would also be easier for the centre to control.

The proposal to reorganise Pakistan's administrative structure is not new. Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal has previously spoken about the need for a larger number of provinces and smaller administrative units, including the possibility of 12 to 15 provinces and up to 160 districts.

Sri Lanka's ex-first lady arrested over alleged misuse of children's hospital donations

OCTOBER 9, 2026

COLOMBO (TIP): Sri Lanka's former first lady Shiranthi Rajapaksa has been arrested over allegations that a charity she is linked to misused donations raised for a children's hospital.

Anti-corruption authorities arrested the 73-year-old wife of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa at their Colombo home on Wednesday, Oct 7.

They are questioning her over the 10 million rupees (\$30,300; £22,800) of donations collected by the Siriliya Saviya charity, meant to be spent on a specialised scanner for Colombo's Lady Ridgeway Children's Hospital.

But officials say such a scanner had already been donated by the Chinese government.

Shiranthi Rajapaksa has denied any wrongdoing and says the money has not been appropriated.

She returned to Sri Lanka on Monday from Singapore, where she was receiving medical treatment. She had filed a court



Shiranthi Rajapaksa

petition to try to prevent her arrest, but the hearing was set for 12 October.

Ex-President Mahinda Rajapaksa's spokesperson, Manoj Gamage, has said the money is safe in Siriliya's accounts and that no fraud has occurred.

Mahinda Rajapaksa served as president of Sri Lanka from 2005 to 2015 and for years, his family held a tight grip

over the country's politics. He was hailed by many as a hero for bringing an end to nearly three decades of civil war when Tamil Tiger rebels were crushed in 2009, during his first term as president.

But in 2022, protests broke out across the country as inflation surged and Sri Lanka ran out of fuel, food and medicine.

Mahinda's brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who was serving as leader at that time, was eventually toppled.

Sri Lanka's current government, under President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, has since revived long-stalled corruption investigations involving various members of the Rajapaksa family.

Mahinda and Shiranthi's eldest son, Namal Rajapaksa, was arrested earlier this year over allegations linked to an aircraft procurement deal made during his father's presidency. He is currently held in remand. His brother Yoshitha was also arrested earlier this year on corruption charges.

Sikh History This Week

OCTOBER 9 TO OCTOBER 15

OCTOBER 9

1839 - Murder of Sardar Chait Singh Bajwa

Sardar Chait Singh Bajwa, a close confidant and chief adviser of Maharaja Kharak Singh, was murdered inside the Lahore Fort, only months after the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. His assassination was among the early events in the succession intrigues and factional struggles that weakened the Sikh Empire.

Modern commemoration - Shaheedi of Bhai Sukhdev Singh Sukha and Bhai Harjinder Singh Jinda

October 9 is observed as the Shaheedi Diwas of Bhai Sukhdev Singh Sukha and Bhai Harjinder Singh Jinda in contemporary Sikh calendars.

1960 - Punjabi Suba movement

Some Sikh historical chronologies also mark October 9 in connection with the Punjabi Suba movement and the martyrdom of a Punjabi Suba activist in Bathinda Jail.

OCTOBER 10

Birth anniversary of Bhai Taru Singh



Bhai Taru Singh is remembered for his extraordinary commitment to Sikh principles during the persecution of Sikhs under the Lahore administration of Zakariya Khan. The 2026 Sikh calendar lists October 10 as his birth anniversary.

1946 - Demand for a Sikh state

Sikh historical chronologies record that Ishar Singh Majhail moved a resolution in the Indian legislative body on October 10, 1946, calling for the creation of a Sikh state. Sardar Swaran Singh seconded the resolution.

1947 - Punjab government's controversial circular on Sikhs

On October 10, 1947, Punjab Governor Chandu Lal Trivedi issued a controversial circular concerning Sikhs, which described the community in highly prejudicial terms and directed district authorities to take special measures. The episode is remembered in accounts of the difficult political climate surrounding Partition.

1982 - Sikh protest in Britain

A major Sikh demonstration was held in London, with a procession from Hyde Park to 10 Downing Street. A petition carrying more than 75,000 signatures was presented to the British prime minister.

OCTOBER 11

1780 - Sikh forces cross the Ganga

A Sikh force of around 4,000 horsemen crossed the Ganga on October 11, 1780, and carried out raids in the Bijnor and Najibabad areas. The episode reflected the expanding military reach of the Sikh Misls beyond

Punjab during the 18th century.

1920 - Khalsa Baradari gathering continues

The Khalsa Baradari held a major religious gathering at Jallianwala Bagh on October 11-12, 1920. Large numbers of Sikhs from communities historically subjected to caste discrimination were initiated into the Khalsa. The gathering became closely connected with the events at the Golden Temple and Akal Takht on October 12.

OCTOBER 12

1920 - Akal Takht comes under reformist Sikh control



This is one of the most important events of the week. Following the Jallianwala Bagh gathering and a dispute over the refusal of priests at Darbar Sahib to accept offerings from newly initiated Sikhs, the reformist group proceeded to Sri Akal Takht Sahib. The priests had left, and the Sikhs took possession of the Akal Takht.

1920 - Nine-member management committee formed

On October 13, the Amritsar deputy commissioner formed a nine-member committee of reformist Sikhs to manage Sri Harmandir Sahib. This development helped pave the way for the formal establishment of the SGPC.

2015 - Bargari sacrilege case

On October 12, 2015, torn pages of Sri Guru Granth Sahib were found scattered at Bargari in Faridkot district. The incident triggered protests and became part of the wider sacrilege and police-firing controversy in Punjab.

OCTOBER 13

1920 - Reformist administration of Darbar Sahib

Following the October 12 developments, a nine-member committee was constituted to manage Sri Harmandir Sahib. The episode represented a decisive stage in the Gurdwara Reform Movement and the eventual institutionalisation of Sikh control over historic gurdwaras.

1923 - SGPC and Shiromani Akali Dal declared unlawful

During the Jaito Morcha, the British Punjab government declared the SGPC and Shiromani Akali Dal unlawful on October 12, 1923. Sikh leaders were subsequently arrested on sedition-related charges.

1973 - Kapur Singh honored as National Professor of Sikhism

Sardar Kapur Singh was bestowed the honor of "National Professor of Sikhism" by Sri Akal Takht on October 13, 1973, according to Sikh historical chronologies.

1979 - Sikh identity recognised in Pakistan document

A historical document concerning Sikh rights and identity was signed during the visit of an international Sikh delegation to Pakistan.

OCTOBER 14

1664 - Guru Tegh Bahadur takes

possession of Guru's property

Historical accounts record that Guru Tegh Bahadur formally took possession of the property associated with the Guru's family. The event is included in Sikh historical chronologies for October 14.

1745 - Sarbat Khalsa reorganises Sikh forces

This is another major historical event. A Sarbat Khalsa gathering at Sri Akal Takht Sahib decided to reorganise the scattered Sikh fighting groups into 25 jathas/regiments. Nawab Kapur Singh provided overall leadership, while commanders including Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, Hari Singh Bhangi and others led individual formations.

The reorganisation marked an important transition from smaller guerrilla bands towards a more coordinated Sikh military structure and eventually contributed to the emergence of the Dal Khalsa.

2015 - Behbal Kalan/Kotkapura police firing

October 14, 2015, became a watershed date in Punjab after police action against protesters following incidents of sacrilege of Sri Guru Granth Sahib. Two protesters were killed in police firing, making the date particularly significant in contemporary Sikh memory.

1981 - Four Sikhs killed in alleged fake encounter

Sikh historical chronologies record the killing of four Sikhs in an alleged police encounter at Khadur Sahib on October 14, 1981.

OCTOBER 15

1708 - Bhog ceremony following

Guru Gobind Singh's passing

October 15 is listed in some Sikh historical chronologies in connection with the bhog ceremony following the passing of Guru Gobind Singh at Nanded.

1745 - Formation/reorganisation of the Dal Khalsa

Some historical sources place the formal reorganisation of Sikh military forces into 25 jathas on October 15, 1745, while other accounts date the Sarbat Khalsa gathering to October 14. For a magazine, it is safer to note the event as October 14-15, 1745, rather than presenting one date as undisputed.

1981 - Release of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale

Sikh historical chronologies record that Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale was released unconditionally on October 15, 1981, after his arrest in connection with the killing of Lala Jagat Narain.



Every October, calendars across the United States mark an observance that has become one of the most fiercely debated holidays in modern Western culture. What originally began as a civic commemoration of transatlantic exploration, maritime courage, and Italian-American cultural pride has, over recent decades, transformed into a complex national conversation about history, imperial conquest, indigenous sovereignty, and how a society chooses to remember its past. To fully understand the weight of the day, one must look beyond the simplified textbook narrative and examine the intricate tapestry of 15th-century ambition, 19th-century immigration politics, and 21st-century historical reexamination.

The Great Transatlantic Gamble

On August 3, 1492, Genoese navigator Christopher Columbus set sail from the port of Palos de la Frontera in southwestern Spain. Sponsored by the Catholic Monarchs, King Ferdinand II of Aragon and Queen Isabella I of Castile, the expedition set out with three small wooden vessels: the flagship Santa María, a square-rigged carrack, alongside two smaller caravels, the Pinta and the Niña. Columbus believed that by sailing directly west across the Atlantic, he could open a profitable ocean trading route to the wealthy ports of Asia, bypassing the land routes controlled by the Ottoman Empire.

After more than two grueling months at sea—during which the crew faced dwindling supplies, false land sightings, and rising threats of mutiny—a sailor named Rodrigo de Triana aboard the Pinta spotted land in the early morning hours of October 12, 1492. Columbus made landfall on an island in the Bahamas archipelago known to its native inhabitants as Guanahani, which Columbus promptly claimed for Spain and renamed San Salvador. Believing he had reached the East Indies, Columbus referred to the indigenous people he encountered as "Indians." This fateful landfall initiated sustained contact between the Old World and the New, triggering the "Columbian Exchange"—a sweeping global transfer of plants, livestock, human populations, cultures, and lethal infectious diseases that permanently reshaped the ecology and demographics of both hemispheres.

From Assimilation to Federal Recognition

The path from a 15th-century maritime voyage to an official American public holiday was neither immediate nor straightforward. The earliest recorded civic celebration took place on October 12, 1792, when the Tammany Society in New York City organized a banquet and procession to mark the 300th anniversary of Columbus's landfall. However, the holiday's formal political adoption was driven largely by 19th-century social tensions surrounding immigration.

During the late 1800s, millions of Italian immigrants arrived in the United States, facing widespread anti-Catholic prejudice, xenophobia, and violent discrimination. A turning point

Beyond the shores of 1492: The evolving legacy of Columbus Day



Photo source: Wikipedia



An oil painting of Christopher Columbus that is said to be the most accurate likeness of the explorer, attributed to Ridolfo del Ghirlandaio, 1525.



Photo source: iStockphoto.com

occurred in March 1891, when eleven Italian immigrants were brutally lynched by a mob in New Orleans after being acquitted in the murder of the city's police chief. To defuse a severe diplomatic crisis with the Kingdom of Italy and promote national unity, President Benjamin Harrison issued a presidential proclamation in 1892 declaring a one-time nationwide celebration of Columbus Day on the 400th anniversary of the voyage. Italian-American communities embraced Columbus—a native of Genoa—as a symbol of Catholic inclusion and patriotic contribution to the American story.

Through intense lobbying by civic organizations like the Knights of Columbus, states began adopting the holiday individually, beginning with Colorado in 1907. In 1934, amidst the Great Depression, Congress passed a resolution authorizing President Franklin D. Roosevelt to declare October 12 an official annual federal holiday. Decades later, under the Uniform

Monday Holiday Act enacted in 1968 and taking effect in 1971, the official federal observance was officially shifted from the fixed calendar date of October 12 to the second Monday in October, ensuring a standardized three-day weekend for federal workers.

Reexamination and the Rise of Indigenous Peoples' Day

As historical scholarship expanded in the late 20th century, the traditional narrative surrounding Columbus faced intense scrutiny. Critics pointed to primary historical records—including Columbus's own journals and reports by contemporary historians like Bartolomé de las Casas—which documented the brutal subjugation, forced labor, sexual violence, and near-total demographic destruction of the native Taino population through enslavement and introduced Old World pathogens.

This shift in historical perspective gave rise to a movement advocating for

the recognition of the continent's original inhabitants. In 1990, South Dakota became the first U.S. state to replace Columbus Day with Native American Day. Two years later, in 1992, the city council of Berkeley, California, officially instituted Indigenous Peoples' Day to coincide with the 500th anniversary of Columbus's landfall.

Over the past two decades, this movement has gained widespread momentum. Today, dozens of states and hundreds of municipalities across the United States have either formally replaced Columbus Day or observe Indigenous Peoples' Day concurrently on the second Monday of October. In October 2021, President Joe Biden issued the first formal presidential proclamation commemorating Indigenous Peoples' Day alongside Columbus Day, acknowledging both the painful historical truths of European colonization and the enduring resilience, heritage, and sovereignty of Native nations.

Ways to keep your curls bouncy, shiny and frizz-free

Curly hair has a beauty all its own - from loose waves and soft spirals to tightly coiled curls. But those gorgeous curves can also make hair care a little more challenging. Unlike straight hair, curly strands tend to lose moisture more easily, which can leave them feeling dry, rough and prone to frizz.

The shape of the hair is influenced by the structure of the hair follicle. Curly hair tends to grow from more oval or asymmetrical follicles, a characteristic largely determined by genetics. While you cannot change your natural curl pattern, the right routine can help your curls look more defined, soft and healthy.

Here are some simple ways to care for your natural texture.

Start with a pre-shampoo treatment

If your curls are particularly coarse or dry, consider conditioning your hair before shampooing.

Conditioner does not have to be limited to the post-shampoo step. Applying it before cleansing can provide an additional layer of moisture and, in theory, help protect the hair strand from the drying effect of shampoo. This can be especially useful for coarse, curly hair that tends to lose moisture quickly. Apply conditioner through the lengths and ends, leave it on briefly and then follow with your usual shampoo routine.

Turn down the water temperature

A long, hot shower may feel relaxing, but very hot water can leave hair feeling dry by stripping away moisture. When washing curly hair, avoid excessively hot water. Using cooler or lukewarm water can help your hair retain more of its natural moisture.

If your curls frequently feel rough or dehydrated after washing, your shower temperature may be one small change worth making.

Don't over-shampoo

Curly hair generally does not benefit from being shampooed every day. Frequent cleansing can strip away the natural oils that help keep hair moisturized.

Instead, experiment with a washing schedule that suits your scalp and curl type. The material recommends trying every other day or every three days, rather than automatically shampooing daily.

Your ideal schedule will depend on factors such as



your scalp, lifestyle and how quickly your hair becomes oily. The goal is simple: cleanse the scalp without unnecessarily drying out the lengths.

Detangle with care

Curly hair can be dry and fragile, making it more susceptible to breakage during brushing and combing.

One useful strategy is to detangle your curls in the shower, particularly while conditioner is still present. The conditioner can provide slip, making it easier for a comb to move through the hair while also helping coat the strands. Start at the ends and gently work your way upwards rather than pulling a comb from the roots through a mass of tangled hair.

Choose a wide-tooth comb

A wide-tooth comb is generally a gentler option for separating curls and loosening knots. Avoid aggressive brushing, especially when the hair is dry and tangled.

For particularly springy curls, you may not need a brush or comb at all. Apply a leave-in conditioner and gently rake through wet hair using your fingertips.

This allows you to work with your natural curl pattern rather than disrupting it.

FOOD CORNER

Cauliflower fried rice

Ingredients

1 whole cauliflower (try to pick a large one)
1 chopped red bell pepper, 1 packet of baby corn, 1 packet of mushrooms, 3 spring onions, 1 tablespoon of soy sauce, 6-7 pods of chopped garlic, salt and pepper to taste

Method

1. Cut off all the leaves and the stem of the cauliflower and chop it up into smaller pieces. Wash thoroughly in case of any dirt or worms.
2. Add the cauliflower bits in batches into your food processor or a dry grinder. Blitz till they become crumbly. Do not add any water at all to the cauliflower this is a dry grind or else it will be a disaster.
3. Once you have the cauliflower into this fine crumbly rice or cous cous like texture leave it aside and chop all the other vegetables and ingredients.
4. Heat some oil in a pan or wok and add the cauliflower so you can cook/roast it for about 5-7 minutes. Keep stirring. The cauliflower won't take very long to cook.
5. Add the chopped garlic and let it cook a bit, then add the spring onions, the whites and some of the greens, keep some greens to garnish later and mix it all together.
6. To this add the peppers and baby corn. Sprinkle a little salt n pepper on the peppers and baby corn to season them. Mix all the ingredients and cauliflower together.
7. Add the mushrooms and again season them with salt n pepper before they cook. Once they cook and start to release their water mix it into the other ingredients.



Master all-black without looking boring

Are you one of those people who can never seem to have enough black in their wardrobe? Don't worry-you are in great company. Every style insider knows black is the ultimate sartorial fail-safe: timeless, instantly chic, and effortlessly sleek for virtually any occasion. However, even the most devoted dark-wardrobe enthusiasts have to admit that too much of the same tone can occasionally feel flat, heavy, or repetitive. The secret to wearing head-to-toe black like a pro isn't adding color-it's mastering contrast, texture, shape, and structure. Here is your definitive blueprint for elevating all-black ensembles into high-impact, multidimensional looks.

Classic Monochrome Power Play

Nothing commands a room quite like sharp, tailored lines. A monochromatic black suit or tailored ensemble relies on

precise fit to create an undeniable air of sophistication.

- The Anchor: A structured, well-fitted black blazer or a sharp leather jacket paired with tailored trousers or deep-black denim.
- The Layer: A classic silk shirt, high-neck top, or crisp cotton tee tucked in cleanly.
- The Finish: Minimalist leather shoes-such as pointed loafers or clean dress boots-complemented by sleek, low-profile accessories like a simple leather watch or a clean belt.

Edgy Realism with Heavy Leather

When you want your outfit to carry a distinct attitude, leather provides instant weight and rebellion to an all-dark look.

- The Anchor: A classic black leather biker jacket worn over slim-cut black denim or distressed jeans.
- The Layer: A soft, washed black

graphic tee to break up the clean lines with a subtle worn-in print.

- The Finish: High-top sneakers or lug-sole ankle boots. Accentuate the edge with hardware-think a studded belt or a structured leather backpack.

High-Contrast Textured Layers

When color is off the table, texture becomes your primary design tool. Combining distinctly different fabrics creates visual depth and stops black pieces from bleeding into a single shape.

- The Combination: Pair a heavy, tactile black knit sweater or ribbed cardigan with smooth black leather leggings or dark denim.
- The Subtle Break: Intersperse a sheer mesh or delicate lace top underneath to introduce soft negative space along the neckline or hemline.



Rethinking the morning brew: Is your first cup sabotaging your day?

For many, the morning routine feels entirely incomplete without a hot cup of tea or coffee. As the steam rises and the first sip goes down, grogginess subsides, leaving a sense of alertness and readiness to take on the day. But this universally cherished ritual harbors a hidden downside regarding the timing of that caffeine hit. Often, early morning caffeine is associated with sudden palpitations, heightened jitters, and a worsening of baseline anxiety. Yet, the impact of these drinks on your physiological wellbeing does not exist in a binary of purely good or bad. It is much more nuanced and layered, and clinical insights reveal exactly how to optimize this common morning habit for sustained energy rather than a temporary spike.

The Cortisol Clash

The human body operates on a deeply ingrained circadian rhythm. When we wake up, our endocrine system naturally orchestrates a surge in cortisol, which is responsible for our natural morning alertness and immune regulation. Consuming caffeine while cortisol is already at its peak—typically the first 60 to 90 minutes after waking—puts the body's natural ignition system into overdrive. This overlap is precisely what triggers sudden jitters and anxiety. Over time, introducing caffeine during this natural peak can blunt your body's independent cortisol production. The body adapts by producing less cortisol on its own, making you increasingly reliant on that morning cup just to achieve a baseline sense of normalcy.



The Empty Stomach Dilemma

Beyond hormones, the early morning brew presents significant gastrointestinal challenges. Both black coffee and highly caffeinated teas are acidic, and when consumed on an empty stomach, they stimulate the rapid production of gastric acid. Without food present to absorb and buffer this digestive fluid, the excess acid can irritate the sensitive stomach lining. For many, this daily irritation silently manifests as chronic acid reflux, heartburn, and generalized indigestion. Furthermore, caffeine relaxes the lower esophageal sphincter, making it easier for that excess acid to travel upward and exacerbate morning heartburn.

A Layered Reality of Benefits

The goal is not to eliminate caffeine, but to harness it correctly. Coffee and tea are remarkably complex beverages packed with potent antioxidants, polyphenols, and cognitive-enhancing compounds. When timed correctly, a daily cup has been clinically linked to enhanced cognitive function through improved memory

consolidation and focus. It also provides metabolic support by mildly increasing the resting metabolic rate. Long-term regular consumption is even associated with neuroprotection, lowering the risk of developing neurodegenerative conditions like Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. The beverage itself is highly beneficial; it is the empty-stomach, immediate-waking execution that requires an adjustment.

Redesigning Your Morning

To extract the maximum benefit from your morning beverage while mitigating anxiety and acidity, specialists recommend a structural redesign of your first two hours awake. The process begins with hydration before caffeination. Drinking 12 to 16 ounces of room-temperature water immediately upon waking kickstarts the metabolism and prepares the gastrointestinal tract after a dehydrating night of sleep. About thirty minutes later, it is crucial to introduce a physical buffer. Consuming something solid, such as a small handful of almonds, a piece of fruit, or a slice of toast, provides the necessary barrier to absorb gastric acid. Finally, the ideal brew window opens around 90 minutes after waking. By this time, natural cortisol levels have begun their downward slope, and introducing caffeine bridges the energy gap to provide a sustained, jitter-free lift. Shifting your first cup back by just an hour and a half transforms it from a chemical crutch into a strategic tool, allowing you to enjoy the ritual without the sudden jitters.

Childhood obesity: WHO draws a new treatment line

Children with obesity under the age of 9 should not be given weight-loss medicines, bariatric surgery or weight-loss devices, while adolescents aged 10-19 could be considered for approved anti-obesity medicines if a supervised programme combining diet, physical activity and behavioural interventions fails to deliver the desired results.

That age-based treatment divide is among the sharpest takeaways from the World Health Organisation's (WHO's) new guideline on the integrated management of obesity in children and adolescents – a significant shift from its earlier guidance, which focused more on identifying, preventing and managing excess weight in young children.

The advisory covers kids and adolescents aged 29 days to 19 years.

The new guideline treats obesity as a chronic, relapsing disease that can require long-term, structured care rather than simply telling a child to eat less and exercise more.

The scale of the problem explains the shift. In 2024, an estimated 170 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were living with obesity, including 70 million children aged 5-9 and 100 million adolescents aged 10-19. Obesity prevalence in this age group has quadrupled since 1990, rising from 2% to 8%.

For India, the issue is particularly complex. The country is dealing with a double burden of malnutrition – undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies on one side and increasing overweight and obesity on the other.

Rapid changes in diets, greater consumption of energy-dense packaged foods, sedentary lifestyles and longer screen time have made childhood obesity an increasingly important public-health concern.

The WHO does not use the adult definition of obesity – a BMI of 30 or above for children because their bodies are constantly growing and their body composition changes with age and sex.

For children aged 5-19 years, obesity is defined as BMI-for-age more than two standard deviations above the WHO growth-reference median. For children under five, WHO defines obesity as weight-for-height more than three standard deviations above the WHO Child Growth Standards median.

That distinction matters because childhood obesity is not simply about body weight. Excess adiposity during the growing years can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other non-communicable diseases later in life. Children can also face bullying, stigma and discrimination because of their weight.

The new WHO guidance therefore moves away from viewing obesity purely as an individual behavioural problem and recognises the influence of biology, genetics, food environments, physical activity, behaviour and wider social factors.

Need to add more fiber to your diet? Try these snacks for better blood sugar control

Fiber doesn't get much attention, but it is an important part of a healthy diet. It supports digestion, keeps you full for longer and may help control blood sugar. Still, many adults do not get enough fibre every day. Adding more fibre does not always mean changing your entire diet. Some simple snacks can also increase your daily intake. Nutritionist Deepsikha Jain has shared four food options that can add more fibre to your meals and snacks.

On Instagram, Jain shares, "The first one is half to one avocado. A half avocado has five to six grams of fibre and it's also rich in

prebiotics. This can actually help you keep you much fuller for longer. Second one is blueberries. They are also a great snack option if you want more fibre. Also, these are rich in anthocyanin that can help you manage your inflammation much better."

"Third one is going to be two pieces of dark chocolate. Dark chocolate is a very good snack to get in at least two to three grams of fibre per piece. Obviously, the last one has to be four to five walnuts. Walnuts are a great nut option with more fibre, more omega 3s that can manage your inflammation and also your blood sugars much better. So save this the next time you want

more fibre."

Narayana Health explains that the amount of fibre a person needs each day depends on their age and sex. Men aged 19 to 50 need around 38 grams daily, while men above 51 need 30 grams. Women aged 19 to 50 need around 25 grams and women above 51 need about 21 grams.

Pregnant women may need 28 grams a day, while breastfeeding women will need around 29 grams of fibre. These numbers are general guidelines and the right amount can be different for each person. A health expert can suggest the right intake based on a person's health and diet.

Source:NDTV

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Google launches website to help you detect AI slop, here is how it works

Not sure whether that image or video you just saw online is real or an AI deepfake? Google has a new tool that could help you find out. The company has made its SynthID Detector publicly available, allowing users to check whether an image, video or audio file was created or edited using supported AI tools.

The website is now available globally in English, after previously being offered in limited access to journalists, media professionals and testers. Google says SynthID Detector can identify content made using its own AI tools as well as supported systems from partners including OpenAI, NVIDIA and Kakao. Support for Apple-generated content is also expected soon.

Google's deepfake detector website is based on SynthID, the company's watermarking technology for AI-generated content. The system adds an invisible watermark to AI-generated media when it is created. Unlike a visible logo or label, the watermark cannot be seen in an image or heard in an audio file.

Google says these watermarks are designed to remain detectable even after common changes are made to a file, such as cropping, applying colour filters, changing the frame rate or using lossy compression.

To use Google's SynthID Detector, simply upload a supported image, video or audio file. The tool will scan it for an invisible SynthID watermark and, if it finds one, indicate whether the content



was created or modified using an AI system that supports SynthID.

Google has also integrated similar verification features into some of its other products. Users can check suspected content through Gemini, Search and Chrome, while Circle to Search can look for SynthID watermarks as well as C2PA content credentials.

There is one important thing to keep in mind, though. SynthID Detector is not a universal AI detector. It can only identify content if it has a SynthID watermark, so AI-generated images, videos or audio made using tools that do

not support SynthID may not be detected.

Google has used SynthID to watermark more than 180 billion images and videos, along with around 240,000 years of audio. The company claims that its verification features across Search, Gemini and Chrome now handle more than one million requests every day.

Where is SynthID Detector available? SynthID Detector is available globally through the web in English. Google is also expanding support across its products and partner AI systems, with Apple support expected in the future.

Artemis-II astronauts saw flashes on the Moon as they circled it. What were they?

Nasa's Artemis II astronauts witnessed something extraordinary while flying around the Moon: tiny flashes of light suddenly appearing on its dark surface, nearly 74,000 kilometres away.

The flashes, initially appearing as faint pinpricks of light, were caused by small rocky fragments crashing into the lunar surface at tremendous speeds.

The observations were part of a planned scientific experiment during the Artemis II mission, which flew around the Moon in April 2026.

Lunar scientists had specifically asked the astronauts to watch for impact flashes. However, even the scientists were surprised when the crew reported spotting five extremely faint bursts of light from such a vast distance.

According to Nasa, the flashes were produced by tiny space rocks, likely no larger than a couple of inches across, striking the Moon at thousands of miles per hour.

Despite their small size, the tremendous speed of these fragments released enough energy upon impact to produce brief flashes visible to the human eye.

Unlike Earth, the Moon has virtually no atmosphere to burn up incoming space debris. As a result, even tiny fragments can strike its surface directly.

Scientists initially considered whether the flashes could have been caused by cosmic rays or reflections from the Orion spacecraft. After examining the observations, the science team confirmed them as lunar impact flashes.

The sightings occurred while Orion was travelling around the Moon's far side during a planned communications blackout.

At the time, the astronauts were experiencing a nearly hour-long total solar eclipse, with the Moon blocking the Sun and creating exceptionally dark viewing conditions.

Nasa astronauts Reid Wiseman and Victor Glover, along with Canadian astronaut Jeremy Hansen, recorded the locations of the flashes on a tablet.

Apollo astronauts had previously reported similar events, but Nasa scientists believe the Artemis II crew may have witnessed some of the faintest lunar impact flashes ever detected with the unaided eye.



OpenAI launches Intelligent UI for ChatGPT, it can show you interactive visuals and buttons

OpenAI wants to change the way you use ChatGPT. The company has announced Intelligent UI. As the name suggests, this feature brings a major overhaul to how the AI chatbot shows you results, including interactive visuals and buttons. Intelligent UI was launched alongside the new GPT-4 AI model.

In a blog post, OpenAI said that GPT-4 was trained to decide when an interactive format could be more useful than just plain text. When the model does pick an interactive format, it may combine written responses with diagrams, charts, forms, tappable buttons and other interactive elements, instead of solely using text.

According to OpenAI, the format of the answer will depend on the question you ask ChatGPT. A comparison may appear side by side or an explanation may be shown through an interactive diagram.

The company showed various



examples of how the feature works. In one, the user gives the prompt, "break down the design of a seven-speed bike." ChatGPT then creates a diagram of the bike with different buttons that highlight specific parts such as the Wheels or the Drivetrain. ChatGPT can also create tools for you such as

calculators for splitting bills, or even create an interface for retro games within the chatbot.

Alongside the new interface, OpenAI said GPT-4 improves response speed by allowing ChatGPT to begin answering while it continues to think. GPT-4 performs better on web searches, and starts answering search-based questions sooner on average than GPT-3.5 Turbo.

At the same time, OpenAI added that GPT-4 showed stronger resistance to attempts to bypass its safety training and is better at recognising and communicating the limits of its own capabilities.

GPT-4 with Intelligent UI is now rolling out globally to ChatGPT Plus, Pro, Business and Enterprise users in the Chat tab. ChatGPT Free and Go users will get access to the new models and the UI from this week. Higher-tier subscribers will use GPT-4o, while Free and Go users will get the more efficient GPT-4o mini model.

Oil prices fall as Trump rules out Iran attack before US midterm elections

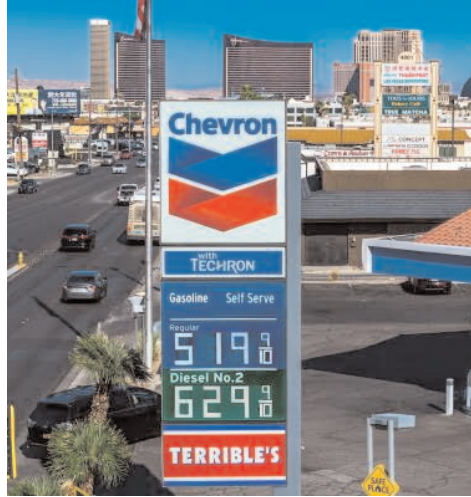
OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): Crude oil prices fell on Friday, Oct 9, as concerns over potential supply disruptions in the Middle East eased after US President Donald Trump said Washington would not attack Iran before next month's midterm elections, while pointing to progress in talks aimed at ending the conflict.

Brent crude futures declined 72 cents, or 0.7%, to \$103.53 a barrel, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures fell 52 cents, or 0.6%, to \$90.97 by 7.50 am IST, according to market data. Reuters reported that the easing in prices followed Trump's remarks about ongoing discussions with Tehran.

Despite Friday's decline, Brent remained on course for a weekly gain after settling around 4% higher on Thursday, when increased attacks on shipping carrying crude from the Middle East heightened concerns about supply disruptions. WTI, meanwhile, was headed for a slight weekly decline, with the market also factoring in supply interruptions caused by a hurricane approaching the US Gulf Coast.

Trump said on Thursday that Washington was engaged in "productive discussions" with Iran and that the US



would not launch an attack before the November 3 midterm congressional elections. His remarks helped ease immediate fears of military escalation, although uncertainty over the negotiations and the broader security situation continued to keep traders cautious.

The Strait of Hormuz remains a major concern for energy markets. Before the conflict, the strategic waterway carried shipments equivalent to about one-fifth of global oil and fuel supplies. Any prolonged disruption to traffic through the strait could tighten supplies and put upward pressure on prices.

Iran's Tasnim news agency reported on Thursday that Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi was reviewing the US response to a proposal that could reopen the Strait of Hormuz within seven days. The outcome of the discussions could prove important for restoring shipping flows and reducing uncertainty in global energy markets.

Meanwhile, Washington continued to exert economic pressure on Tehran. The US announced fresh sanctions targeting individuals, networks and 17 vessels involved in transporting Iranian crude oil, petroleum products and petrochemicals, adding another layer of uncertainty to the supply outlook.

Oil markets are also contending with the impact of Hurricane Isaias in the Gulf of Mexico. US offshore producers had shut in about 1.3 million barrels per day of oil production, equivalent to 62.9% of current output, as of Thursday, according to figures cited in the Reuters report.

With geopolitical tensions, shipping risks and weather-related disruptions affecting supplies, traders are expected to remain sensitive to developments in US-Iran negotiations and changes in crude production and transportation. Friday's decline offered some relief, but the outlook for oil prices remained uncertain.



US, Russia explore Nord Stream revival as talks consider American investor

OCTOBER 9, 2026

BERLIN/WASHINGTON (TIP): Russia could be exploring a route to resume natural gas supplies to Europe through the Nord Stream pipelines, with senior Russian and US officials reportedly discussing the possibility of bringing an American investor into the infrastructure that once transported Russian gas directly to Germany.

The discussions involve US Special Envoy Jared Kushner and Kirill Dmitriev, a close adviser to Russian President Vladimir Putin, according to five people familiar with the matter cited by Reuters. The talks come amid broader efforts to explore economic cooperation between Washington and Moscow alongside negotiations over the war in Ukraine.

Before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Germany sourced more than half of its natural gas from Russia through the Nord Stream pipelines. The undersea infrastructure was subsequently taken out of operation, and explosions in September 2022 severely damaged the pipelines.

Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 were designed to transport Russian gas across the Baltic Sea directly to Germany, bypassing transit countries. Their potential revival could reshape Europe's energy landscape, but the reported discussions remain exploratory, with no confirmed agreement to restart deliveries.

Any effort to restore supplies faces significant legal and political obstacles. US and European Union sanctions affecting the Nord Stream pipelines mean that resuming deliveries would be illegal under existing restrictions, Reuters reported, citing a US official. An American investment alone would not remove those restrictions or guarantee permission to resume operations.

A White House official said any potential agreement would have to be negotiated by Russia with the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) and the Treasury Department, and would need to benefit American taxpayers and businesses. The official also said there had been no recent discussions specifically concerning Nord Stream.

GST 2.0 upgrade: Easier compliance, no arrests

OCTOBER 9, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council on Thursday, Oct 8, approved process reforms to complete GST 2.0, including revoking arrest powers of tax officials, dropping tax notices below Rs 10,000, including pending ones, speeding up refunds and allowing input tax credit on employee health and life insurance, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said.

After rate rationalisation — when the Council in September 2025 cut the slabs to two, from 5%, 12%, 18% and 28% — the Council turned to process reforms to help businesses and taxpayers. "Pehle daron mein rahat, ab prakriyaon mein aasani (after relief in rates, now ease in processes)," the finance minister said in Hindi, after the 57th GST Council meeting concluded in New Delhi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed the reforms, saying that they were "in line" with the government's "constant efforts to make GST more efficient, transparent and citizen-friendly".

"The Council's recommendations on removal of arrest provisions, greater decriminalisation and simpler procedures will have a very positive impact," he posted on X.

Sitharaman said process reforms were taken up after GST 2.0 stabilised following the rate rationalisation of



Nirmala Sitharaman

September 2025. A year after the two-rate structure (5% and 18%) was introduced, taxable supply is up 25.8%, from ₹40.19 lakh crore a month to ₹50.58 lakh crore, according to official data. Gross monthly GST collections now hover around ₹2 lakh crore, registering double-digit growth on an annualised basis.

Outlining some key decisions of the Council, Sitharaman said automatic registration within three working days was already available to low-risk and other eligible applicants, and the Council has now decided to accept routine changes in registration particulars automatically, such as the address of an additional place of business. Cancellation of registration by the taxpayer will also be easier, she said.

Sitharaman said the 57th GST Council did not consider any rate changes as it

had completed that task last year. She announced that the Council will take up rate changes only once a year, and any changes will take effect from April 1, a reform meant to ensure tax certainty and predictability. The Union finance minister chairs the Council, the apex decision-making body for the indirect tax, and finance ministers of states and Union territories are its members. By convention, its decisions are unanimous.

The Council has also made refunds faster. Taxpayers will get acknowledgement in 10 days instead of 15, with deemed acknowledgement where no response is issued, she said. Based on a risk assessment, the system will sanction 90% of the amount claimed within three working days of acknowledgement, down from seven. "It will enhance working capital for businesses," the FM said.

The Council recommended allowing input tax credit (ITC) on more business expenses, including employee health and life insurance and telecom towers.

Refunds under the inverted duty structure, where inputs are taxed at a higher rate than output, will also cover input services, for credit availed from November 1, 2026, she said. For a smooth rollout, phased refunds of tax paid on plant and machinery will cover eligible credit availed from April 1, 2027, she added.

Source: HT

Sharad Navratri: Nine nights of Shakti, devotion and the triumph of good over evil

Sharad Navratri, the nine-night festival dedicated to the divine feminine, will begin on October 11, 2026, and culminate on October 19, with Vijayadashami falling on October 20. The festival brings together prayer, fasting, ritual, music and community celebrations while inviting devotees to reflect on the deeper meaning of strength, compassion, wisdom and spiritual renewal.

Every year, as the autumn season sets in, India comes alive with the energy of Sharad Navratri. Homes are cleaned and decorated, temples glow with lamps, devotional songs fill the air and communities gather for Garba, Dandiya and Durga Puja celebrations. Yet beyond the color and spectacle lies a deeply spiritual festival centred on Shakti - the divine feminine power that sustains, protects and transforms the universe.

Navratri literally means "nine nights". During these nine days, devotees worship the nine manifestations of Goddess Durga, collectively known as the Navadurga. Each form represents a distinctive quality of the divine - from courage and penance to motherhood, wisdom, destruction of evil and spiritual fulfillment.

The 2026 festival begins with Ghatasthapana and the worship of Goddess Shailputri on October 11. The nine-day observance concludes on October 19, while Vijayadashami or Dussehra will be celebrated on October 20.

The sacred beginning: Ghatasthapana

The first day of Navratri marks the invocation of the Goddess through Ghatasthapana, or Kalash Sthapana. A sacred pot filled with water and adorned with mango leaves and a coconut is installed as part of the ritual. In many homes, barley seeds are also sown in a decorated vessel. Their growth over the nine days becomes a symbol of life, prosperity and renewal.

Devotees begin their day with a bath, prayers and meditation before performing the puja. Flowers, fruits and other offerings are presented to the Goddess, while sacred texts and hymns are recited. The atmosphere of Navratri encourages devotees to turn inward, observe discipline and devote time to prayer and contemplation.

The festival's emphasis on austerity is particularly evident in the practice of fasting. Many devotees abstain from grains and certain spices and instead consume fruits, potatoes, sweet potatoes, buckwheat, water chestnut flour, sabudana and makhana. Rock salt, or sendha namak, is commonly used in fasting meals. But fasting is not merely viewed as dietary restriction. At its heart is the idea of self-control and purification - an opportunity to step away from excess and concentrate on spiritual discipline.



Nine forms, nine dimensions of Shakti

The nine days of Navratri are devoted to nine manifestations of Goddess Durga. Together, they portray different

dimensions of feminine power.

Day 1 - Maa Shailputri

The first day is dedicated to Shailputri, meaning the daughter of the mountains.

Depicted riding a white bull and carrying a trident and lotus, she represents the beginning of the spiritual journey and the grounded, nurturing aspect of the divine feminine.

Day 2 - Maa Brahmacharini

The second day honours Brahmacharini, the embodiment of devotion, penance and perseverance. She carries a rudraksha mala and kamandalu. Her form reminds devotees of the strength that comes from patience, discipline and dedication.

Day 3 - Maa Chandraghanta

On the third day, devotees worship Chandraghanta, the warrior form of Durga associated with courage and divine protection. She is depicted with multiple arms carrying weapons and other sacred objects and is shown riding a tiger.

Day 4 - Maa Kushmanda

The fourth day belongs to Kushmanda, associated with the creative power of the universe. Her eight-armed form represents Mahashakti, the supreme creative energy. She is traditionally depicted riding a lion.

Day 5 - Maa Skandamata

The fifth day celebrates Skandamata, the maternal manifestation of the Goddess. She is depicted holding her son Kartikeya while seated on a lion. Her worship highlights motherhood, compassion and protection.

Day 6 - Maa Katyayani

The sixth day is dedicated to Katyayani, the warrior Goddess. Armed with weapons and mounted on a lion, she represents courage, strength and the determination to confront evil.

Day 7 - Maa Kaalratri

The seventh day invokes Kaalratri, the fierce form of Durga associated with the destruction of darkness and evil. Her formidable appearance symbolises the power to overcome fear and remove negativity.

Day 8 - Maa Mahagauri

The eighth day, Ashtami, is devoted to Mahagauri, traditionally associated with purity, beauty and spiritual renewal. She is depicted in a serene form, riding a white bull and blessing her devotees.

Day 9 - Maa Siddhidatri

The final day honours Siddhidatri, the Goddess associated with spiritual accomplishment and perfection. Seated on a lotus, she represents the culmination of the devotee's journey towards higher consciousness and divine fulfilment.

In the 2026 calendar, Ashtami and Navami observances coincide on October 19 in the cited Panchang calendar, making it an especially significant day of worship.

From Page 41



Goddess Shailputri



Goddess Chandraghanta



Goddess Kushmanda



Goddess Brahmacharini



Goddess Skandmata



Goddess Katyayani



Goddess Kaalratri



Goddess Mahagauri

From prayer to celebration

Navratri's spiritual character does not exclude celebration. Instead, devotion and cultural expression become intertwined.

In Gujarat, the nights are marked by energetic Garba and Dandiya, with devotees gathering in colourful traditional attire. In West Bengal and other eastern regions, the period is closely associated with Durga Puja, elaborate pandals and artistic depictions of Goddess Durga. Northern India observes the period through fasting, devotional gatherings and Ramlila, culminating in Dussehra. Across different regions, the customs may vary, but the central theme remains the triumph of righteousness over evil.

The festival therefore becomes a remarkable expression of India's cultural diversity. The same divine story is experienced through different languages, foods, rituals, music and artistic traditions.

Kanya Puja: Celebrating the feminine

One of the most significant observances associated with Ashtami and Navami is Kanya Puja, in which young girls are traditionally worshipped as manifestations of the Goddess.

Their feet are washed and they are offered food as a sacred gesture of respect. The meal commonly includes preparations such as puri, halwa and chickpea curry.

The ritual carries a powerful symbolic message: the divine feminine is not confined to an image in a temple but is

recognised in living human beings. It places reverence for feminine energy at the heart of the celebration.

Ayudha Puja and the dignity of work

In several communities, the festival also includes Ayudha or Astra Puja, during which tools, vehicles, instruments and equipment are worshipped. The practice reflects an important philosophy - that the objects through which people earn their livelihood deserve respect. Whether the tool is a farmer's implement, a craftsman's equipment, a musician's instrument or a modern machine, it becomes part of the ritual of gratitude.

The tradition also connects Navratri with learning. In some communities, children begin their formal education during the festival with prayers to Goddess Saraswati, the embodiment of knowledge and wisdom.

The discipline of fasting

Fasting remains one of the most visible practices of Navratri. For many devotees, it involves abstaining from grains, regular table salt and selected foods while eating specially prepared vrat dishes.

Sabudana, makhana, buckwheat flour and water chestnut flour feature prominently in fasting cuisine. Sabudana vada, kuttu puri, potato preparations, sweet potato dishes and makhana-based foods are among popular choices.

Yet the deeper purpose of the fast is

restraint. By simplifying food and daily habits, devotees seek to create space for prayer, reflection and spiritual discipline.

The deeper meaning of Navratri

At its core, Navratri is a celebration of the victory of good over evil. The Goddess represents the force that confronts darkness and restores balance.

But the battle can also be understood symbolically. The nine nights offer an opportunity to confront the negative forces within oneself - fear, anger, greed, ego and distraction - and replace them with courage, discipline, compassion and wisdom. The festival thus becomes an annual moment of renewal.

Its rituals encourage devotees to pause amid the demands of everyday life. Its fasts promote restraint. Its prayers encourage introspection. Its celebrations create community. And its stories remind people that righteousness requires both inner strength and the courage to act.

Festival that unites tradition & modern life

Navratri has travelled far beyond temples and traditional homes. Indian communities around the world now celebrate the festival through cultural associations, public Garba events, devotional gatherings and community programs.

Its appeal lies partly in this ability to evolve without losing its central message. Traditional rituals coexist with contemporary celebrations, while younger generations discover their



Goddess Siddhidhatri

heritage through music, dance, food and storytelling. For the Indian diaspora, Navratri can become more than a religious observance - it can be a bridge to language, family traditions and cultural memory.

Nine nights of reflection

As Sharad Navratri arrives in 2026, its familiar sights and sounds will once again fill homes and communities with festive energy. But behind the lamps, colours and celebrations lies a quieter invitation: to discover strength within, overcome negativity and renew one's commitment to a life guided by faith and righteousness.

Shiva and Shakti: The eternal union of consciousness and power

In the vast philosophical landscape of Hindu traditions, few ideas are as profound and evocative as the eternal union of Shiva and Shakti. They are often represented as a divine masculine and feminine couple, but their significance extends far beyond gender or mythology. In Tantric cosmology, Shiva and Shakti represent two inseparable dimensions of the One - consciousness and energy, stillness and movement, transcendence and manifestation. The universe, according to this vision, does not exist through one principle acting alone. It is created, sustained and ultimately withdrawn through the interaction of these two fundamental forces. Shiva represents the unchanging ground of existence, while Shakti is the dynamic power through which that existence becomes active and visible. This relationship gives rise to one of the most powerful philosophical ideas associated with Shaktism: there is no Shiva without Shakti, and no Shakti without Shiva.

Shiva: The principle of pure consciousness

In the metaphysical understanding of the Shiva-Shakti tradition, Shiva represents the abiding, transcendent aspect of the Divine. He is associated with pure consciousness - still, limitless and beyond the changing world of forms.

Shiva's familiar image as the meditating ascetic captures this dimension beautifully. Seated in profound stillness, detached from worldly distractions, he represents consciousness untouched by the fluctuations of creation.

Yet stillness alone cannot produce manifestation. This is where Shakti enters the cosmic picture.

Shakti: Power that makes creation move

Shakti literally embodies divine power or energy. She is the dynamic potency through which the universe comes alive and through which the forces of creation operate. If Shiva represents the potential for existence, Shakti represents that potential in action.

She is therefore understood as the immanent aspect of the Divine - the force actively participating in creation and life. Nature, movement, transformation, fertility, creativity and the countless processes through which existence expresses itself are associated with her dynamic principle. This helps explain why the Goddess occupies such a central place in Shaktism.

The Divine Feminine is not simply regarded as a consort or companion of a male deity. Shakti is herself the cosmic force through which the Divine becomes active in the manifested universe.

Two aspects, one reality

The distinction between Shiva and Shakti should not be mistaken for a separation. Tantric philosophy presents them as complementary aspects of a

In the Tantric vision, Shiva is the stillness of pure consciousness while Shakti is the dynamic force that makes creation possible. Together, they represent the eternal unity at the heart of existence.



single reality. Shiva without Shakti would remain pure, unmoving consciousness; Shakti without Shiva would lack the transcendent ground from which her energy arises.

Their relationship can therefore be understood through several complementary pairs:

- Shiva is consciousness; Shakti is energy.
- Shiva is stillness; Shakti is movement.
- Shiva is transcendence; Shakti is manifestation.
- Shiva is the eternal ground; Shakti is the power of creation.
- The two are ultimately one.

This philosophical unity is reflected in the iconic image of Ardhanarishvara, in which Shiva and Shakti are represented as two halves of a single divine form. The image expresses the idea that masculine and feminine principles are not opposing realities but inseparable dimensions of existence.

The Shakta vision

Shaktism places the Divine Feminine at the centre of spiritual understanding. This does not necessarily mean rejecting masculine or neuter conceptions of divinity. Rather, Shaktism emphasises that manifestation and activity are impossible without Shakti.

A celebrated line associated with Adi Shankara's Saundaryalahari expresses the idea powerfully: "If Shiva is united with Shakti, he is able to create."

The philosophical message is clear: consciousness may be fundamental, but it is Shakti that enables consciousness to

express itself through creation.

The traditional image of Goddess Kali standing upon Shiva communicates this paradox in striking visual form. Shiva lies apparently still beneath her while Kali embodies overwhelming movement and power. The image is not simply one of dominance. It represents the relationship between the unchanging and the dynamic - the consciousness that provides the ground and the energy that acts upon it.

The three dimensions of Shakti

Within the philosophical traditions described in the source material, Shakti is distinguished into three broad aspects:

Para-Shakti - Transcendental Energy

Para-Shakti represents the supreme or transcendental dimension of divine energy. It points towards the reality beyond ordinary manifestation and the highest level of spiritual existence.

Apara-Shakti - Immanent Energy

Apara-Shakti represents the energy present within the manifested universe. It is the force experienced through life, nature, action and creation.

Para-Apara-Shakti - The Intermediate Energy

Para-Apara-Shakti occupies an intermediate position between transcendence and manifestation, connecting the two dimensions.

Together, these aspects express the many ways in which the one divine power can be understood.

The five powers of Shakti

Shaiva traditions also describe five

fundamental powers through which Shakti operates. These are often presented as dimensions of divine consciousness and activity:

- Chit-Shakti - The Power of Consciousness
- Chit-Shakti represents consciousness itself - the awareness underlying existence.

The story of Shiva and Sati

The philosophical relationship between Shiva and Shakti is also expressed through powerful mythology.

One of the best-known stories concerns Sati, the first wife of Shiva and an embodiment of Shakti.

According to the traditional narrative, Sati was the daughter of Daksha, who did not approve of her marriage to Shiva. When Daksha later organised a great yajna, Shiva and Sati were not invited.

Despite Shiva's reluctance, Sati went to her father's gathering. There, she was deeply distressed by Daksha's disrespect towards Shiva. Unable to bear the humiliation, Sati immolated herself in the sacrificial fire.

When Shiva learned of Sati's death, he was overcome with grief and fury. Carrying her body, he began the terrifying Rudra Tandava, the cosmic dance of destruction.

The universe itself appeared to be threatened by the intensity of his grief and anger.

According to the legend, Vishnu intervened and used his divine weapon to separate Sati's body. The places where parts of her body are believed to have fallen became sacred Shakti Peethas, centres of worship of the Divine Feminine.

Among the important Shakti sites associated with this tradition are Kamakhya in Assam and Vindhyavasini in Uttar Pradesh.

The story transforms personal grief into a cosmic myth about separation, destruction and eventual renewal.

From Sati to Parvati

Following Sati's death, Shiva withdrew into profound meditation in the Himalayas.

But Shakti was not absent from the world.

She was reborn as Parvati, daughter of the Himalayas. Determined to unite with Shiva once again, Parvati undertook intense austerities and devotion.

Her spiritual discipline eventually won Shiva's attention. With the intervention and encouragement of sages and the divine forces, Shiva and Parvati were ultimately reunited in marriage.

The union is one of the most enduring images in Hindu mythology: the ascetic Shiva and the devoted Parvati coming together as complementary forces.

CONTD FROM PAGE 12

39th Annual Deepavali Festival Brings Indian Culture, Music, Community and Fireworks to Long Island

In his message, Senator Schumer also recognized AIA-NY's commitment to serving older adults and highlighted a **\$100,000 federal grant supporting senior wellness and community programs.**

AIA-NY expressed its sincere appreciation to Senator Schumer for his Diwali message and for recognizing the importance of supporting seniors and strengthening the community.

U.S. CONGRESSMAN TOM SUOZZI JOINS THE CELEBRATION

U.S. Congressman Tom Suozzi attended the celebration and shared his Diwali greetings with the community.

"Happy Diwali! It was wonderful to celebrate with the Indian American community," U.S. Congressman Suozzi said. "Let's carry forward the messages of Ganesh Chaturthi, Navratri, Dussehra, and Diwali: overcoming obstacles, finding strength and courage, choosing good over evil, and lighting a candle of hope in the darkness."

STRONG SUPPORT FROM TOWN OF BABYLON AND SUFFOLK COUNTY LEADERS

The festival was honored by the presence of **Town of Babylon Supervisor Rich Schaffer**, along with fellow elected officials and community leaders.

Town of Babylon Councilman Anthony Manetta also joined the celebration, while **Suffolk County Legislator Jason Richberg**, representing Legislative District 15, participated in the festivities.

Representatives from the Town of Babylon, including the **Chief Fire Marshal, Public Safety Commissioner and Park Commissioner**, also joined the community at Overlook Beach.

AIA-NY expressed its appreciation to Supervisor Schaffer, Councilman Manetta, Legislator Richberg and all Town of Babylon and Suffolk County officials who attended and helped recognize the importance of Indian heritage, culture and the contributions of the Indian-American community to Long Island.

A CELEBRATION MADE POSSIBLE BY THE COMMUNITY

AIA-NY credited the success of the festival to the dedication of its Executive Committee, Board of Trustees, Past Presidents, advisors, members,



Performers and organizers

volunteers, performers, parents, teachers, sponsors, vendors, media partners, community organizations and supporters.

"Every successful celebration is built by people who believe in the mission and are willing to work together" Beena Kothari said. "I am deeply grateful to every person who gave their time, opened their hearts and helped make this celebration possible. Our children, volunteers, sponsors, media partners, past presidents, trustees and the entire AIA-NY Team are the pillars of this organization. Your dedication has not gone unnoticed, and I am truly honored to share this journey with you."

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE EMCEES AND THE CULTURAL TEAM

AIA-NY extended special appreciation to its emcees - **Gautam Chopra, Ananya Kavi, Kaavya Ramani, Swati Bhansali, Cultural Chair Jyoti Gupta and Gunjan Rastogi** - for guiding the audience and bringing energy, warmth and professionalism to the stage throughout the day.

The organization also thanked the volunteers, teachers, schools, choreographers, performers, parents and children who dedicated countless hours to preparing and presenting the cultural program.

"Our children are our future, and watching them proudly share their heritage and talents was one of the most meaningful parts of the celebration," AIA-NY President Beena Kothari said.

SPECIAL APPRECIATION TO ARJUN

AIA-NY offered special thanks to Arjun, the British Indian singer who traveled from the United Kingdom to perform for the Long Island, NY and the Tristate community. His nearly hour-long performance brought tremendous energy to the festival and was enjoyed by audiences of all ages.

GRATITUDE TO AIA-NY LEADERSHIP

AIA-NY also expressed its deep appreciation to its Executive Committee, Board Members, Trustees, Advisors, members and organizing team.

Special recognition was given to **Dr. Sharad Kothari, Dr. Bal Gilja, Dr. Tarun Wasil, Harsh Vyas, Anita Thakkar, Jyoti Kothapalli and Navneet Kothari** for their dedication, teamwork and countless hours of behind-the-scenes work, without them this tremendously successful Festival would not have been possible.

The organization also thanked its Past Presidents and longtime pillars whose leadership, experience and

continued support have helped build the foundation of AIA-NY.

THANK YOU TO COMMUNITY LEADERS, VENDORS AND MEDIA PARTNERS

AIA-NY expressed its sincere appreciation to the community leaders, elected officials, dignitaries and guests who joined the celebration and shared their Diwali wishes.

The organization also thanked the festival's vendors, whose food, shopping and cultural offerings helped create a vibrant marketplace and brought the richness of India to Overlook Beach.

AIA-NY further recognized its media partners, including Newsday, Long Island Press and Indian American media organizations, for their coverage and continued support in sharing the community's stories, traditions and accomplishments.

A CELEBRATION BELONGING TO THE COMMUNITY

With an estimated **10,000 visitors throughout the day**, the 39th Annual Deepavali Festival demonstrated the strength, diversity and spirit of the Indian American community on Long Island, NY and from the tristate.

"And finally, thank you to every single person who attended - every family, senior, child, young person, performer, supporter and visitor who came to Overlook Beach and celebrated Deepavali with us," Beena Kothari said.

"This celebration belonged to all of you. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for believing in AIA-NY, for supporting our mission, for celebrating our heritage and for helping us build bridges of light, unity and community."

"This Diwali, AIA-NY rode the waves of change - from the riverbanks of our past to the oceanfront of our future. Together, we are building a bridge of light, unity and joy that connects every generation of Indians in America."

ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION OF INDIANS IN AMERICA

Established in 1967, the **Association of Indians in America (AIA)** is one of the oldest national Indian-American organizations in the United States. Guided by its motto, **"Indian Heritage, American Commitment,"** AIA works to serve, educate, empower and unite communities while promoting Indian heritage and strengthening civic and cultural connections in America.

(Based on a Press Release issued by AIA-NY)



Spectacular Fireworks



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

ARIES



Ganesha says this week is a positive and encouraging time for Aries natives. There will be a flow of collective energy in your life, which will strengthen all kinds of relationships. If you wanted to reconnect with an old friend, this is the right time. A feeling of love and cooperation will awaken in your heart, which will also increase your social circle. Take the initiative to increase mutual understanding and harmony in relationships; this will increase the warmth between you even more. At this time, there will be an atmosphere of positivity around you, which will allow you to spend good moments with your loved ones. Some new friendships or relationships may also be formed, which will bring new happiness to your life. This week will give you a lot of happiness in terms of love, friendship, and social engagement. Recognize your inner feelings and do not hesitate to express them. Every day of this week will be full of hope and love for you. This is the time for you to deepen relationships.

TAURUS



Ganesha says this week is very positive and encouraging for Taurus natives. This is the right time to welcome new opportunities in your life. You will be able to strengthen relationships with people around you. Due to your sociability and friendly nature, you will actively participate in social activities, which will bring freshness to your relationships. During this week, focus on matters that can make your kinship deeper. Be it friendship or family relationship, your open style of communication will spread positivity everywhere. If you are thinking of starting a new relationship, then this time is favorable. Your feelings will be clear and strong, which will make you enjoy the company of your loved ones more. Keep in mind that the energy level of this week will help you to establish harmony with others, and this will result in an increase in mutual understanding and love. This week will bring you a chance for a new beginning, which will make your personal relationship even sweeter.

GEMINI



Ganesha says this week can be somewhat challenging for Gemini natives. During this period, you need to pay attention to your emotions and mental state. It will be important to maintain composure in whatever situation you come across. You

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - OCT 12, 2026 TO OCT 18, 2026

BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

may feel a kind of restlessness inside you, due to which you will experience difficulty in thinking clearly. Social and personal relationships may be slightly hindered, which may make you feel insecure. This is the time for you to identify the truth and clarify your thoughts. Avoid hesitation in expressing your feelings; this may improve your situation. Taking some time for meditation and peace will also be beneficial. Communicate with your loved ones this week; this will make you feel more empowered. Overall, this week is about understanding and taking cognizance of your inner restlessness, so that you can move forward and strengthen your relationships.

CANCER



Ganesha says this week will be very wonderful overall for Cancer natives. A new positive energy will flow in your life, which will inspire you to strengthen your relationships. This time is ideal to spend with your close ones. You will be successful in strengthening your emotional bonds, which will give you security and satisfaction. You will feel happy in the company of your loved ones. Small things will make your heart happy. This week is a time of communication, where you will be able to share your feelings openly. By keeping transparency and clarity in relationships, you can eliminate any misunderstandings. Your sensitivity and understanding will bring stability in relationships this week. You will take time to establish a deep connection with your partner, which will make the mutual relationship even sweeter. Overall, this week will bring a positive change in your relationships.

LEO



Ganesha says this week, you may face some difficulties in relationships. You may feel that there are some communication issues going on in your relationships. This time shows the need for deeper communication with the people around you. Try to express your feelings openly, as this can reduce your worries. Maintain positivity and, most importantly, move forward with patience and empathy. Spending time with your loved ones will be very important for you this week, so that you will be able to understand and support each other. Share your concerns and seek their solutions wisely. During this period, avoid any kind of negativity and spread positive energy. You will continue to get the support of your loved ones, just maintain a little patience and understanding. This is the time for you to strengthen relationships.

VIRGO



Ganesha says this week, the overall situation looks very great for Virgo people. There is a flow of positive energy around you, which will raise your morale and make

you cheerful. This is the time when you will be inspired to share your feelings and thoughts with others. Your relationships will grow sweeter, and you will be able to connect more deeply with your loved ones. In love, your sensitivity and understanding will bring you closer to your partner. Mutual understanding and communication will make your relationship stronger. If you are in a new relationship, this is the right time to express your feelings. Your creativity and self-expression are going to be unparalleled this week. Embracing new ideas and imagination will allow you to reach new heights. All your efforts and relationships will see growth this week, which will bring you satisfaction and happiness. Go ahead because this time is going to prove miraculous for you.

LIBRA



Ganesha says this week, the overall experience is going to be a bit challenging for Libra natives. You will feel that there may be some hindrances in the relationships around you. This is the time when there may be difficulties in communicating with your partner or loved ones. You are full of passion and enthusiasm, but the energy around you may bother you a bit. Be careful in conversations, as any matter can take a big form. You may face ups and downs in various relationships. Perhaps your emotions are a little unstable, which may affect your self-esteem. It is necessary to maintain harmony with the people around you. Establishing mutual interest and understanding should be the priority this week. Be patient and be ready to face some obstacles in love matters. Do not refrain from sharing your emotional thoughts and feelings; it will give you relief. Maintain a positive attitude; this time will also pass.

SCORPIO



Ganesha says this week can be a challenging time for Scorpios. Problems may arise in the surroundings, which may affect your mental balance. There are also chances of tension in personal relationships. This week indicates facing some difficulties in love and relationships. You may feel unable to express your feelings properly, which may increase misunderstandings. You should take care of your relationships with dedication and patience. Try to clarify things and be open in communication. Try to spend quality time with your partner; this can strengthen your mutual relationship. Although this time is challenging for you, keep being patient in exploring new opportunities. Adopt the right way to express your feelings this week, and try to deal with problems with a positive attitude. Remember, every difficulty can also be a learning experience.

SAGITTARIUS



Ganesha says this week will be very positive and dedicated

for Sagittarius natives. There will be a surge of enthusiasm and excitement in your life, which will enable you to bring more depth to your relationships. The bridges of communication will be strengthened at this time, and you will connect heart to heart by spending time with your loved ones. Due to the depth of feelings, you will be happier and satisfied with your friends and family members. This is a great time to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in the weekly period. There will also be an opportunity to enhance your creativity and self-expression, which will enable you to share a new experience with your partner. The more you spend this time strengthening relationships, the better the result you will get. Overall, this week will be very good for Sagittarius from a social and relationship point of view. Express your feelings openly and enjoy this beautiful moment.

CAPRICORN



Ganesha says the overall situation is going to be extremely positive for Capricorn natives this week. There will be a flow of positive energy around you, which will help to lift your morale. You will experience harmony and understanding in your relationships. Spending time with family and friends will bring you happiness and satisfaction. During this time, your communication skills will improve, which will make your relationships even stronger. Your confidence will increase, and due to this, you will be able to express your feelings openly. This time is an opportunity for you to establish deep and meaningful relationships with those closest to you. Positive communication will bring new freshness to your relationships. By capitalizing on this feeling of connecting with each other, you will be able to make your life even more beautiful this week. So, stay away from negativity and welcome positivity. This week will be very pleasant and joyful for you from an overall point of view.

AQUARIUS



Ganesha says there may be many challenges and disruptions for Aquarius natives this week. You may feel that the situation around you is unstable, and this may disturb you mentally. Some differences may arise in relationships, due to which you may feel anxious. This is the time when you need to pay attention to your reactions. Avoid any kind of argument, as it may worsen the situation. Lack of mutual understanding and cooperation can also be seen in your social life. Be careful in communicating with your loved ones, so as not to give rise to any misunderstanding. Your creativity may also be affected, so you may find it difficult to come up with new ideas. This week, make self-introspection and sadhana your priority, so that you can recognize your inner strength. It will not be easy to overcome any negativity, but with self-confidence and patience, you can pass this week.

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BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : OCTOBER 12 TO OCTOBER 18 BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

OCTOBER 12

Ganesha says you are an extremely intelligent individual who is knowledgeable in every field. You will see yourself rise like a brilliant star. Because of your exceptional mental acuity, you can solve puzzles quickly. However, high-paying endeavors could be inconsistent for you despite your organized risk-taking skills. Because you possess unmatched communication skills, which are crucial in today's competitive landscape, you are well aware of the pace of the competition.

OCTOBER 13

Ganesha says, although you may not have as many friends due to your shyness, you will be able to manage the direction of your life methodically because of your unstoppable thoughts and strong ability to conclude. Doing consistently excellent work would also improve your standards. Your close ones should be warned when you exhibit your introverted side, since it needs to be changed to prevent

misunderstandings. In terms of love, don't hold back from expressing your sentiments.

OCTOBER 14

Ganesha says you will have many opportunities to demonstrate your abilities at work, and everyone will be impressed. You'll have to spend time with your family due to circumstances, and you'll steal the show with your electrifying gestures. Your life's stability may improve if you strike it rich. You are a sensible individual. The early games you played with obstacles shaped your tough nature and made it difficult to dominate. The public will like you for who you naturally are. They frequently adhere to you.

OCTOBER 15

Ganesha says your creative spirit will produce win-win circumstances for you everywhere. Today is expected to be good for your devout soul, yet a small slip-up can chafe you. Your job will always be your first passion, and since you spend most of your

time there, it will provide you incredible glory, honor, and surprises. You detest bigots and constantly work to cast a ray of optimism into the gloomy corners. As a result, you are a seasoned warrior.

OCTOBER 16

Ganesha says despite their best efforts, your coworkers and associates are unable to adopt your working style. However, you must adhere to all policies and procedures at work so that no one can ever call your attention to any flaws. Thanks to your unshakable focus and ferocious resolve, you will surely become the center of attention on the professional front. It would also be simpler for you to advance and earn more money.

OCTOBER 17

Ganesha says you are a fountain of intelligence, talent, and potential. No one will ever be able to defeat you at work since you are above all others and unbeatable. You only need a reliable source of money if



you have sharp, refined acumen skills. All of your obstacles will be simply overcome by you. Your communication style will propel you to the top position in your field. Your genre includes serving humanity highly.

OCTOBER 18

Ganesha says you come up with your inventory. Having undiscovered artistic or musical talent might serve as a physical representation of your distinction in life. In this well-known sector, you're likely to start your own business. Not just the home market, but also the global one, will be populated with your ideas. Your life will be easy and peaceful as a result, both in terms of your financial situation and your physical well-being.

CONTD FROM PAGE 44



PISCES

Ganesha says this week, the overall experience for the Pisces natives appears to be a bit difficult. You may face some troubles during this time, especially at the level of your thoughts and feelings. Emotions may be a bit unstable, and you may get lost in some memories of the past. This may hurt your mental health,

making you feel a little anxious. People and relationships around you may also experience some tension during this time. However, this challenging time will provide you with an opportunity to grow and understand yourself. This period will make you feel the need for self-growth. If you take the time to understand your feelings, you can improve your situation. Remember that this is also an opportunity to recognize your inner strength. Try to move

forward with an open mind by stepping out of your assumptions. This week's

challenges can be an opportunity to take steps towards your personal growth.

Author Bio

Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website chiragdaruwalla.com. He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: info@chiragdaruwalla.com

|| SHREE GANESHAY NAMA ||



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Nastur Bejan Daruwalla

Legend of stone and sacrifice: The definitive guide to Chittorgarh Fort

Rising 590 feet above the surrounding plains of Southeastern Rajasthan, the massive plateau of Chittorgarh Fort sprawls across nearly 700 acres, encompassing a 13-kilometer perimeter wall. As the largest fort complex in India and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this ancient citadel is a living monument to medieval military engineering, royal grandeur, and the storied martial pride of the Kingdom of Mewar.

The fort's strategic position atop an isolated outcrop made it the ultimate prize in Western India. Built originally by local Maurya rulers in the 7th century A.D., it grew into a thriving fortified city complete with 84 water bodies, royal palaces, ornate temples, and victory towers. Over its long history, Chittorgarh endured three catastrophic sieges—in 1303 by Alauddin Khilji, in 1535 by Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, and in 1567 by the Mughal Emperor Akbar—each ending in fierce resistance and the historic practice of Jauhar (mass self-immolation by royal women to preserve honor) and Saka (a final battle to the death by Rajput warriors).

Padmini Palace: The Mirror of Beauty and Bravery

Located in the southern expanse of the fort complex, the two-story Padmini Palace stands gracefully at the edge of a large lotus pool. Built as the royal residence for Queen Padmini after her marriage to Rawal Ratan Singh (who ruled Mewar from 1302 to 1303 CE), the palace is famous for its open pavilion set directly in the center of the water moat. It was here in 1303 that Sultan Alauddin Khilji laid siege to the fortress. According to historic lore, Khilji was permitted to view Rani Padmini's reflection through a complex system of mirrors aligned across the water before launching his assault. When the fall of the fort became inevitable after months of blockade, Queen Padmini led hundreds of women in the historic first Jauhar of Chittorgarh. The surrounding garden courtyards and water structures remain among the most visited sites in the fort.

Rana Kumbha Palace: The Imperial Heart

The largest structural complex within Chittorgarh, Rana Kumbha Palace was the power seat of Maharana Kumbha (1433-1468 CE), a visionary monarch who transformed Mewar into a cultural and military power. Built over older 8th-century foundations, this sprawling palace once featured three stories supported by carved stone columns, grand audience halls (Darbar Hall), and royal zenana quarters.

- **Underground Labyrinth:** Below the ground floor lies an extensive network of subterranean chambers and interconnecting tunnels designed for secret movement during



Kalika Mata Temple: Architectural Masterpiece

Standing on an elevated stone plinth, the Kalika Mata Temple is one of the oldest and artistically significant structures inside Chittorgarh. Originally constructed in the 8th century as a Surya (Sun) Temple, it was destroyed during early medieval raids and later restored in the 14th century, rededicated to Goddess Kalika (an incarnation of Durga). The shrine showcases classic Pratihara architectural design. Its exterior walls, lofty shikhara (spire), and interior pillars are adorned with intricate relief carvings depicting celestial beings, floral motifs, and Hindu deities. The temple remains an active pilgrimage site today, drawing devotees and art historians alike.

Monuments of Victory and Faith

Beyond its primary palaces, the fort features two towering stone monuments that define its skyline:

- **Vijay Stambha (Tower of Victory):** Constructed by Rana Kumbha between 1440 and 1448 CE to commemorate his victory over the combined armies of Malwa and Gujarat. Rising 122 feet across 9 stories, the tower is covered from base to summit with detailed stone sculptures of Hindu gods and mythological scenes.
- **Kirti Stambha (Tower of Fame):** A 72-foot, 7-story tower built in the 12th century by a Jain merchant, Jija Bhagerwala. Dedicated to Adinath, the first Jain Tirthankara, it features delicate figures of Jain ascetics carved into its outer niches.

- **military sieges.**

- **Cultural Legacy:** The palace complex includes a shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva, royal stables for horses and elephants, and the birthplace space

- **attributed to Maharana Pratap.**

- **Evening Experience:** A nightly sound-and-light show held among the palace ruins narrates the history of the Mewar dynasty under the stars.

History This Week OCT 09 - OCT 15

OCTOBER 9

October 9, 1962 - Uganda achieved independence after nearly 70 years of British rule.

October 9, 1970 - Cambodia declared itself the Khmer Republic following the abolishment of the monarchy by the legislature.

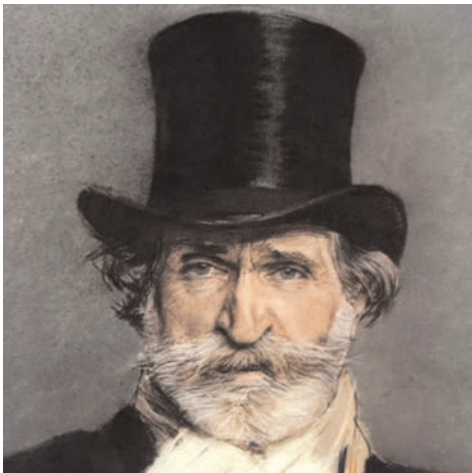


Birthday - John Lennon (1940-1980) was born in Liverpool, England. He was a member of The Beatles, an influential rock group which captivated audiences first in England and Germany, and later in America and throughout the world. He was murdered in New York City on December 8, 1980.

OCTOBER 10

October 10, 1954 - Ho Chi Minh entered Hanoi, Vietnam, after the withdrawal of French troops, in accordance with armistice terms ending the seven-year struggle between Communist Vietnamese and the French.

October 10, 1973 - Spiro T. Agnew (1918-1996) resigned the office of Vice President of the United States amid charges of income tax evasion on illegal payments allegedly received while he was governor of Maryland and after he became Vice President. He was later given a \$10,000 fine and sentenced to serve three years probation. He was succeeded as Vice President by Gerald R. Ford, who went on to become President after the resignation of Richard M. Nixon.



Birthday - Italian opera composer Giuseppe Verdi (1813-1901) was born in Le Roncole, Italy. His 26 operas include; Rigoletto, Il Trovatore, La Traviata and Aida, and are among the most popular of all classical music performed today.

OCTOBER 11

October 11, 1521 - King Henry VIII of England was given the title "Defender of

the Faith" by Pope Leo X following the publication of the King's book against Martin Luther.

October 11, 1899 - The Boer War began in South African between the British Empire and Boers of the Transvaal and Orange Free State. The war ended in 1902 with the Treaty of Pretoria in which the Transvaal and Orange Free State became British colonies.

October 11, 1939 - Albert Einstein warned President Franklin D. Roosevelt that his theories could lead to Nazi Germany's development of an atomic bomb. Einstein suggested the U.S. develop its own bomb. This resulted in the top secret "Manhattan Project."

October 11, 1962 - The Second Vatican Council was opened in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome by Pope John XXIII. Sessions were held in four successive autumns from 1962-65. Vatican II resulted in sweeping changes to the Catholic Church including the use of English and local native languages in the Mass instead of Latin, and openness and cooperation with other religions and denominations.

October 11, 1976 - The "Gang of Four," including the widow of Mao Zedong, was arrested in China, charged with plotting a coup. They were subsequently tried and convicted of various crimes against the state.



Birthday - Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962) was born in New York City. She was the wife of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, 32nd U.S. President. As First Lady, she led an unprecedented independent life, striving to improve the lives of people all over the world. In 1933, she became the first wife of a president to give her own news conference in the White House. She traveled extensively on her own and was affectionately called "First Lady of the world." She served as a U.S. delegate to the United Nations for many years and helped write the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

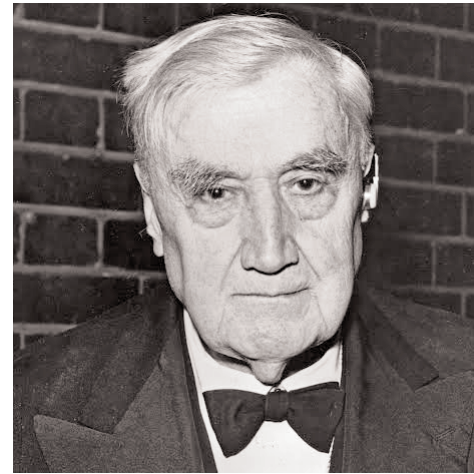
OCTOBER 12

October 12, 1492 - After a 33-day voyage, Christopher Columbus made his first landfall in the New World in the Bahamas. He named the first land sighted as El Salvador, claiming it in the name of the Spanish Crown. Columbus was seeking a western sea route from Europe to Asia and believed he had found an island of the Indies. He thus called the first island natives he met, 'Indians.'

October 12, 1811 - Paraguay declared its independence from Spain and Argentina.

October 12, 1822 - Brazil became independent of Portugal.

October 12, 1960 - During a debate over colonialism in the United Nations, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev took off his shoe and pounded his desk repeatedly.



Birthday - British composer and conductor Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) was born in Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, England. He combined modern composition techniques with traditional English folk and Tudor music to create a uniquely British style. His major compositions include; Mass in G Minor, Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis and the opera The Pilgrim's Progress. He also composed nine symphonies, church and choral music, film and stage music and several operas.

OCTOBER 13

October 13, 54 A.D. - Roman Emperor Claudius died after eating mushrooms poisoned by his wife, the Empress Agrippina.

October 13, 1775 - The United States Navy was born after the Second Continental Congress authorized the acquisition of a fleet of ships.

October 13, 1792 - The cornerstone of the White House was laid by George Washington. The building, located at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, is three stories tall with over 100 rooms, and was designed by James Hoban. In November of 1800, President John Adams and his family moved in. The building was first known as the "Presidential Palace," but acquired the name "White House" about 10 years after its completion. It was burned by British troops in 1814, then reconstructed, refurbished and reoccupied in 1817.

October 13, 1884 - Greenwich was established as the universal time from which standard times throughout the world are calculated.

October 13, 1943 - Italy declared war on its former Axis partner Germany after the downfall of Mussolini and collapse of his Fascist government.

October 13, 1990 - The first Russian Orthodox service in over 70 years was held in St. Basil's Cathedral, next to the Kremlin, in Red Square, Moscow.



Birthday - Molly Pitcher (1754-1832) was born near Trenton, New Jersey (as Mary Ludwig). She was a water carrier

at the Battle of Monmouth in 1778 during the American Revolution. After her husband, artilleryman John Hays, collapsed, she took his place at his cannon.

OCTOBER 14

October 14, 1912 - Former President Theodore Roosevelt was shot by a fanatic while campaigning in Milwaukee. Roosevelt was saved by his thick overcoat, a glasses case and a folded speech in his breast pocket, all of which slowed the bullet. Although wounded, he insisted on making the speech with the bullet lodged in his chest and did not go to the hospital until the meeting ended. Roosevelt, a rugged outdoorsman, fully recovered in two weeks.

October 14, 1933 - Nazi Germany announced its withdrawal from the League of Nations and stated it would take no further part in the Geneva Disarmament Conference.

October 14, 1947 - U.S. Air Force Captain Chuck Yeager became the first man to break the sound barrier, flying in a rocket-powered research aircraft.

October 14, 1964 - Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. He donated the \$54,000 in prize money to the Civil Rights movement.

Birthday - Pennsylvania founder William Penn (1644-1718) was born in London. In 1681, he received a Royal charter with a large land grant in America from King Charles II. Penn, a Quaker, welcomed members of all religious faiths and established a democratic form of government in his province which measured over 50,000 square miles.



Birthday - Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) the 34th U.S. President was born in Denison, Texas. He served two terms as President, from January 20, 1953 to January 20, 1961. Nicknamed "Ike," he was a West Point graduate and career Army officer who became Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II. He held the rank of Five-star General of the Army.

OCTOBER 15

October 15, 1815 - Napoleon Bonaparte arrived on the Island of St. Helena beginning a British-imposed exile following his defeat at the Battle of Waterloo.

October 15, 1917 - World War I spy Mata Hari was executed by a French firing squad at Vincennes Barracks, outside Paris.

October 15, 1945 - Pierre Laval, the former premier of Vichy France, was executed for collaborating with Nazi Germany during World War II.

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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

Veteran Actor Nana Patekar has Died: Tributes Pour in; Goa Police Register Unnatural Death Case

Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS). According to police records, the 76-year-old actor was brought dead to the casualty ward of Manipal Hospital, Bambolim, from his residence at Ocean Park, Dona Paula. PSI Nitin Naik is leading the further inquiry.

According to Dr Shekhar Salkar, head of the oncology department at Manipal Hospital, Patekar had messaged a friend around 2.30 am on Thursday, saying he was feeling unwell and experiencing pain on the left side of his chest. The friend, who initially missed the message, later contacted the actor and reached his residence around 4 am. By then, Patekar was sweating and gradually losing consciousness. His caretaker was sent to arrange an ambulance, while an emergency medical team reached the residence and began cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) after finding him unresponsive. He was shifted to Manipal Hospital at around 4.20-4.30 am, where doctors continued efforts to revive him for nearly 45 minutes. However, he could not be saved and was declared dead at around 5.20 am, the doctor told ANI.

Tributes from across the film industry

In an emotional post on X, actor Shah Rukh Khan remembered Patekar as his "mentor, teacher, critic and friend", sharing an old photograph of the two.

Recalling their first meeting, Shah Rukh said he was so awestruck and awkward that he began fiddling with his hair. Patekar slapped his hand away and told him, "Hero ki tarah baal mat bana... tu actor hai" (Don't style your hair like a hero; you are an actor).

Shah Rukh said Patekar was straightforward and honest, never flattering people or telling them what they wanted to hear. He recalled how the veteran actor had his own way of expressing affection, often beginning with a reprimand before making those around him realize how much he cared.

"He loved me and I loved him back," Shah Rukh wrote, recalling their conversations and Patekar's victories in game after game of carrom.

Expressing regret that they did not have more time together, the actor said he wished they could have shared more conversations, arguments, cups of tea and games of carrom.

Shah Rukh also recalled another lesson from Patekar that stayed with him: "Hero banne ke chakar mein actor mat khona" (Do not lose the actor while trying to become a hero).

"Nana, your intensity, laughter, madness and love will always stay with us," he wrote, adding that Patekar had left a void not only in cinema but also in the hearts of Indians and people across the world.

Concluding his tribute, Shah Rukh wrote, "May your soul rest in peace Nana and Allah bless you. The Heavens will be blessed to have you... a masterful actor and an unbeatable carrom champion."

Patekar is survived by his wife, Neelkanthi Patekar, and son, Malhar.

Trump officials block Microsoft's access to program for employee green cards

"Our message to Microsoft is, you're a great American company, but you've got to hire great American workers," Vance said. "You cannot lay off American workers and then replace them with foreign indentured servants."

Vance did not present evidence that Microsoft had laid off U.S. workers and replaced them with foreign employees through the H-1B program.

The H-1B program, created by Congress in 1990, provides employers with visas for 65,000 skilled foreign workers annually, with an additional 20,000 visas available for workers with advanced degrees from U.S. universities. The visas are prized by tech companies, many of whose leaders say they are critical to success and innovation.

President Donald Trump has targeted the program as part of his crackdown on legal and illegal immigration. His administration issued a proposed regulation in August that seeks to impose a \$103,000 fee on employers seeking H-1B workers after a similar attempt was struck down by a federal judge in June.

In addition to Microsoft, Labor Secretary Keith Sonderling said the department was suspending Adobe from sponsoring workers for permanent residency, citing active investigations. The agency also blocked major IT staffing firms Cognizant,

Infosys, Tata, Wipro, HCL and Capgemini from participating in the permanent residency program.

It remained unclear why Microsoft and Adobe were under investigation and how long the suspensions might last. The Labor Department did not respond to a request for comment. The White House referred questions to Labor.

Microsoft said in a statement that it was cooperating with the administration and largely used H-1B visas to extend or change the status of existing employees.

"Microsoft only files H-1B petitions for those who meet the rigorous standards of this visa category," the company said. "We pay our employees some of the highest compensation in the tech sector, and our wages are among the highest of all H-1B filings."

Adobe did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Microsoft is among the top users of the H-1B program. The company was approved to hire roughly 3,700 H-1B workers in fiscal year 2026 through June 30 and has had some 54,000 petitions approved over the past decade, according to federal government data.

The suspension does not prohibit Microsoft and Adobe from employing H-1B workers but could make the company a less lucrative destination for workers who hope to obtain permanent residency.

Companies are required to show there are not qualified U.S. workers available to fill a job before sponsoring someone for a green card. Microsoft and Adobe will be blocked from the program used to certify that requirement, essentially stopping them from sponsoring those workers for permanent residence.

The suspensions could also affect Microsoft and Adobe's ability to sponsor permanent resident applications for foreign workers on other types of visas.

Later in the day, Trump presented Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella with the National Medal of Technology and Innovation, the highest honor given by the U.S. for technological achievement.

Nadella, who was born in India, previously worked in the U.S. on an H-1B visa. He surrendered his U.S. permanent residency in 1994 and applied for the visa so he could bring his wife to the U.S., an unusual immigration story he recounted in his 2017 memoir.

"I went back to the U.S. embassy in Delhi in June of 1994, past the enormous lines of people hoping to get a visa, and told a clerk that I wanted to give back my green card and apply for an H-1B," he wrote in the memoir, called "Hit Refresh."

Nadella later obtained U.S. citizenship, he has said in interviews.

The award presentation was part of the White House's "Science: a New Golden Age" summit. Other tech leaders receiving awards included Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, who has defended the H-1B program in the face of far-right criticism. DOL Inspector General Anthony D'Esposito said at the news conference that his office was separately investigating possible improper use of the J-1 visa program for cultural exchange visitors by nine universities, including Brown, Harvard, Stanford and Yale.

D'Esposito did not detail specific allegations.

Multiple universities said they were cooperating with investigations and defended their use of the visa program.

Brian Clark, a spokesperson for Brown University, said they had received a subpoena "for various records pertaining to foreign labor programs" and would respond promptly.

"Brown's international scholars, students and employees make essential contributions on our campus, including to teaching and research that advances American innovation, competitiveness and economic vitality," Clark said.

Federal investigators have issued dozens of subpoenas and executed search warrants as part of their effort to combat fraud in the foreign labor programs, the Labor Department said in September.

For decades, Microsoft has been one of the most vocal supporters of the H-1B visa program on Capitol Hill.

Microsoft founder Bill Gates testified before Congress on the issue in 2008, citing a report that each H-1B worker that technology companies hire creates four or five jobs. In more recent years, the firm has lobbied extensively to expand the program for high-skilled workers.

Doug Rand, a former adviser for U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services during the Biden administration, said that if Vance wanted to keep H-1B workers from becoming "indentured servants," he would not be restricting green cards.

"Once you have a green card, you're no longer dependent on your employer for your immigration status," Rand said in a social media post. "You're a permanent resident who can change jobs and negotiate higher wages without fear."

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Aichi Asian Games: Curtains lowered on the mega sporting extravaganza of Asia



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

OCTOBER 4, 2026

AICHI (TIP): More than 6000 athletes from 45 member nations of the Olympic Council of Asia, after rubbing shoulders for 15 days as they sought to outplay one another and assert supremacy, bade farewell to Aichi Prefecture, promising to meet again.

It was a ceremony held in true sports tradition. It not only brought down the curtain on the Games but also revealed new equations, new relations and new champions that emerged because of the Games. Empty seats in the stadium were not only an eyesore but also glaring. Perhaps, organizers could not sell or convince the locals of the significance and importance of the ceremony.

The philosophy of the 2026 Aichi Asian Games has been to project Asia as one.

The grand closing ceremony started on a low key, as almost three-fourths of the venue was empty. Low turnouts must have been disappointing for the organizers, as tickets for various events, including the closing ceremony, had no takers. Even members of the accredited media preferred to watch the ceremony on big TV screens of the media center rather than be physically present at the venue.

Restricted vehicular movement on the roads leading to the closing ceremony and



The Closing Ceremony at the Stadium. Photo by Maninder K Chandhoke

tight security arrangements served more as deterrents for spectators than as assurances of an evening of entertainment and a cultural feast. Traditionally, opening and closing ceremonies are major crowd pullers. However, the Aichi Asian Games somehow missed the public response that is normally associated with such major sporting events.

Interestingly, the huge screens at the venue played instructions on how to handle medical emergencies in case of an earthquake. It may be pertinent to mention

that some parts of Japan were rocked by tremors some weeks ago.

After 15 days of intense competition, one startling revelation was that the gap between the bigger sporting nations and upcoming nations has been widened. Of 1410 medals at stake during the games, almost one-fourth - 341 - went to China alone, while the hosts, Japan, had an impressive tally of 261, and the third-placed Korea aggregated 150.

Statistically speaking, 291 of 470 gold medals at stake went to the kitty of China,

Japan and Korea. India placed fourth and got only 85, reflecting a huge gap between third-placed Korea at 150 and fourth-placed India at 85.

Besides 169 gold, China won 89 silver and 83 bronze medals. Japan had 95 silver and 91 bronze medals in its kitty, while Korea got 43 silver and 68 bronze. The president of the Olympic Council of Asia, in his address, expressed satisfaction, saying that 40 of 45 participating nations ended up on the medal tally. He gave a call to athletes to reassemble four years from now for the next edition of the Games in Doha before declaring the Games closed.

Before the ceremony started, a series of announcements directed spectators to remain seated or not to leave in the no-exit period and not to leave their seats at any time during the ceremony.

Since VIP movement was expected, spectators were informed that between 7.30 and 7.50 pm no one would be allowed to exit.

Exactly at 6, it started with the arrival of the Crown Prince, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Japan. After the hoisting of the flag of Japan.

Flag bearers of all participating nations, followed by a procession of participating athletes, comprised the most important, traditional part of any closing ceremony. After the entry of athletes, it was a recall of some of the glorious moments of the game through a video on big screens of the venue.

The baton was handed over to Doha, the hosts of the next edition of the games.

Doha made a presentation.

Aichi Asian Games 2026: India with 85 medals finishes fourth

BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

OCTOBER 4, 2026

AICHI (TIP): With a rare triple "double", India ended its Aichi Asian Games 2026 campaign with 85 medals, including 21 gold, to finish fourth behind leaders China, hosts Japan and Korea.

India's major consolation has been its record and historic "double" in hockey. It is for the first time since the inception of the Games in 1951 and 1958, when hockey was introduced, that India has had a gold medal finish in both men's and women's sections of the hockey competition.

By virtue of the gold medal finish, India's men's and women's hockey teams have got a direct passage to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games. Besides hockey, Indian men's and women's teams also made it a "double" in kabaddi and cricket.

For India, of 21 gold medals, 14 came in team games or team events. The remaining eight came as individual gold medals.

Among the individual gold medal winners were Anil Kumkum Mohod (Archery - Recurve Women's Individual), Lovlina Borgohain (Boxing women 75 kg), Parveen (Boxing women 68 kg), Ankush (Boxing men 80 kg), Pranavi Sharath Urs (Golf Women Individual stroke play), Meenu Dhanda (Shooting Trap women), Aman (wrestling free style 57 kg) and Sujeet (Wrestling men 65 kg).

In fact, women dominated, accounting for five of the



eight individual gold medals. The women's teams in archery, shooting, hockey, kabaddi and cricket also put up

their best performances to end with gold medals.

Besides the major team games - cricket, kabaddi and hockey - it was archery that gave India the maximum number of medals. The bow and arrow got India 9 medals, including five gold followed by shooting that saw Indian stars winning 15 medals, including three gold, eight silver and four bronze medals. Boxing was another sport in which India did well, with three gold and as many bronze medals.

In track and field, in the absence of Neeraj Chopra, India got silver and bronze in javelin throw and ended with gold in the women's 4x400 m relay, with a total tally of 24 medals, including nine silver and 14 bronze medals.

India had six medals in wrestling, with two medals each in the gold, silver, and bronze categories.

In squash, India had some disappointment as both Abhay Singh and Anahat Singh lost their gold medal matches but still ended with two silver and three bronze medals.

In water sports, sailing gave India three medals, including a silver, while rowing accounted for a single bronze. Weightlifting contributed a silver to the Indian tally.

Golf must have warmed the cockles of hearts of followers of this elite game as India ended with a gold and a silver, both coming in the women's section.

Kurush, mixed martial arts, soft tennis and table tennis accounted for one bronze medal each.

India, however, ended without a medal in tennis.

Aichi Asian Games: India scripts history by completing its first-ever hockey 'double'



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

OCTOBER 3, 2026

AICHI (TIP): India completed its first-ever "double" in 44 years of the Asian Games Hockey competition, defeating Malaysia in an action-packed final at Gifu's Green Stadium on Oct 3. On Oct 2, India edged out Olympic silver medalist China to win its first gold in 44 years, since the 1982 New Delhi Asian Games.

Skipper Harmanpreet led the team by scoring the first and fifth goals, while Jugraj Singh, Hardik Singh and Shilanand Lakra contributed a goal apiece to make it 5-1, while Shello Silverius reduced the margin.

By winning the continental championship titles here, both Indian teams have earned direct entry to the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games. Incidentally, the win of the men's team got India its 21st gold medal of the Games, making the country the most successful nation in winning "doubles" in hockey, cricket, and kabaddi.

Earlier in the day, India completed its double in cricket as well, defeating neighbors and arch-rival Pakistan in a tall-scoring final. India dismissed Pakistan for 192 in response to its target of 211 for 9.

Though India fell short of its previous games' aggregate of medals, it ended with 21 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze medals to finish overall fourth in the tally with an aggregate of 85.

China finished at the top with 340 medals, including 168 gold, while hosts Japan came next with 266 medals with 83 gold medals. Korea was the third contingent to have a tally of more than 100 medals, as it ended with 149 with 38 gold.

India started on an aggressive note by



India achieved its first-ever hockey 'double' at the 2026 Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games by winning both the men's and women's gold medals at the same continental games.



mounting pressure from the word go. In the 11th minute, when it forced its first penalty corner, all eyes were on skipper Harmanpreet, who, after the first intake that saw the ball not being stopped neatly, attempted a shot at the goal, yielding the second penalty corner. This time Harmanpreet found the target.

Indian joy was, however, short-lived as Malaysia in a concerted counter move saw Shello Silverius restoring parity that had the entire Indian defense caught on the wrong foot. The first quarter saw the two teams locked in a 1-1 stalemate.

Malaysian aggression continued into the second half as it forced a penalty corner in the 17th minute. Jerky clearance led to the Malaysian defense for VR and the award of the second penalty corner that followed the third before the Indian defense finally managed to clear the danger.

Playing its third Asian Games final, Malaysia was more purposeful and organized in its attacks. Indian players quickly adapted to the strategy their opponents had adopted in run-and-drill tactics.

India forced its third penalty corner in the 18th minute, but once again failure to stop the ball clearly led to the wastage of this chance. Four minutes later, when India got its fourth penalty corner, Jugraj Singh came to try his drag flick. His powerful grounder sounded the boards to put India ahead (2-1) again.

When the teams broke for half time, India was ahead 2-1.

At the start of the second half, Indian defense looked more focused and better organized as it started asserting its supremacy aggressively. When India got its fifth penalty corner, Jugraj Singh's powerful lift went over the crossbar.

India, continuing with its offensive, had a couple of penalty corners before one such award caught a Malaysian defender on the goal line, leading to the award of a penalty stroke. The award was upheld by VR after Malaysians wanted a review. Hardik Singh made no mistake from the resultant stroke to put India ahead 3-1.

India 3-1 at the end of quarter 3.

Malaysians appeared to be succumbing to mounting pressure on their goal. Their initial enthusiasm started vanishing. Midway in the fourth quarter, India again forced a series of penalty corners with Amit Rohidas and Jugraj taking chances. Jugraj tried an indirect free kick but remained unsuccessful. In the 54th minute, India finally put its act together to see Shilanand Lakra hoisting its fourth goal to make the score 4-1.

Two minutes later, India, in a rare tactic, had only one pair to take its 14th penalty corner, from which skipper Harmanpreet Singh made no mistake with a rising shot into the net to make the score 5-1.

Malaysia thus failed with its third successive attempt at the Asian Games hockey gold. And for India, Manpreet Singh became the only Indian player to win three Asian Games gold medals.

Hockey without South Asian Diaspora robs Asiad of its sheen

BY PRABHJOT SINGH

OCTOBER 2, 2026

AICHI (TIP): Hockey, though a game that the British brought to South Asia in the late 19th century, has come to be known as a game that members of the South Asian Diaspora took to every corner of the globe.

No competition in this sport is considered complete without Indian Diaspora. Since I have been covering FIH World Cups since 1980 (Mumbai) and summer Olympic Games from 1992 onwards, there has hardly been any occasion when the South Asian Diaspora skipped the elite gathering of hockey playing nations.

The Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games 2026, however, have provided the contrast. Even the India-Pakistan encounter, considered one of the most marketable events in contemporary sports, drew a flak here. The semi-final match between two giants of not only South Asian

but World Hockey, displayed vintage hockey, displaying some fast vanishing niceties of the game like dribbling, short passes, captivating body maneuvers and also the plethora of exciting moments that get the fans of the sport on the edges of their seats.

It happened exactly like that when the two neighbors and arch-rivals played each other in the semis. Though India survived and won by a last-minute game, the game reminded the fans the vintage hockey they had been waiting to watch. The only missing link had been those fans.

The Gifu Green Stadium had only a handful of people in the stands. And those present were either members of the participating squads or officials of various National Hockey Federations, the Asian Hockey Federation or the International Hockey Federation. Hockey without its dedicated and sincere followers, as is the case with other popular sports like football and

cricket, hockey has started losing its link with its followers.

The venue for the Asian Games Hockey was not easily accessible. Even the media personnel covering the hockey competition were cribbing a lot about the arrangements, especially the transport, and lack of basic infrastructure, including covered stands, would have normally got this venue rejected for wanting to meet the minimum guidelines. But the national and international federations do not think twice for compromising the necessities to get sponsors. Sad though. It is not sport but sponsorship or money that has become the organizational mainstay.

These organization or structural problems apart, as was expected of it. Japan does not have a very strong presence in the South Asian Diaspora. Even members of the erstwhile South Asian community from neighboring countries like Malaysia,

Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia and Hong Kong did not respond as warmly to the Aichi Asian Games.

Incidentally, hardly any Indian corporate or big company figures among the major sponsors of the Aichi Asian Games. Though Japan itself is a huge industrial and business power, it could any day hold any major sporting extravaganza on its own, the absence of major international sponsors has been baffling. One interesting aspect we noticed has been the assimilation of Nepalese in the local culture. Some of the restaurants and eateries identified as "exclusive places for Indian cuisine" are run by the Nepalese here. While travelling to MMC today, we came across a young Nepalese couple - Subash and Sudha - who have decided to make Japan their second home. Though they do not work in the hospitality industry, they find the atmosphere and opportunities for immigrants attractive.

My Asian Games Diary: Where are the cops?



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

OCTOBER 3, 2026

AICHI (TIP): The Aichi Asian Games 2026 stands out for a different reason. I did not see or notice the presence of gun-toting policemen or security personnel anywhere near any of the venues of the mega sporting event.

The contrast between the security environment at the last Summer Olympic Games in Paris, the FIFA World Cup in Canada, the USA, and Mexico, and the Winter Olympic Games in Milano is mind-boggling.

Checking bags or frisking media personnel getting into media centers or stadiums is limited to volunteers. Policemen, in uniform or plain clothes, are seen nowhere.

The other day while we were travelling from an unmanned railway station in a suburb of Nagoya, an item on the notice board surprised me.

It read:

"Under terror alert enforcement
To all passengers



If you find any suspicious articles or behavior, please notify station staff or train crew.

Carrying of dangerous items into the station or onto trains is prohibited.

Thank you for your cooperation.
Meitetsu."

Meitetsu is one of the important rail lines operating in Nagoya. It is only after reading this public notice that one gets the impression that even Japan is not free from the pangs of terrorism.

But for this notice, no action to tackle any such problem related to terrorism was noticed in the public domain. We have been moving almost all hours everywhere.

While moving around various towns and

cities, mostly within the Aichi Prefecture, one does not feel threatened by any minor to serious crime-like situations. Since we arrived in Japan on August 24, at no stage have we felt insecure. Incidents of snatching, bugging, petty or minor thefts, or even assaults are an unheard-of phenomenon here. The civil society overall is law-abiding and peaceful.

Using public transport, everyone is required to follow decorum so as not to disturb fellow co-passengers. Even eating inside the trains is prohibited.

In such an environment where people move freely even at midnight, the overbearing presence of gun-toting cops or canine squads, as was witnessed both in



Photos by Maninder K. Chandhoke

France and the three co-hosts of the FIFA World Cup 2026, has been so reassuring.

To our great surprise, we noticed a police vehicle near the Main Media Centre (MMC), though it was not visible from the building from which hundreds of media personnel are operating.

On the lighter side, another night while we were trying to book a taxi from a rural unmanned station shortly before midnight, a gentleman volunteered to help us to get a taxi. He realized that communicating with a person on the other side who did not know English was the barrier. After helping us and getting us the taxi, he revealed his identity. He was a cop off duty but on social duty like an average Japanese-sincere and dedicated to his nation.

Remembering Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri with 'golden' tributes

BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

OCTOBER 2, 2026

AICHI (TIP): Members of Indian squad competing in the Aichi Asian Games could not have thought of a better way than paying "golden" tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri.

It was one of those days that brought glory, cheers and smiles to the Indian camp with its athletes doing well in archery, boxing, wrestling and hockey to take its tally past the 75-mark.

Before the close of the day, the Indian contingent couldn't have asked for more as its gold tally rapidly swelled to 15. India would be hoping for more on the last two days as Indian men's hockey and cricket teams are scheduled to play their gold medal games on October 3. Indian men take on Malaysia for the hockey crown while archrivals and neighbors Pakistan play India in cricket final.

Gandhi and Jayanti turned out to be the best day for Team India as its archers - Recurve archers, boxers Parveen, Lovlina and Ankush, besides the wrestler Sujeet turned in gold performances before the Indian women's hockey team took on Chinese in the final.

Woman boxer Lovlina Borgohain lived to the expectations as she boxed out her Chinese rival, Ziyi Bao 8-0 to submission in the 75 kg final. It was the first gold for India in boxing this time. Parveen followed with a similar smashing performance in the 65 kg category by knocking out Taipei challenger Nien-Chin Chen in a close contest that was



Lovlina Borgohain won the gold medal in the women's 75kg middleweight category by defeating China's Bao Ziyi (5-0). She became only the second Indian woman boxer after MC Mary Kom to win an Asian Games gold; and (right) Indian wrestler Sujeet Kalkal won the men's freestyle 65kg gold medal at the Asian Games 2026 after mounting a sensational comeback.

decided by a split verdict of 3-2.

To cap the boxing day in gold, Ankush beat Minseong Kim of Korea 4-0 to complete India's tally in boxing to three gold and three bronze medals. Three Indian boxers - Narender, Priya and Kamal Pokhariya - completed their engagements with bronze medals hanging around their necks.

In wrestling Sujeet was the toast of Indian camp as he wrestled his way to the gold in the 56 kg category. He overpowered Kudev Abdulmashid (Tajikistan) 10-0.

After winning all three team titles in Compound category, Indian archers had to contend with one gold and two silver medals in all three sections of Recurve Team championships. The women beat Korea 5-3 while the men and mixed teams won silver medals. In the mixed team contest, India lost to China 3-5 and in men they fell to Korea 1-5.



Ankush Panghal won the gold medal in the men's 80 kg light heavyweight division at the 2026 Asian Games in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan, by defeating South Korea's Kim Min-seong.



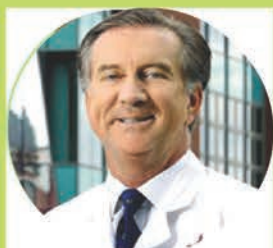
(Prabhjot Singh is a senior Toronto-based, award-winning independent journalist, who worked with The Tribune, Reuters, and several media groups in a career spanning nearly five decades. He has written extensively about Diaspora, Politics, Business, Aviation, Health, Public and Private Sectors and Sports. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)



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Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



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