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The INDIAN PANORAMA

20TH YEAR

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1 Indian American Weekly : Since 2006

VOL 20 ISSUE 45 ● NEW YORK / DALLAS ● NOV 06 - 12, 2026 ● ENQUIRIES: 646-247-9458 ● info@theindianpanorama.news



INSIDE

NOT VENDETTA, RESTORE AMERICA'S GREATNESS PAGE 02

POLL ROUT PUTS TRUMP ON A STICKY WICKET PAGE 08

GEN ZA & THE VIKSIT BHARAT DREAM PAGE 09

DEMOCRATS WON - NOW DON'T BLOW IT PAGE 10

DIWALI SPECIAL PAGE 30

Indian Americans Make Historic Gains in 2026 U.S. Midterm Elections

Six elected to Congress; Aruna Miller retains Maryland office; Nithya Raman wins Los Angeles mayoral race; dozens secure state and local positions



The breadth of Indian-American participation in the 2026 elections reflects a significant transformation in the community's political life. AI generated pic / ChatGPT

NOVEMBER 6, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

Indian Americans emerged as a significant presence in the November 3 midterm elections, winning seats in Congress, state legislatures, county governments and municipal councils across the United States.

The victories extended far beyond the familiar Indian-American faces on Capitol Hill. A new generation of candidates won legislative seats, several incumbents secured additional terms, and candidates of Indian origin achieved historic breakthroughs in states where their community had previously enjoyed little representation.

According to a post-election tally published by India Tribune, 30 Indian-American candidates won state legislative races, including eight who faced no opposition. The tally identified 28 Democratic victories among 33 decided contests involving Indian-American Democrats. The figures remain subject to final reconciliation with official results.

CONTD ON PAGE 4

After Donald Trump's midterm poll rout, South America breathes easy as far-right feels the heat



Reduced to a lame-duck President, Donald Trump himself could now become a jinx for the far right across South America. File photo/ AP

NOVEMBER 06, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

On Wednesday, November 4, 2026, rising tensions in Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, turned violent as hundreds of thousands stormed the streets to protest locking out of their accounts in the country's biggest bank. As fires burned and people anxiously queued outside the collapsed bank, President Santiago Pena, a former shareholder in the bank, announced his resignation.

But as Congress moved to impeach him, Mr. Pena disappeared amid rumors that he had fled to Argentina - just as Brazilian far-right leader Flávio Bolsonaro did last week before fleeing to U.S. after losing the election to President Lula da Silva. "We have information that he left the country without telling anyone. I think he went to Argentina and sought asylum," said Paraguayan Senator Antonio Velázquez on Thursday, November 5, 2026.

Just a day after a blue wave swept across the U.S. in midterms election shaking President Donald Trump's administration, the fall of Mr. Pena

CONTD ON PAGE 74

Harmeet Kaur Dhillon, Chandigarh-born Trump official, resigns as head of US Civil Rights Division

NOVEMBER 6, 2026
WASHINGTON, D.C. (TIP)

Indian-origin lawyer Harmeet Kaur Dhillon has resigned as head of the US Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, becoming the first senior official in the Trump administration to step down following the Republicans' major defeat in the midterm elections.

US Attorney General Todd Blanche announced Dhillon's departure on Thursday, November 5, praising her work and leadership during her tenure.

"She has defended the civil liberties of every American and enforced the law without fear or favor," Blanche wrote in a post on X, adding that the department was grateful for her public service and wished her success in her future endeavors.

Dhillon, however, said the decision to



Indian-origin lawyer Harmeet Kaur Dhillon

step down was her own.

Speaking to Fox News, she said she had delayed announcing her resignation at the request of White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles until after Election Day. In a post on X, Dhillon described serving as Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights as the "honor of a lifetime" and thanked President Donald Trump for the opportunity.

CONTD ON PAGE 74

Canada plans to welcome 0.6 million new permanent residents by 2027

1,00,000 SPACES EARMARKED FOR SKILLED WORKERS UNDER EXPRESS ENTRY, PNP; ADDITIONAL ADMISSIONS PLANNED UNDER EARLIER HUMANITARIAN AND WORKER INITIATIVES



The temporary resident target for 2027 includes 2,20,000 workers and up to 1,50,000 international students.

NOVEMBER 6, 2026
TORONTO (TIP)

Canada plans to welcome up to 6,22,000 new permanent residents by the end of 2027 through a combination of regular immigration admissions and a one-time transition programme for temporary residents, according to the federal government's Budget 2026 and Immigration Levels Plan.

CONTD ON PAGE 74



The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

COMMENT

Not Vendetta, Restore America's Greatness

THE ANSWER TO BAD GOVERNANCE IS NOT REVENGE, BUT BETTER GOVERNANCE. THE PEOPLE MUST REMAIN AT THE CENTER OF EVERY POLITICAL DECISION

Prof. Indrajit S Saluja



A few days before the November 3 midterm elections, The Indian Panorama warned against the politics of vendetta pursued by President Donald Trump's administration. We argued that the use of government authority to settle political scores served neither democracy nor the American people, whose concerns lay elsewhere.

The election has delivered a resounding verdict. Democrats have captured both the House of Representatives and the Senate, dealing Republicans a crushing defeat and expressing widespread dissatisfaction with the administration's priorities.

But the verdict carries a warning for the victors as well.

The answer to bad governance is not revenge, but better governance.

The people have not transferred power from one party to another merely to witness a reversal of political persecution. They expect their representatives to address the problems that affect their lives, protect their constitutional rights, and restore confidence in government.

That must be the overriding responsibility of the incoming Democratic Congress.

Accountability, Not Vendetta

Our earlier criticism was directed at President Trump because his second administration has repeatedly raised concerns about the use of federal authority against perceived political enemies. Such conduct threatens the independence of institutions entrusted with administering justice impartially.

But a principle cannot be valid only when applied to one's opponents.

Democrats must resist the temptation to answer Republican excesses with excesses of their own.

There have been allegations concerning abuses of authority, conflicts of interest, questionable financial dealings, and possible corruption involving administration officials and individuals close to the President, including members of his family.

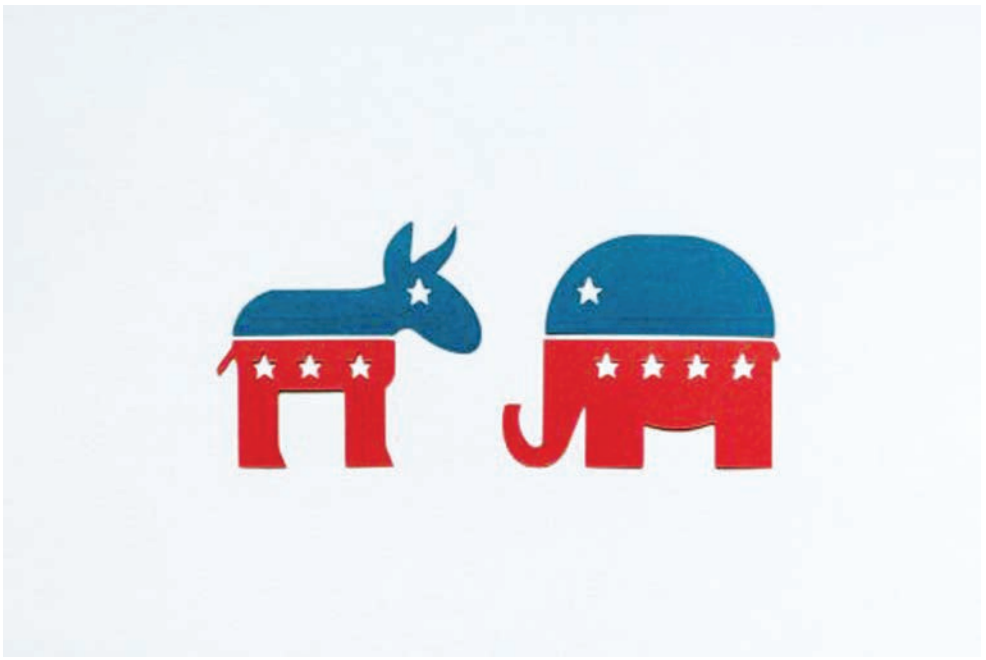
These allegations cannot simply be ignored. Where credible evidence exists, investigations must proceed through lawful, impartial procedures. No President, public official, relative, or political associate should be above the law.

But neither should anyone be presumed guilty because of political affiliation.

Justice seeks the truth. Vendetta seeks a victim.

That distinction is fundamental to constitutional government.

Congress must exercise oversight without turning investigations into instruments of political punishment. Wrongdoing, when established, must have consequences. But punishment must follow evidence and due process, never partisan resentment.



America has suffered enough from political bitterness. It is time not to rub salt into its wounds, but to apply the balm of responsible government.

What Americans Really Want

The November 3 results should remind political leaders that ordinary Americans are far more concerned about their daily lives than the personal rivalries of politicians.

Affordability remains a pressing concern. Families struggle with housing costs, groceries, healthcare expenses, insurance premiums, and the uncertainties of employment.

Working people seek dependable incomes and opportunities for advancement. Retirees worry about Social Security, Medicare, pensions, and the purchasing power of their savings. Parents want quality education and a secure future for their children.

These are the concerns that should dominate the congressional agenda.

An impressive stock market does not necessarily mean prosperity for a family struggling to pay its bills. National wealth means little to citizens who cannot afford adequate medical treatment or decent housing.

The true measure of America's prosperity is not how much wealth the nation produces, but how fairly its people share in the opportunities that wealth creates.

Democrats must offer credible solutions, not merely criticism of Republican failures.

And Republicans, despite their electoral defeat, remain responsible for cooperating wherever legislation can improve American lives.

Political parties may win elections. Only good governance can win the lasting trust of the people.

Strength Without Domination

America must also reconsider how it exercises its extraordinary power abroad.

For decades, successive administrations, Democratic and Republican alike, have involved the United States in distant conflicts. Some interventions arose from genuine security concerns; others reflected strategic ambitions or attempts to reshape the governments of other nations.

Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan remind us that overwhelming military superiority does not guarantee political success.

Wars consume national resources, destroy lives, destabilize societies, and leave consequences that endure long after military operations end. The conflict involving Iran has again demonstrated how decisions made abroad can impose substantial costs upon Americans at home.

A nation that spends enormous resources on foreign military operations must also ask whether it is adequately meeting the needs of its own people.

America must remain strong enough to defend itself, protect its citizens, and honor legitimate international commitments. But strength should never become an excuse for unnecessary confrontation.

A great nation does not have to prove its greatness by subduing others. Just as Americans cherish their independence and their right to determine their system of government, other peoples cherish those rights.

Respect for national sovereignty does not require indifference to oppression or abandonment of international responsibilities. It requires restraint, diplomacy, respect for international law, and recognition that lasting peace cannot simply be imposed by force.

America should lead through the strength of its example, not merely the example of its strength.

The Responsibility of Victory

The incoming Democratic majority will have substantial authority, but it will not possess unlimited power. The Constitution establishes checks and balances, and the President will retain important powers of his own.

A divided government need not mean governmental paralysis.

Democrats and Republicans can cooperate on affordability, healthcare, infrastructure, public safety, and economic opportunity if they place the national interest above partisan advantage.

President Trump, too, should recognize that the election has sent a message requiring reflection rather than confrontation. The millions who voted Republican remain Americans entitled to representation, just as Democratic voters were entitled to representation when their party was in the minority.

Government belongs to neither party.

The real challenge before the new Congress is not how effectively it can embarrass or obstruct the President, but how successfully it can improve the lives of the people.

That does not mean surrendering congressional oversight or constitutional responsibility. It means exercising both with seriousness and restraint.

We the People

As America commemorates 250 years of independence, its leaders would do well to remember the three words with which its Constitution begins: We the People.

Not We the Republicans. Not We the Democrats. Not We the Powerful.

We the People.

Those words establish the moral and constitutional purpose of representative government.

The people do not exist to serve their government. Government exists to serve the people. Political authority is not a personal possession or a reward for electoral victory. It is a temporary trust, granted by citizens and subject to their judgment.

Let the Democrats use their victory to demonstrate that public service matters more than political revenge. Let Republicans recognize that opposition does not absolve them of responsibility. Let the President and Congress work wherever possible for the common good.

Let wrongdoing be investigated, justice be administered impartially, and constitutional rights be protected without favoritism.

Above all, let America's leaders devote their energies to making the country more secure, more prosperous, more just, and more peaceful.

The finest response to the failures of one's predecessors is not to repeat those failures against them, but to demonstrate how government can serve the people better.

That is how America's greatness can be restored.

That is how democracy earns the confidence of its citizens.

And that is how we honor the enduring promise of We the People.

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The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

CONTD FROM PAGE 1



Vivek Ramaswamy lost Ohio's governor contest

The election also brought setbacks, notably Republican Vivek Ramaswamy's defeat in the Ohio gubernatorial contest.

SIX INDIAN AMERICANS ELECTED TO CONGRESS

The Indian-American delegation in the U.S. House of Representatives will include four returning lawmakers and two newcomers.

AMI BERA (California, Democrat) won another term representing the state's 3rd Congressional District. A physician and the longest-serving Indian American in Congress, Bera was first elected in 2012 and has been active in healthcare, foreign affairs and U.S.-India relations.

RO KHANNA (California, Democrat) retained his seat in the 17th Congressional District, defeating fellow Indian-American candidate Ritesh Tandon, a Republican. Khanna represents the Silicon Valley region and is known for his work on technology, manufacturing and economic policy.

PRAMILA JAYAPAL (Washington, Democrat) won re-election from the 7th Congressional District. Born in India, Jayapal became the first South Asian-American woman elected to Congress in 2016. She remains a prominent voice on immigration, healthcare and workers' rights.

SUHAS SUBRAMANYAM (Virginia, Democrat) secured a second term representing the 10th Congressional District. A former White House technology adviser and Virginia legislator, Subramanyam became the first Indian American elected to Congress from Virginia in 2024.

PIA DANDIYA (Florida, Democrat) defeated Republican Casey Askar in the 22nd Congressional District. A former teacher and high school principal, Dandiya is among the most notable newcomers, becoming the first Indian-American woman elected to the U.S. House from Florida.

DR. AMISH SHAH (Arizona, Democrat) defeated Republican Jay Feely in the 1st Congressional District, becoming the first Indian American elected to Congress from Arizona. Shah, a physician and former state representative, campaigned on healthcare and economic concerns.

The two newcomers replace some of the Indian-American representation lost when Raja Krishnamoorthi and Shri Thanedar were defeated in earlier primary contests.

ARUNA MILLER AND OTHER STATEWIDE VICTORIES

ARUNA MILLER, Maryland's Indian-born lieutenant governor, won another term alongside Democratic Governor Wes Moore. Miller, who immigrated from Hyderabad as a child, previously worked as a transportation engineer and served in the Maryland House of Delegates.

In Wisconsin, **JOSH KAUL** won re-election as attorney general. The Democratic incumbent has served as the state's chief legal officer since 2019.

These victories demonstrate that Indian-American participation in public life now extends to senior executive and legal offices, not merely legislative positions.

HISTORIC BREAKTHROUGHS IN STATE LEGISLATURES

Among the most significant state legislative victories was that of **JYOT SINGH,** who won Georgia's House District 97. His election makes him the first Indian American and first Sikh American elected to Georgia's General Assembly.

In Texas, **POOJA SETHI** won House District 47, becoming the first Indian-American woman elected to the Texas Legislature.

Illinois produced several important victories. **NABEELA SYED,** previously a member of the Illinois House, defeated Republican Darby Hills in Senate District 26, flipping a Republican-held seat.

SABA HAIDER, born in India, won Illinois House District 84, defeating Republican Brian Scopa. Ram Villivalam retained his state Senate seat, while Kevin Olickal secured another term in the Illinois House without opposition.

In Michigan, **RANJEEV PURI,** the Democratic House minority leader, won re-election from District 24. With Democrats regaining control of the state House, Puri has emerged as a potential candidate for Speaker. Such an appointment would mark another milestone for Indian-American and Sikh-American political representation.

Arizona's **PRIYA SUNDARESHAN,** the Democratic Senate minority leader, retained her seat in District 18. Her party's legislative gains have also placed her among potential candidates for a senior leadership position in the Arizona Senate.

INDIAN-AMERICAN VICTORIES IN NEW YORK

New York produced several notable results.

LISA KAUL, a Democrat, defeated Republican incumbent Rob Rolison in State Senate District 39, representing a significant political breakthrough in the Hudson Valley.

JEREMY COONEY won another term representing State Senate District 56 in the Rochester area. Born in Kolkata and adopted by an American mother, Cooney has often spoken about his personal journey and the opportunities provided by American democracy.

Republican **ANIL BEEPHAN** Jr. retained his seat in the New York State Assembly, demonstrating that Indian-American electoral success was not confined to one political party.

The victories are particularly relevant to the large Indian-American community in New York, whose political participation continues to grow.

VICTORIES ACROSS OTHER STATES

Indian-American candidates also registered successes in several other state legislatures.

In North Carolina, Democratic State Senator **JAY CHAUDHURI** won re-election from District 15. A senior Democratic figure in the state Senate, Chaudhuri has served in public office for a decade.

In Pennsylvania, physician **ARVIND VENKAT** retained his state House seat. Venkat became the first Indian-American physician elected to the Pennsylvania legislature in 2022.

In Connecticut, **SUJATA GADKAR-WILCOX** secured another term in the state Senate.

In Minnesota, pediatrician **KRISH SUBRAHMANIAN** won Senate District 49.

In Maryland, **AMAR MUKUNDA,** an engineer and military veteran, won the State Senate District 39 contest without opposition.

In Vermont, **KESHA RAM HINSDALE** retained her Senate seat, while Nikhil Goyal won election to the chamber.

In California, **ASH KALRA** won another term in the State Assembly. Kalra, who represents the San Jose area, has been a prominent Indian-American voice in California politics.

In Washington state, **MANKA DHINGRA** retained her state Senate seat.

In Ohio, physician **ANITA SOMANI** won re-election to the state House.

In Wisconsin, **RENUKA MAYADEV** secured a state legislative victory.

In Tennessee, Republican **SABI "DOC" KUMAR,** a physician, retained his state House seat.

Additional Indian-American candidates won uncontested legislative races in several states, including Iowa, Kentucky, Nevada, New Mexico and Washington, although a fully reconciled national roster was not yet available.

INDIAN AMERICANS MAKE THEIR MARK IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The election also demonstrated the increasing presence of Indian Americans in municipal and county administration.

In California, **NITHYA RAMAN** defeated incumbent Karen Bass in the Los Angeles mayoral contest. Raman, born in Kerala, previously served on the Los Angeles City Council and campaigned on housing, homelessness and municipal services. Her election marks a major breakthrough in the leadership of one of America's largest cities.

In Oakland, **JANANI RAMACHANDRAN** won re-election to the City Council. A public-interest attorney, Ramachandran has focused on housing, public safety and neighborhood concerns.

Other reported local winners included **KASHEF QAADRI** in Dublin, California, and **VIPAN S. BAJWA** in Union City, California, where election returns placed them ahead in their council contests.

In Washington, D.C., **APARNA RAJ** won the Ward 1 Council race.

Indian Americans also registered victories in county government. Reported winners included **NEIL MANIMALA** in Hillsborough County, Florida; **ROHIT MALHOTRA** in Fulton County, Georgia; **RANJAN ROHATGI** in St. Joseph County, Indiana; and **MONA SINGH** in Wake County, North Carolina.

In Utah, **SIM GILL** won re-election as Salt Lake County district attorney.

New Jersey, home to a substantial Indian-American population, also saw reported municipal victories involving **KETAN BHUPTANI** in Livingston, **MANSI PATEL** in Long Hill, **AAKASH SHAH** in Tenafly and **ANITA CHADHA** in South River.

Some municipal results remained unofficial as ballot counting continued.

Not All Indian-American Candidates Won

The November 3 elections also brought defeats for several candidates of Indian origin.

The most prominent was Republican **VIVEK RAMASWAMY,** who lost Ohio's gubernatorial election to Democrat Amy Acton despite receiving President Trump's endorsement.

In New York, Republican **SARITHA KOMATIREDDY** lost the attorney general's contest to incumbent Democrat Letitia James.

Other unsuccessful Indian-American candidates included **RITESH TANDON** in California, **NIRAV SHETH** in Washington state, **MAHESH GANORKAR** in North Carolina and independent **ANIL KUMAR** in Michigan.

These results underline the political diversity of the Indian-American community, whose candidates contested elections across party lines.

A GROWING PRESENCE IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The breadth of Indian-American participation in the 2026 elections reflects a significant transformation in the community's political life.

Once primarily identified with achievements in medicine, technology, education and entrepreneurship, Indian Americans are increasingly seeking positions where public policy is debated, formulated and implemented.

Their presence in state legislatures is particularly consequential. State lawmakers influence education, healthcare, taxation, infrastructure, business regulation and numerous policies affecting everyday life.

The emergence of Indian-American candidates in city councils, county commissions and school governance also signals a willingness to engage directly with the concerns of local communities.

The election results should be viewed not merely as an ethnic community's achievement, but as another expression of America's evolving democratic character.

As the United States commemorates

CONTD ON PAGE 5

CONTD FROM PAGE 4

HERE ARE SOME WHO WON IN THE STATE HOUSES AND LEGISLATURES

STATE	INDIAN-AMERICAN WINNERS	OFFICE
Illinois:	Nabeela Syed, Ram Villivalam, Saba Haider, Kevin Olickal	State legislature
New York:	Lisa Kaul, Jeremy Cooney, Anil Beephan Jr.	State legislature
Vermont:	Kesha Ram Hinsdale, Nikhil Goyal	State Senate
Arizona:	Priya Sundareshan	State Senate
Michigan:	Ranjeev Puri	State House
Texas:	Pooja Sethi	State House
Georgia:	Jyot Singh	State House
Minnesota:	Krish Subrahmanian	State Senate
Maryland:	Amar Mukunda	State Senate
North Carolina:	Jay Chaudhuri	State Senate
Pennsylvania:	Arvind Venkat	State House
Connecticut:	Sujata Gadkar-Wilcox	State Senate
Wisconsin:	Renuka Mayadev	State House
Ohio:	Anita Somani	State House
California:	Ash Kalra	State Assembly
Washington:	Manka Dhingra	State Senate
Tennessee:	Sabi "Doc" Kumar	State House



Saritha Komatireddy lost race for New York Attorney General

250 years of independence, the expanding participation of Americans of Indian origin provides another illustration of the opportunities available in a nation shaped by successive generations of immigrants.

Their electoral victories bring recognition. Their performance in office will determine the lasting value of that recognition.

Ultimately, their responsibility, like that of every elected representative, is to serve not one community alone, but We the People.







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AIA Honors Five "Power Builders of Scale" with Kautilya Awards at New York Gala

Business leadership, responsible artificial intelligence and Indian classical music highlight the evening



Kautilya award honorees (L to R) Pankaj Bhalla, Ashok Sancheti, Yakub Mathew, Aravind Melligeri and Dr. Samarth Kulkarni. AIA leadership pictured (L to R, excluding honorees) Dr. Dolly Manvar - Trustee, Harish Thakkar - Gala Organizing Chair, Dr. Neeru Bhambri, Kalpana Patel - Co-Chair, Gobind Bathija - Co-Chair, Nilima Madan - National President, Ravi Bhooplapur - Chairman, Board of Trustees, Dr. Samin Sharma - Gala Chair, Gobind Munjal - Immediate Past President, Neelam Modi - Banquet Chair, and Uma Swaminathan, one of AIA's founders.

NOVEMBER 1, 2026
WOODBURY, NY (TIP)

The Association of Indians in America (AIA), together with its Business Council, hosted the AIA Business Council & Kautilya Awards Night on November 1, 2026, at Crest Hollow Country Club in Woodbury, New York. More than 250 attended, including CEOs, COOs, presidents, entrepreneurs and community leaders. They gathered to recognize five outstanding business leaders and explore the opportunities and responsibilities surrounding artificial intelligence.

Celebrating the honorees as "Power Builders of Scale," the evening recognized leadership across aerospace and precision manufacturing, gemstones, consumer products, biotechnology and financial services.



AIA Panelists. (From L to R) - Corey David Johnson (Moderator), Hardik Bhilota, Gary Rado, Andrew Rasiej, Sai Chowdhary, Sookie Pyo, Siddhartha Kaul, Maulik Bhansali and Nilesh Mamdani

National President Nilima Madan reflected on the enduring relevance of Kautilya, also known as Chanakya, the Indian strategist, economist and author of the Arthashastra. Her eloquent remarks connected his ideas on preparation, innovation, alliances and responsible leadership with the challenges facing contemporary business leaders, emphasizing the importance of using wealth and influence for the common good.



A musical extravaganza. Rimpa Siva on Tabla accompanied by Abhik Mukherjee on Sitar.

Ravi Bhooplapur, Chair of the AIA Board of Trustees, highlighted the organization's achievements and congratulated the team on bringing together an accomplished gathering. Dr. Samin Sharma, AIA Gala Chair and Immediate Past Chairman of the Board, spoke about healthcare initiatives in India that support disadvantaged communities.

RECOGNIZING FIVE DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS LEADERS - THE 2026 KAUTILYA AWARDS HONORED:

ARAVIND MELLIGERI - Chairman, Aequs, and Co-Founder, QuEST Global. A visionary entrepreneur and industrial leader, Melligeri has helped advance India's aerospace and precision manufacturing industries through the development of integrated manufacturing ecosystems.

ASHOK SANCHETI - President, Pioneer Gems, New York. A distinguished entrepreneur, internationally respected gemstone expert and philanthropist, Sancheti shared his guru's advice that, after learning and earning, the third stage of life should be returning -humanitarian service.

PANKAJ BHALLA - Senior Vice President, Procter & Gamble, and CEO, Gillette North America. A global business executive, Bhalla has helped drive the growth and transformation of some of the world's most recognized consumer brands.

DR. SAMARTH (SAM) KULKARNI - CEO, CRISPR Therapeutics. A globally recognized biotechnology leader, Kulkarni has led the development of the world's first approved gene-edited treatment and advanced a pipeline addressing oncology, cardiovascular and autoimmune diseases.

YAKUB MATHEW - Managing Director, Wells Fargo Advisors, New York. A financial leader with nearly four decades of experience across Citibank, HSBC and Wells Fargo, Mathew is also the author of Seeking the Infinite - Maha

CONTD ON PAGE 7

CONTD FROM PAGE 6

Kumbh 2025, a multifaith exploration of the spiritual significance of the Kumbh Mela.

The honorees were introduced, respectively, by Amogh Bhooplapur, Neelam Modi, Animesh Goenka, John Gupta and Dr. Shashi Shah. National President Nilima Madan and Board of Trustees Chair Ravi Bhooplapur presented the awards.

AI & TECH PANEL EXAMINES INNOVATION AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

A central feature of the evening was the panel discussion, "Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Innovation, Economic Progress & Responsible Global Leadership."

Curated by Kalpana Patel, President and CEO of Unique Comp, Inc., and Business Council Co-Chair, the panel brought together Andrew Rasiej, Maulik Bhansali, Siddhartha Kaul, Gary Rado, Hardik Bhilota, Sookie Pyo, Nilesh Mamdani and Sai Chowdhary. Corey David Johnson moderated the discussion.

Panelists expressed optimism about AI's potential to accelerate productivity, innovation and economic growth, while examining challenges involving cybersecurity, governance, public trust, sustainability and workforce transformation. The discussion emphasized the importance of human-centered applications, responsible implementation and thoughtful leadership as organizations adopt this rapidly evolving technology.

The organizing team of Nilima Madan, Dr Samin Sharma, Co-chairs Kalpana Patel and Gobind Bathija as well as Harish Thakker presented the panelists and moderator with plaques of appreciation in recognition of their participation in the AI panel discussion.

The evening featured a classical music performance by highly accomplished Rimpa Siva on tabla, representing the Farukhabad gharana, and Abhik Mukherjee on sitar, of the Etawah-Imdadkhani gharana.

Madan expressed heartfelt gratitude to the honorees, panelists, artists, sponsors, supporters, volunteers and guests whose participation contributed to the evening's success. She gave particular recognition to Business Council Co-Chairs Kalpana Patel and Gobind Bathija, Organizing Committee Chair Harish Thakkar and Banquet Committee Chair Neelam Modi.

The gathering also recognized the support of AIA's leadership, including Immediate Past National President Gobind Munjal, its National Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and chapter representatives. Harish Thakkar delivered a vote of thanks.

Messages commending AIA's Kautilya Awards initiative were received from Binaya S. Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York; U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer; and Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman.



A view of the audience

Guests received copies of the commemorative event journal, and the evening that began with a warm reception of all dignitaries and esteemed guests concluded with a sumptuous dinner.

Looking ahead, Madan outlined plans for the Charaka and Sushruta Medical Awards in 2027, alongside celebrations marking AIA's 60th anniversary.

The Association of Indians in America was founded in 1967 and is a national organization with several Chapters dedicated to serving the Indian American community, celebrating achievement, supporting educational and humanitarian initiatives, and strengthening friendship and understanding between India and the United States. Through its national leadership and chapters, AIA brings together community members and leaders in business, science, medicine, public service and the arts.

For information and inquiries: AIA
Email: aianecevent@gmail.com
Website: www.aianational.org

(Based on a Press Release issued by Nilima Madan)



AIA Officials who spoke on the occasion



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Poll rout puts Trump on a sticky wicket

India must be prepared to deal with a more difficult and erratic US President

By Manoj Joshi



Countdown : The midterm election results mark the beginning of the end of Trump's presidency. -Reuters

"For India, the elections carry significant stakes across immigration, trade and geopolitics. Despite the turbulence of the past year, the underlying strategic logic of the US-India partnership will continue to enjoy bipartisan support in Washington. A Democratic-controlled House - with a friend of India, Sherrod Brown, flipping the Senate seat in Ohio - could give New Delhi additional political avenues to challenge some of the Trump administration's contentious measures. A Democratic Congress may not necessarily be more sympathetic to Indian trade interests, but it could complicate Trump's ability to use tariffs indiscriminately."

There are tsunamis that come without warning and there are others which can be seen coming - but you can do little to avoid them. And so it was with US President Donald Trump and his Republican Party, who have been hit by a tidal wave of epic proportions.

The Democratic sweep in the House of Representatives and the Senate will shape American politics in the years to come. A chastened Trump says now that he is willing to work with the Democrats, but they can hardly take this famously self-centered President at his word. He is more likely to lash out not just as a lame duck, but a particularly angry one who could hit out in all directions, with little care for the institutions of his country or his party.

Financial issues, inflation and mortgage rates have played a major role in the elections, in addition to the war in Iran, which has driven up petrol and diesel prices. Everything became unaffordable for many - healthcare, groceries, housing and higher education. There were also understated issues like corruption within the Trump administration; the President has made over $1 billion in crypto transactions in the past year.

This has been the most expensive midterms, with mega donors like Elon Musk putting in nearly half a billion dollars into the elections. There were donations from crypto millionaires and non-profit organizations, and more than $2 billion had been pumped into the House and Senate races alone.

The Democrats flipped seven Republican-held Senate seats - Iowa, Kansas, Ohio, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maine and Texas - to secure a majority in the Senate. The victories in Texas, where the Democrats won the Senate and the governorship, mark a massive political realignment. Jon Ossoff, who retained his Georgia seat, is already being talked about as the Democratic candidate for the 2028 elections.

The victory in Ohio suggests that organized labor and the working class are once again getting behind the Democrats. They have won Kansas for the first time since 1932, suggesting a deep rural backlash against the Republicans. Likewise, the defeat in Iowa indicates that agricultural pressures and tariffs were deeply unpopular issues in this pro-Trump state. Abdul El-Sayed's victory in Michigan makes him the first Muslim to be elected to the US Senate; it is a validation of the unapologetically progressive policies in this crucial swing state.

This is a wave election, which comes with repercussions for governorships, state legislative seats and mayoralties, and power beyond committee rooms. The President will face scrutiny of his administration, family and allies. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth could face impeachment or pressure from the White House, which is looking for scapegoats.

Tariffs, the Iran war, Pentagon activities, health coverage and the US-Israel relationship will come under the Democratic microscope. But procedural delays and legal tactics can slow things down to a crawl for the Democrats. Trump has threatened to use the veto as a primary weapon. And the Democrats lack the numbers to remove him from office. But his capacity to govern will be severely affected.

The Republicans will in all likelihood remove Speaker Mike Johnson and Senate leader John Thune. But the biggest question mark will be over Vice President JD Vance, the all-but-declared presidential candidate for 2028. Will the electorate support Trump's understudy after having rejected the President in 2026?

With the midterms over, the clock has now begun ticking for the presidential elections. The Democrats had been waiting for this moment ever since they lost the presidency to Trump. Now, they can build on their current victory to shape their 2028 campaign. Potential contenders have used the midterms to position themselves.

Besides Ossoff, who is a moderate, there are many potential Democratic candidates in the reckoning, including Kamala Harris. Take Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who feels that the victory of progressive Abdul El-Sayed is something that will "break open the entire political calculus in America" by bringing Left-leaning politics to the center stage. She contributed $1 million for El-Sayed's campaign.

Another contender, Josh Shapiro, has won the governorship of Pennsylvania. He is less known nationally, but he has a "get things done" reputation. By defeating Republican Stacy Garrity by double digits and carrying three Democratic House candidates across the finishing line, he has positioned himself to make a bid for the top job.

Gavin Newsom, the California Governor, was not running for office, but he helped the Democrats gain five seats and take the House of Representatives. The defeat of the billionaire wealth tax bill, a measure opposed by Newsom, has enhanced his standing with the billionaires and the electorate.

The immediate international concern is the possibility of renewed US attacks on Iran. There are contradictory signals. Washington has told Arab Gulf states to prepare for a short, intense campaign, whereas

JD Vance is engaging with senior Iranian figures, including Mohsen Rezaei, in an effort to revive negotiations.

For India, the elections carry significant stakes across immigration, trade and geopolitics. Despite the turbulence of the past year, the underlying strategic logic of the US-India partnership will continue to enjoy bipartisan support in Washington. A Democratic-controlled House - with a friend of India, Sherrod Brown, flipping the Senate seat in Ohio - could give New Delhi additional political avenues to challenge some of the Trump administration's contentious measures. A Democratic Congress may not necessarily be more sympathetic to Indian trade interests, but it could complicate Trump's ability to use tariffs indiscriminately.

The midterm election results mark the beginning of the end of Trump's presidency. But the process will be drawn out over the next two years. With his room for maneuver significantly reduced domestically, he is likely to lash out abroad. India must be prepared to deal with a more difficult and erratic Trump. It remains to be seen whether American institutions can impose meaningful constraints on his excesses.

(Manoj Joshi is Distinguished Fellow, Observer Research Foundation. His X handle is @manojmanoj1951)

Gen ZA & the Viksit Bharat dream

Gen ZA will be in the prime of life (27-42 years) by 2047

By R Jagannathan



"THERE WAS A TIME WHEN WE CONSIDERED 20 YEARS TO A GENERATION BEFORE WE STARTED COUNTING THE NEXT ONE, SINCE THAT IS THE AGE AT WHICH SOME START MARRYING AND START EARNING A LIVING. IF THAT GAP HAS NOW COME DOWN TO 15 YEARS OR LESS, IT IMPLIES THAT TRYING TO DEFINE A GENERATION BY AGE INTERVALS IS PAST ITS SELL-BY DATE. THE GENZ PERSON BORN IN THE LATE 1990S IS NOT GOING TO SHARE THE SAME ATTITUDES WITH THOSE BORN IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE SECOND DECADE OF THE 21ST CENTURY. GIVEN THE SPEED WITH WHICH TECHNOLOGY IS CHANGING - WIDELY AVAILABLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) MODELS ARE BARELY FOUR YEARS OLD TODAY - GEN ALPHA, WHICH CAME AFTER GENZ - IS ALREADY ENDING."



Ephemeral : Unlike homes, which last a lifetime, gadgets become obsolete rather quickly. / iStock

There is much talk about GenZ these days, especially after the protests led by students in the wake of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) paper leaks. GenZ is defined as those people who were born between 1997 and 2012, which means some have already entered the job market, while others are still in the classroom or doing odd jobs, the latter in case they can't afford higher education.

There was a time when we considered 20 years to a generation before we started counting the next one, since that is the age at which some start marrying and start earning a living. If that gap has now come down to 15 years or less, it implies that trying to define a generation by age intervals is past its sell-by date. The GenZ person born in the late 1990s is not going to share the same attitudes with those born in the early years of the second decade of the 21st century. Given the speed with which technology is changing - widely available artificial intelligence (AI) models are barely four years old today - Gen Alpha, which came after GenZ - is already ending.

So, when we talk about the young today, we are essentially talking about a mix of later-born GenZ and the early-born Gen Alpha, and it is this cohort (born between 2005 and 2020) that may share one characteristic: of being born entirely in the digital age, where one spends a lot of time watching screens, whether on the laptop or the smartphone. Let's call them Gen ZA (or 'Zah').

The road to Viksit Bharat, assuming it is reachable, will depend on how this cohort is educated, skilled, nurtured and allowed to contribute to national wealth creation. Gen ZA will be in the prime of life (27-42 years) by 2047.

Unfortunately, it is precisely this ZA generation that faces the toughest future, for it has been born when AI and automation will start impacting entry-level jobs, or jobs that need middle-level skills.

Consider this reality: the earnings of the entry-level software coder is not much higher than what a lower-skilled Zomato or Swiggy delivery person working up to 10 hours a day would be capable of earning - Rs 18,000-20,000. The coder's salary may even be lower than what a good carpenter, plumber or electrician may earn in the metros. Of course, the job quality of the greenhorn coder may be higher than that of the delivery boy who rides a bike under the scorching sun, but earning levels are comparable when adjusted for age and skillsets.

The challenge Gen ZA is facing is one where formal full-time jobs are less likely to be available, and hence incomes may also be lumpy and uneven between months. This generation, especially the one in contractual jobs that depend on work done and not time spent in the office, will not easily be able to buy a home using equated monthly instalments (EMIs).

A former colleague and columnist, Vivek Kaul, speculated recently about whether GenZ (my Gen ZA) will ever be able to afford a home, or is destined to live in rental homes or with family. It is a relevant question to ask when almost anything affordable is located far away from the workplace, or simply unaffordable to most single-income nuclear homes. The fact that permanent jobs are themselves becoming scarce reinforces this fact.

Kaul also speculates that since GenZ are mostly progeny of the Millennial generation (1981-1996), they are more likely to be either single children or have only one sibling. This means, even if they don't buy a home because they are unaffordable, they may end up inheriting one from their Baby Boomer grandparents or Millennial parents, who lived in times when regular jobs were easier to come by.

If fewer people buy homes, it means that EMIs, or differently structured EMIs that allow for flexible payments over the same time period, may be used for the other objects of desire beyond homes - from fancy cars to gadgets or foreign vacations. If Gen ZA kids are born digital natives, it stands to reason that they will be buying gadgets like smartphones and digital devices more often than their parents.

But unlike homes, which last a lifetime if maintained properly, gadgets become obsolete rather quickly. These days, one can barely keep a smartphone or laptop for three years without them beginning to slow down or even hang repeatedly. To make sure that you do indeed keep upgrading, the manufacturers of these gadgets will keep updating your software to the point where the old hardware will not be able to cope with the new software's memory and processing requirements.

Add the need for cyber security, and the need for upgrades and frequent changes of gadgets can only grow. The tech industry knows that it can upgrade you enough to kill the utility of the old device and force you to buy another, more expensive, gadget.

What this is adding up to is a simple result: Gen ZA, and the ones to follow, will be investing or buying gadgets for the short-term, which makes it obvious that those who want to sell them anything will have to make it more like a rental than a genuine purchase. At some point, smartphones will not be bought, but bundled into a regular post-paid connection with regular monthly payments that will amortize the cost of the phone before the next upgrade.

Gen ZA, even if it ultimately buys a home, will be more likely to stay in rented properties, or in co-living apartments or with parents for a substantial length of time. I suspect that many of them end up buying cheaper homes on the periphery, from where they cannot commute to work, and then buy cars and gadgets instead.

The upper middle class and the richer classes above them buy timeshares for vacations and even shares in private jets. The middle-middle and lower middle Gen ZA will be doing the same with the homes and gadgets they buy.

Thirty years ago, in 1996, Swiss watchmaker Patek Philippe faced the same problem: how do you sell a watch that costs thousands of dollars to buy (a minimum of Rs 15 lakh in India) when you can get a good enough watch to tell the time for under Rs 200? It came up with a brilliant ad which ran: "You never actually own a Patek Philippe. You merely look after it for the next generation."

For Gen ZA, whether it is a home or a phone or a car or furniture or anything which costs a lot, ownership may not be the available option. It will either inherit, or rent or share a service with family, friends or colleagues. Gen ZA will be the first generation that will own less and hire and rent more.

(R Jagannathan is a Writer and Author)

The INDIAN PANORAMA
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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

DEMOCRATS WON - NOW DON'T BLOW IT

WE WON. DEMOCRATS GAINED CONTROL OF CONGRESS. NOW WHAT?



We need to govern. Our time is limited, and our to-do list enormous. Running headlong into impeachment would be politically self-destructive. I understand the temptation. The MAGA machine spent millions attacking me. Vice President JD Vance came to my district and called me "the worst congressman in the entire United States."

But Americans didn't vote for another two years of political warfare. They want relief from rising costs, leaders who work across party lines, and a Congress that actually solves problems.

My CPA background taught me to think in percentages. Democrats should devote 75% of our time to the cost of living and affordability and the other 25% to rigorous oversight.

Our constitutional oversight responsibility should be guided by the interests of the American people. An investigation into the Trump family's business dealings, including their cryptocurrency ventures, must examine the effect on Americans' pocketbooks. When Democrats probe whether the Pentagon or Elon Musk shut down Ukraine's access to Starlink, we must assess the national-security consequences.

But we campaigned on affordability. Let's start with restoring the enhanced premium tax credits under the Affordable Care Act, which Republicans refused to extend. Reverse the One Big Beautiful Bill Act's Medicaid cuts. End most of President Trump's tariffs, raise the minimum wage, strengthen unions through the PRO Act, and expand opportunities for families to build wealth, including the Trump Accounts. Let's also protect Social Security by lifting the cap on taxable earnings.

We should take up comprehensive immigration reform, combining border security and the removal of dangerous criminals with due-process protections, while also delivering a functional asylum system, professional enforcement, and permanent earned work authorization for law-abiding immigrants. Oversight will expose Mr. Trump's immigration abuses. Only legislation can fix the system.

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the labor force, the economy and national security. We can work across party lines to encourage innovation while protecting workers and consumers.

Finally, we must scrutinize the administration's decisions on spending, healthcare, energy and national security, especially the wars in Iran and Ukraine, and develop a clear plan to replenish munitions and ensure readiness.

Some Democrats will demand a third impeachment of Mr. Trump. That would become another partisan spectacle, drowning out the issues voters elected us to address. I will oppose any impeachment process based on political anger, revenge or retribution.

The measure of Democrats' success won't be how many headlines we generate or scores we settle. It will be whether families can afford healthcare, housing, groceries and a better future.

As a co-chairman of the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus, I know Republicans and Democrats can work together without abandoning their principles or constitutional duties. Mr. Trump made this election a referendum on himself. Voters delivered their verdict. They expect results.

(Mr. Suozzi, a Democrat, represents New York's Third Congressional District)

Letter to Editor



Olena Nicks
Nassau County Legislator, District 5
Uniondale, N.Y.

Dear Editor,

Please publish this message for my constituents.

Thank you, District 5, for choosing me to lead and to be your voice. I don't take that trust lightly, and I never will.

This was our third election in less than two years. When I stepped up for the special election in February 2025, I asked you to answer the call with me. You did. Then you all did it again, and again.

To the Unions, club leaders, my volunteers, ralliers, friends and family my heart is so full. You knocked on doors in the elements. You made calls endlessly. You gave what you could, even when you had already given so much. And through all three campaigns, you never stopped showing up. You stuck with me for the long haul, and I will never forget it. This win is as much yours as it is mine.

To the families of District 5, thank you for believing in me. I'm honored to keep working for you and delivering for the best district in Nassau County!

With love and gratitude,

Letter to the editor of The Indian Panorama



Viviana L. Russell
Re-elected to a two-year term of serving the Nassau County Legislature's Second District.

On November 3, the people of Legislative District 2 made their voices heard, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to continue representing the communities of Carle Place, Westbury, and New Cassel, along with portions of Hempstead, Hicksville, Jericho, and Uniondale.

First and foremost, I give all thanks, honor, and glory to God, whose grace, guidance, and faithfulness have sustained me throughout this journey. I am continually reminded that with faith, purpose, and His guidance, all things are possible.

This is a victory that belongs to all of us! To every member of our campaign team, every person who made phone calls, knocked on doors, contributed financially, volunteered their time, offered prayers, and came out to vote, thank you! I am deeply humbled by the overwhelming support and the margin of victory your efforts helped deliver. Your prayers strengthened me, and your confidence in my leadership inspires me to continue serving with integrity, compassion, and purpose.

To my loving husband, Gary, our three children, two grandchildren, and my extended family, thank you for your unconditional love, patience, encouragement, and sacrifices. Your unwavering support has been my foundation, and I am truly blessed to have you by my side every step of the way.

As I embark upon the next two years in County government, I remain committed to continuing the work of SOWing into our communities by:

- Strengthening the connection between residents and responsive government;
- Overcoming challenges through unity, collaboration, and transparency; and
- Welcoming new ideas that reflect justice, equity, and shared progress.

Now and always, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (516) 571-6202 or vrussell@nassaucountyny.gov to share your ideas, concerns, and vision for our district.

Together, we will continue shaping a future rooted in equity, dignity, opportunity, and progress for all.

Thank you for once again for entrusting me with the honor and responsibility of being your voice in County government.

With a grateful heart and God leading the way, I look forward to continuing this journey of service alongside you.

Viviana R. Russell
Nassau County Legislator
Westbury, N.Y.





SIAEA

44TH ANNUAL GALA

BLACK TIE EVENT

KEY NOTE SPEAKER



PAUL A. OCHOA
Commissioner
NYC Department of Design and Construction

DIGNITARY



AMANDA ROGERS
Director of Construction
Port Authority of NYNJ

DIGNITARY



AHMED TIGANI
Commissioner
NYC Department of Buildings

HONOREES



ANKUR VAIDYA
Chairman
Federation of Indian Associations



APEXSA PATEL
Sr. Project Manager
Holt Construction



ERIC HIRANI
President
Infinite Consulting Corporation



HARPREET DHALIWAL
Partner
BKSK Architects, LLP



MARY CUNNEEN
Chief Operating Officer
Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation



NAVIN NITISH
Senior Vice President
WSP



NISHANT SHAH
Program Executive
GFT



PATHIK MEHTA
Deputy Director
New York City Housing Authority



REDDY VANGALA
Project Executive
Forte Construction Corporation

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14th, 2026 at 6PM

PIER 60 | CHELSEA PIERS | NEW YORK, NY 10011

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20TH YEAR

PM Modi to inaugurate Prashanti Kutiram's Golden Jubilee celebrations in Bengaluru on November 13



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate Prashanti Kutiram's Golden Jubilee celebrations in Bengaluru on November 13 - Photo / ANI

NOVEMBER 4, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to inaugurate the Golden Jubilee celebrations of Prashanti Kutiram, Bengaluru, on November 13, marking 50 years of the institution's contributions to yoga, education, scientific research, integrative healthcare, spirituality and nation-building.

According to a press release, the celebrations will also mark the birth centenary of HV Sheshadri, with the proposed inauguration by the Prime Minister.



Padma Shri Dr HR Nagendra also participated in the celebration of International Day of Yoga at the Indian Consulate sponsored Yoga Session at the iconic Times Square, New York City. Seen in the picture, from left to right: Satish Gupta, Prem Bhandari, Dr HR Nagendra, Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Ms Monalisa Shuvadarshini, and others. -File photo

Padma Shri Dr HR Nagendra, President of the S-VYASA University Society and VYASA, has invited Prem Bhandari, Chief Advisor for International Affairs at S-VYASA University, President of the Rajasthan Association of North America (RANA), New York, and Chairman of Jaipur Foot USA, to attend the occasion as a distinguished guest.

In his invitation, Dr Nagendra highlighted the institution's journey over the past five decades, saying Prashanti Kutiram had evolved from a modest yoga center into an internationally recognized institution for yoga education, research and healthcare.

"During the past five decades, Prashanti Kutiram has grown from a humble Yoga center into an internationally recognized institution for Yoga education, research and healthcare. The Golden Jubilee provides us with an opportunity to express our gratitude to all those who have supported this national mission and to present our vision for the next phase of service to society," he wrote.

Bhandari's contribution towards promoting Indian culture and yoga internationally, Dr Nagendra referred to his involvement in International Day of Yoga celebrations at Times Square and the United Nations, the launch of Vivekananda Yoga University at Capitol Hill and efforts towards organizing a global yoga accreditation summit at the United Nations.

"In a way, you have become a true ambassador of Indian culture and tradition, and it is our privilege having yourself as our chief advisor - International Affairs," Dr Nagendra wrote in the invitation.

Responding to the invitation, Bhandari credited Prime Minister Modi's initiative at the United Nations with giving yoga an unprecedented international platform through the establishment of International Yoga Day.

"Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's visionary initiative at the United Nations led to the declaration of June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. The resolution received historic support, with 177 countries joining as co-sponsors. Today, International Yoga Day is celebrated in well over 100 countries, bringing people together across nationalities, cultures and faiths. His leadership has helped take India's ancient gift of yoga to the world as a message of health, harmony and peace," Bhandari said.

Expressing gratitude to Dr Nagendra, Bhandari said he felt honored to be associated with the institution's international outreach initiatives and thanked its leadership for recognizing his contribution.

"I am deeply grateful to respected Padma Shri Dr. H. R. Nagendra Guru ji for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this mission and for placing his trust in me as S-VYASA's Chief Advisor for International Affairs. His guidance and encouragement have been a great source of inspiration. I feel honored to receive his invitation to this historic celebration," he added.



Padma Shri Dr HR Nagendra addressing a gathering at the Indian Consulate in New York. -File photo



Padma Shri Dr HR Nagendra, President of the S-VYASA University Society and VYASA, has invited Prem Bhandari, Chief Advisor for International Affairs at S-VYASA University, to attend the inaugural ceremony. -File photo

Dr NK Manjunath, Vice Chancellor of S-VYASA University, also acknowledged Bhandari's sustained efforts towards promoting yoga and Indian knowledge systems internationally.



Padma Shri Dr HR Nagendra was felicitated at the Indian Consulate in New York. He is flanked by Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan (to his right), and Satish Gupta, a businessman from Dallas (to his left). Prem Bhandari is seen on the extreme left. -File photo

In his letter, Manjunath said the university was proud to have Bhandari as its Chief Advisor for International Affairs and appreciated his efforts in expanding yoga's presence across the United States over the past decade.

The letter also recalled Bhandari's invitation to Dr Nagendra for a programme at the United Nations premises in 2018, followed by Swami Avdheshanand Giri's participation in International Day of Yoga celebrations at Times Square in 2022.

Manjunath further acknowledged the contributions of RANA and Jaipur Foot USA, along with BRUHUD NY, towards promoting yoga, meditation and holistic wellness. He also referred to the YO1 wellness retreat, which brought together medical professionals and industry leaders.

Following the inaugural ceremony on November 13, a series of special programs will be organized at Prashanti Kutiram from November 14 to 23.

According to the press release, the celebrations will feature academic conferences, yoga and healthcare programs, cultural presentations, exhibitions, alumni gatherings and interactions with eminent personalities. The programme will also include the dedication of important new initiatives.

The Golden Jubilee celebrations will commemorate five decades of Prashanti Kutiram's work in yoga and holistic healthcare while outlining its vision for expanding its contribution to education, research and society in the coming years. (Source: ANI)

Historic Diwali Celebration across the U.S. Pacific Northwest

Six State Governors and 21 Cities Mayors Host 1st ever Diwali Ceremonies at State Capitols, Governors' Mansions and City Halls



Gov. Kelly Armstrong – North Dakota
29 October 2026



Gov. Brad Little – Idaho
16 October 2026



Gov. Greg Gianforte – Montana
26 October 2026



Gov. Jim Pillen – Nebraska
20 October 2026



Gov. Bob Ferguson – Washington
4 November 2026



Gov. Brad Little – Idaho
16 October 2026



Gov. Greg Gianforte – Montana
26 October 2026



Gov. Kelly Armstrong – North Dakota
29 October 2026



Gov. Jim Pillen – Nebraska
20 October 2026



Gov. Bob Ferguson – Washington
4 November 2026

Diwali celebrations at State Capitols and Governors' Mansions across Idaho, Nebraska, Montana, North Dakota and Washington (October-November 2026)

NOVEMBER 5, 2026
SEATTLE (TIP)

In one of the largest-ever Diwali celebrations hosted across the U.S. Pacific Northwest, the Governors of Idaho, Nebraska, Montana, North Dakota and Washington hosted first-ever Diwali celebrations at their respective Governors' Mansions and State Capitol Rotundas, in the presence of US Senators, Members of US Congress, local Mayors and a large number of the Indian American community leadership. The Diwali celebrations began in mid-October and will continue until 10 November 2026, with the Governor of

CONTD ON PAGE 14

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

CONTD FROM PAGE 13

DIWALI 2026: CELEBRATIONS ACROSS WASHINGTON STATE


KIRKLAND (09 OCTOBER 2026)


BOTHELL (27 OCTOBER 2026)


EVERETT (07 OCTOBER 2026)


TUKWILA (19 OCTOBER 2026)


AUBURN (05 OCTOBER 2026)


SEATAC (27 OCTOBER 2026)



DUPONT (27 OCTOBER 2026)


BELLEVUE (13 OCTOBER 2026)


MARYSVILLE (08 OCTOBER 2026)


ISSAQUAH (02 NOVEMBER 2026)


EDMONDS (02 NOVEMBER 2026)


MEDINA (26 OCTOBER 2026)


SPOKANE (28 OCTOBER 2026)


LYNWOOD (03 NOVEMBER 2026)


TACOMA (03 NOVEMBER 2026)


KENT (03 NOVEMBER 2026)

Diwali celebrations and proclamations at City Halls across Washington State (October-November 2026, Washington State)

Oregon scheduled to host the final ceremony on 10 November at the State Capitol in Salem.

It may be noted that, during these first ever Governor Hosted State-level Diwali celebrations, the role of the Indian American community in contributing to their respective states' economies and cultural diversity received particular appreciation from the highest levels of State leadership. Select excerpts as:

- Governor Brad Little at Idaho State Capitol (16 October 2026): "Here in Idaho, we're proud to have a vibrant Indian community that contributes very much to our state through their businesses, professions, service and civic involvement. Indian Americans help strengthen Idaho's economy and help our communities be better places to live, work and raise a family."
- Governor Jim Pillen at Nebraska Governor's Mansion in Lincoln (20 October): "The Indian community is an incredibly vital piece of who we are as the people of Nebraska... It's really important that you keep these traditions alive in your families. Never, ever, ever let the light go out!"
- Governor Kelly Armstrong, North Dakota at Governor's Residence in Bismarck (29 October): "We should celebrate these relationships. We should celebrate these friendships. Diversity is our strength... We're going to continue this relationship because it's a fantastic one, at an international level, at a trade level, at a state-to-state level, at a diplomatic level, but most importantly, a human level."
- Governor Bob Ferguson, Washington at the Rotunda of State Capitol in Olympia (4 November 2026): "We are proud to be home to one of the largest shares of Indian Americans in the country. And during the previous decade, we had the fastest growing Indian American population in the entire country. And we have seen this community contribute so much to our state."



Indian traditional classical dance performance at the 1st ever Diwali celebrations at the Washington State Capitol Rotunda (4 November 2026, Olympia, Washington)


First ever Diwali celebrations at the Washington State Capitol Rotunda (4 November 2026, Olympia, Washington)

Within Washington State, 22 cities in the Greater Seattle area, where nearly 200,000 Indian Americans reside also, observed individual Diwali ceremonies, inside their City Council Chambers with Mayors presiding over the lamp lighting, in presence of all Council Members. These included Auburn; Everett, Marysville, Kirkland, Bellevue, Tukwila, Medina, Bothell, SeaTac, DuPont; Spokane, Issaquah, Edmonds, Lynnwood, Duvall, Tacoma, Mukilteo and Kent. Additional Diwali ceremonies are scheduled in coming days in the city of Snoqualmie, King County (covers 39 cities of Greater Seattle) and the City of Seattle on 10 November.

In addition, Official Proclamations recognizing the importance of Diwali as a festival symbolizing the triumph of light over darkness and the contributions of the Indian American community to the economic and cultural enrichment of their respective regions, and underscoring ongoing partnership with the Consulate General of India in Seattle, were issued by several States and City Governments.

It may be recalled that in Washington State, the State Senate passed Senate Bill 6044 in February 2026, recognizing Diwali (and Bandi Chhor Divas) as state observances (non-legal holidays), marking an important step towards official recognition of these festivals. It may be noted that in each of these SIX States and 22 cities of the Greater Seattle Area, the Consulate worked in close partnership with Indian American community leadership to organize and co-host these large-scale Diwali ceremonies.

12 Fair and Affordable Homes For Sale by Lottery

Enclave at Armonk

113 King Street
Armonk, New York



3 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath Homes for $325,000

Do not apply unless your Household:

- Has annual income that is below the "Maximum Income Limits" below
- Has between 3-7 Persons
- Will occupy this property as your primary residence
- Can afford the total monthly housing payment (see next page for estimates)

Maximum Income Limits by Household Size

	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person
80% AMI	$122,150	$135,700	$146,600	$157,450	$168,250

Income limits as of July 1, 2026 and subject to change.

Features: Twelve two-floor townhome condo units, available in stages starting January 2027. Each unit has 3 bedrooms, 2 full bathrooms, 1 powder room, and a 1-car garage. Washer/dryer hook-ups available. Enclave at Armonk includes 125 total condominium homes and luxury amenities including a clubhouse with fitness room, outdoor swimming pool, cabanas, bocce court, fire pit area, and outdoor dining space. There is no fee to apply however, if your application is selected for review after the lottery and you elect to move forward, you will be required to pay a $200 processing fee.

Application Deadline: November 20, 2026 at 4pm

Must be submitted online, by mail or in person by this time or postmarked by this date.
Submitting more than 1 application per household *may disqualify you.*

Lottery will be held electronically on December 7, 2026 at 11am

You will be notified of your lottery number or can check on your profile on *HomeSeeker*.

How to Apply: Apply via Westchester County's *HomeSeeker* at https://homeseeker.westchestergov.com/, or contact Westchester Residential Opportunities, Inc. by phone at 914.428.4519, by email at affordable@wroinc.org or by mail or in-person at Westchester Residential Opportunities, 470 Mamaroneck Avenue, Suite 410, White Plains, NY 10605.

The complete offering terms are in an Offering Plan available from Sponsor. File No. H25-0002.

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

7 takeaways from the Carney government's 2nd budget

Liberals propose new tax filing deadline, ending homelessness in 10 years

NOVEMBER 5, 2026
OTTAWA (TIP)

Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne tabled the 2026 budget on Thursday, the second introduced under Prime Minister Mark Carney's government.

Titled Masters of our Destiny, it shows a slightly lower than originally forecasted deficit for this year.

The government coffers were bolstered by an expected windfall thanks in part to oil revenues. But the Liberals have largely opted to put that money back into the economy.

The budget outlines billions in new spending, but mostly on non-permanent measures. Here are some takeaways.

Where is the deficit at?

The budget projects a $62.3-billion deficit for this fiscal year, down from the $65.3-billion projection from April.

The projections also keep the federal-debt-to-GDP ratio hovering around 40 per cent for the next five years. Still, public debt charges are projected to rise over the next five years and will account for nearly 13 per cent of government spending by 2031.

Carney's 2nd budget earmarks billions for affordability and Canadian sovereignty

Budget 2026: Liberal government doubles down on plan to build Canadian economy at home

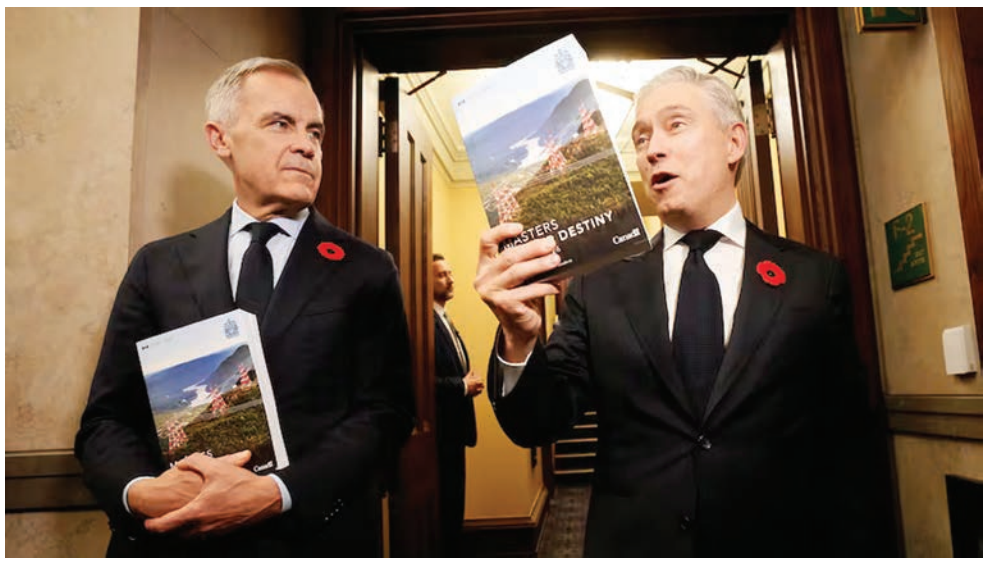
In terms of new spending, the budget announced $142 billion in new measures - on top of $9.5 billion announced since the spring economic update.

A portion of those new measures are geared at affordability, including another 50 per cent top up to the GST rebate set to be delivered early next year.

AIMING TO END HOMELESSNESS WITHIN A DECADE

The budget promises to take steps "toward helping create the conditions to end homelessness within 10 years."

The plan is being backed by a $11.2-billion commitment over the next four years, including $3.6 billion to build



Prime Minister Mark Carney and Finance and National Revenue Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne are seen on Parliament Hill before the federal budget in Ottawa, Thursday, Nov.5, 2026.

Photo: Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press

supportive and transitional housing and $1.8 billion toward mental health, addictions and social supports.

The government is also committing $2 billion over the next two years to build mental health and addictions facilities.

The Trudeau government had promised to reduce chronic homelessness by 50 per cent by 2030, though the Parliamentary Budget Office reported in 2024 that the government was falling short of that goal. That report acknowledged the pandemic likely presented unexpected challenges.

BOOST TO ARTS AND CULTURE

A portion of the budget shows the government is putting some financial backing behind Canadian arts and culture.

One key aspect is a new tax exemption for artistic earnings. This measure promises an annual total $45,000 exemption on "business income derived from original and creative artistic works."

The government is also proposing to make a portion of the Canada Strong Pass permanent, allowing free access to national museums for those under the age of 25.

And it proposes $1.5 billion over nine years to go toward the construction and expansion of community ice rinks and recreational facilities.

IMMIGRATION TARGETS REMAIN FLAT

Like last year, Carney's government has used the budget to unveil its immigration targets for the next few years.

Even though the prime minister has floated the idea that his government is starting to consider when it could increase immigration targets again, the numbers in Thursday's budget show the targets are remaining flat.

Canada is aiming to admit 370,000 temporary residents and 380,000 permanent residents per year over the next three years. These targets line up with the numbers released in last year's budget.

NEW TAX FILING DATE

The government is proposing giving taxpayers a little extra time to file their tax returns and pay any taxes owing.

As it stands, most individuals need to file their income tax return every year by April 30. In other cases, such as trust filing, the due date is at the beginning of April.

The 2026 budget promises to create a single tax filing date of May 15, starting in 2028 for the 2027 tax year.

The government estimates that this will help Canadians avoid $230 million in interest and penalty payments over a five-year span.

'RRSP FOR LIFE'

The government is proposing to allow Canadians to keep their RRSPs - the registered accounts where they can grow their retirement fund with pre-tax income - after the age of 71.

RRSPs currently need to be withdrawn or converted into a Registered Retirement Income Fund, or RRIF, the year someone turns 71.

Billing this new measure as an "RRSP for life," the budget proposes merging tax rules governing both RRSPs and RRIFs, removing the requirement to convert.

The budget says the measure "would also allow a surviving spouse or partner to become a successor holder of an RRSP and simplify tax-free transfers to qualified survivors after the death of the account holder."

WHAT'S NEXT ON AIRPORT PRIVATIZATION?

Carney announced during September's investment summit that the government plans to open up Canada's four largest airport operations to private investors. Budget 2026 hints at what the next steps in that process will be.

The government is aiming to announce its first concession agreement with a private operator by early 2029, the budget document says.

But first the feds say they plan to introduce legislation to govern how the operating agreements will work. The government is also promising to set "clear rules to protect travelers from unreasonable increases

(Source: CBC News)

Canadian MP Vis calls for deportation of Bishnoi gang members, flags extortion



Brad Vis alleges gang exploiting immigration system, targeting business owners and engaging in violent crime

UPDATED NOVEMBER 3, 2026
TORONTO (TIP)

Canada's Conservative MP Brad Vis has called for the deportation of alleged Lawrence Bishnoi gang members in the country on visas, alleging that the gang has been exploiting the immigration system while targeting business owners and engaging in criminal activities.

Vis, who represents British Columbia, recently released a video statement alleging that members of the Bishnoi gang, along with individuals misusing Canada's immigration and student visa systems, are contributing to a rise in extortion and violent crime across the country.

He demanded that anyone on a student visa and linked to the Bishnoi gang be sent back.

Vis is a Conservative MP, first elected in 2019 and re-elected in subsequent federal elections.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

Canada: Life Certificate Camps in Toronto get an overwhelming response

BY PRABHJOT SINGH
NOVEMBER 3, 2026
TORONTO (TIP)



Life Certificate Camps in Toronto get an overwhelming response

The Life Certificate Camps organized by the Consulate-General of India in Toronto got off to a rousing start with an overwhelming response from the beneficiaries. The camps that started on November 1 will continue on all weekends until the end of this month.

Kuljeet Singh Arora, who supervised the first camp at the Hindu Heritage center in Mississauga, said that hundreds of members showed up at the camp to get their life certificates and get other councilor services.

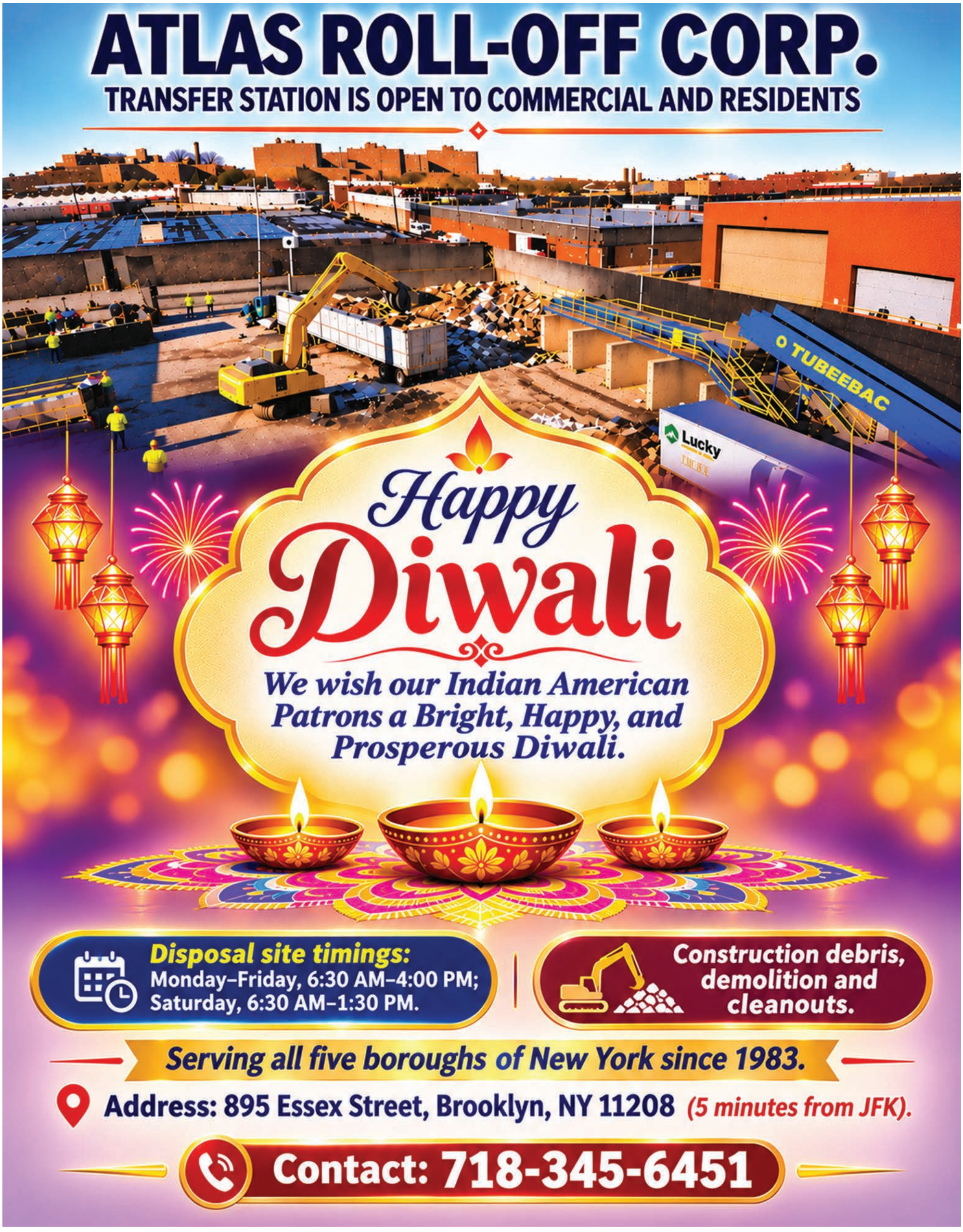
Another camp was held at the Toronto Kalibari Temple. In all, the two camps extended pension-related services to approximately 900 pensioners.

India's Consul General in Toronto, Mahaveer Singhvi, visited the camp at the Hindu Heritage Centre and interacted with senior citizens and heard their concerns and suggestions.

He reaffirmed the Consulate's commitment to making essential consular services more accessible, convenient and responsive by bringing them closer to the community. The Consulate appreciated the support of both community organizations in facilitating this outreach initiative and serving overseas Indian citizens.

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Ambassador Mohapatra Visits Covasna, Brasov and Vrancea Counties to Advance India-Romania Economic Cooperation



Ambassador met with Mr. István RÁDULY, Prefect of Covasna County

OCTOBER 30, 2026
BUCHAREST (TIP)

The Ambassador of India to Romania, Dr. Manoj Kumar Mohapatra, undertook official engagements in Covasna, Brasov and Vrancea Counties on 29-30 October 2026 to promote bilateral trade and investment and strengthen engagement with Romanian regional authorities and the business community.

The programme included meetings with county and municipal authorities, interactions with business representatives and a visit to an industrial park in Sfântu Gheorghe. The engagements focused on showcasing India's industrial and commercial capabilities, identifying investment prospects and fostering partnerships between Indian and Romanian enterprises.



Ambassador met with Mr. Sorin Vornic, President of the Vrancea Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture



Meeting with Mr. Tamás Sándor, President of Covasna County Council; Mr. Gyero József, Mayor of Covasna; and Ms. Éva-Judit Sztakics, Deputy Mayor of Sfântu Gheorghe. Photo: Csulak Zoltán

COVASNA COUNTY

In Covasna County, the Ambassador met with Mr. István Ráduly, Prefect of Covasna County, to discuss regional development priorities, investment prospects and avenues for cooperation with Indian companies. The discussions highlighted the role of institutional engagement in facilitating business contacts and creating opportunities for international partnerships.

The Ambassador also met with Mr. Tamás Sándor, President of the Covasna County Council; Mr. Gyero József, Mayor of Covasna; and Ms. Éva-Judit Sztakics, Deputy Mayor of Sfântu Gheorghe. Discussions centered on the county's development potential, attracting foreign investment and strengthening links between local enterprises and Indian businesses. The importance of institutional support in facilitating investor engagement was emphasized.

As part of the programme, the Ambassador visited Sepsiszentgyorgyi Ipari Park in Sfântu Gheorghe to familiarize himself with the region's industrial infrastructure and business environment. The visit highlighted opportunities for collaboration between Indian companies and Romanian enterprises in manufacturing, technology and related sectors.

BRASOV COUNTY

In Brasov County, the Ambassador met with Mr. Mihai-Catalin Vasii, Prefect of Brasov County; Mr. Andrei-Daniel Soim, Vice-President of the Brasov County Council; and Mr. Zoltán-Huba Szenner, Public Administrator of Brasov County.

Discussions focused on the county's industrial strengths, development priorities and potential areas of cooperation with India. The Ambassador highlighted opportunities for partnerships in manufacturing, industrial development and technology, and underscored the importance of closer engagement between Indian businesses and regional stakeholders.

The meeting also provided an opportunity to discuss ways to facilitate investment and connect prospective Indian investors with relevant Romanian institutions and enterprises.

VRANCEA COUNTY

In Focsani, the Ambassador met with Mr. Nicusor Halici, President of the Vrancea County Council, to discuss the county's development priorities and prospects for trade and investment cooperation with India. The discussions explored ways to promote local business capabilities among Indian companies and facilitate engagement with prospective partners.

The Ambassador also met with Mr. Sorin Vornic, President of the Vrancea Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture. Discussions focused on strengthening business-to-business ties, promoting commercial exchanges and facilitating contacts between Indian and Romanian enterprises. The role of chambers of commerce in identifying business partners, sharing market information and supporting international trade was highlighted.



The Ambassador visited the Sepsiszentgyörgyi Industrial Park in Sfântu Gheorghe, Covasna County -Photo: Csulak Zoltán



Ambassador met with Mr. Nicusor Halici, President of the Vrancea County Council

CONCLUSION

The Ambassador's engagements in Covasna, Brasov and Vrancea Counties reaffirmed India's commitment to broadening its partnership with Romania through regional outreach and closer engagement with local institutions and businesses.

The visits provided an opportunity to identify areas of mutual interest, promote Indian investment capabilities and establish contacts with prospective Romanian partners. The Embassy of India will continue to work with Romanian authorities and the business community to advance bilateral trade, investment and industrial cooperation.

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

HC slams Form 8 freeze, directs EC to restore six names in Goa voter rolls

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

PANAJI: The Goa bench of the Bombay High Court on Thursday allowed a petition filed by a Goa resident and five members of his family whose names were omitted from the electoral rolls despite submitting Form 8 applications to update their residential addresses.

Directing the Election Commission to include their names in the electoral roll within 10 days after verifying their addresses, the bench rejected the poll body's request to stay the order to enable it to approach the Supreme Court.

A division bench of Justices Valmiki Menezes and Amit Jamsandekar clarified that the matter was distinct from the broader legal issues surrounding the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls currently being heard by the Supreme Court.

Advocate Gaurish Agni, appearing for the Election Commission, sought a stay on the order, stating that the poll body wanted to challenge it before the Supreme Court. However, the High Court declined the request.

"We are allowing the petition. The Supreme Court is hearing the SIR issue, this is not about SIR," the bench observed while pronouncing its decision.

The petition was filed by Paresh Vasant Salgaonkar and five members of his family, residents of the Santa Cruz Assembly constituency in North Goa.

The family had shifted to a new address within the same constituency before the enumeration phase of the SIR.

Following instructions from their local Booth Level Officer (BLO), they submitted Form 8 applications to update their residential details. However, their names were missing when the draft electoral roll was published.

The family subsequently received automated notifications informing them that their Form 8 applications had been rejected by the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO), after the deadline for filing claims and objections had passed.

The ECI asked the family to submit Form 6 applications instead, as their names were no longer present in the draft roll. The petitioners challenged this requirement, arguing that Form 6 is meant for first-time voters and would require already registered electors to make an incorrect declaration. In contrast, Form 8 is prescribed for existing voters seeking changes, including an address update.

During the proceedings, the ECI maintained that the SIR was a fresh, de novo exercise and differed from the regular Special Summary Revision.

Centre may set up panel to review UGC equity regulations, Supreme Court told

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Union government on Thursday told the Supreme Court that it is contemplating setting up a committee to reconsider the University Grants Commission's (UGC) 2026 equity regulations, which had sparked protests by upper-caste groups over concerns that their communities will be targeted.

The developments come months before scheduled assembly elections in five states, including in Uttar Pradesh where the UGC norms have triggered several protests and where upper-caste communities are a key demographic being wooed by both the government and the Opposition.

The rules — which garnered support from marginalised groups fighting against caste bias in educational campuses — were stayed by the court in January over concerns that their vague provisions could be misused and have "dangerous impacts" on society.

The submission came after a bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and justice Joymalya Bagchi advised the Centre to revisit the regulations to ensure that the framework protects the interests of all students and does not leave any section feeling apprehensive or dissatisfied.

"Why don't you revisit these regulations so that the next generation is taken care of? They should protect the interest of every student," the bench told solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre.

Mehta informed the court that the



government was contemplating constituting a committee to revisit the regulations and was examining the issue to ensure that "no section feels dissatisfied or apprehensive".

Adjourning the matter, the bench said: "We have given them advice. Let us see what they do."The proceedings came a day after the Union Cabinet gave Agniveers, who fail to make the cut after the initial four-year service, an option to remain in service for two more years and a route to enrol as regular soldiers at the end of the extended period.

The move was seen as an outreach to young men and women in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab -- all three states go to the polls in early 2027 -- that contribute substantial numbers to the armed forces.

The UGC (Promotion of Equity in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations, 2026 were notified on January 13 and stayed by the Supreme Court on January 29, following challenges to their provisions.

The court had at the time expressed concern that the framework, in its existing form, was vague and capable of being exploited by mischievous elements, warning that it could divide society and have "dangerous impacts".

It directed that UGC's 2012 anti-discrimination regulations would continue to operate in the interim to ensure that students facing discrimination were not left without a remedy.

The 2026 regulations mandate universities, colleges and deemed institutions to set up equal opportunity centres and equity committees to address complaints of discrimination and promote inclusion in higher education institutions.

The framework -- which was formulated by the university regulator after a Supreme Court petition by the mothers of two marginalised caste students who died by suicide following caste discrimination -- was welcomed by anti-caste groups, who argued that the rules were necessary to stop bias in campuses.

But it faced opposition from several upper-caste organisations and students, who alleged that the provisions were one-sided and susceptible to misuse. On Tuesday, a group of upper-caste students protested outside the UGC headquarters in Delhi, demanding its withdrawal.

The petitions before the Supreme Court have primarily challenged Regulation 3(c), which defines "caste-based discrimination" as discrimination "only on the basis of caste or tribe" against members of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

24-hr deadline starts from moment of detention, not formal arrest, says Supreme Court

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): In an important ruling expanding the scope and ambit of civil liberties, the Supreme Court on Thursday, Nov 5, ruled that the 24-hour constitutionally mandated deadline to produce an accused before a judicial magistrate runs from the time of his detention and not just from the time of his formal arrest by the police.

"Any attempt to draw an artificial distinction between 'arrest' and 'detention' would dilute or negate the fundamental protection guaranteed by the Constitution under clause (2) of Article 22. Such an endeavour should be avoided. We must adopt that interpretation which enhances and furthers the constitutional objective," a Bench of Justice Ujjal Bhuyan and Justice Atul S Chandurkar said.

Holding that the words "arrested" and "detained" appearing in clause (2) of Article 22 were synonymous, the Bench said, "Thus, the prescription of 24-hour time period would commence the moment a person is detained by the arresting authority suspecting him to have committed an offence, when his liberty is effectively curtailed."

The verdict came on appeals filed by four persons challenging the Tripura High Court's April 29 judgment denying them bail in a case under the NDPS Act. The accused were detained on September 29, 2025, at 2 pm as part of a search and seizure but were formally arrested the next day.

Setting aside the high court's order, the top court held that they should have been produced before the magistrate within 24 hours from 2 pm on September 29. Noting that they were kept under detention for about 18 hours without any judicial oversight in violation of Article 22(2), the Bench ordered that they shall be produced before the jurisdictional Special Court within seven days from today and, thereafter, they shall be released on bail on such terms and conditions as may be deemed appropriate.

Writing the judgment for the Bench, Justice Bhuyan said, "Article 22(2) does not sanction exclusion of the time taken for enquiry and investigation before the arresting authority could effect arrest of the detainee. This is beyond the mandate of Article 22(2) of the Constitution. Article 22(2) does not sanction creation of any buffer zone where the liberty of an individual is curtailed for investigating purposes but not formally shown as arrested." Justice Bhuyan said, "Creation or contemplation of such buffer zone is unconstitutional. There cannot be any suspension or keeping in abeyance of the constitutional safeguards provided under clause (2) of Article 22 save and except what is provided thereunder.

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Home Ministry relaxes passport, visa rules for foreign nationals in India

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): The Centre has relaxed passport and visa rules for several categories of foreign nationals residing in the country, including certain Pakistani citizens, minority refugees, Sri Lankan Tamils, and Tibetans, according to the The Immigration and Foreigners (Exemption) (Amendment) Order, 2026, published on Thursday, Nov 5.

Under the amended rules released by the Union Home Ministry, Pakistani nationals who entered India on or before December 31, 2009, with the intention to reside permanently, are exempt from standard passport renewal requirements if they cannot renew their travel documents due to the non-possession of a Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) issued by Pakistan.

"To qualify, they must not have married while in Pakistan or acquired any immovable property there, must have left behind family members who are Indian citizens when going to Pakistan, and must undertake not to return to that country. They must also have no adverse reports from police or security agencies," the notification said. The rules also exempt members of Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi and Christian communities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who entered India on or before December 31, 2024, after being compelled to seek shelter because of religious persecution or fear of religious persecution.

The latest amendment also streamlines travel and identification protocols for citizens of Nepal, Bhutan, and India travelling between these neighbouring nations.

More checks added on EC staff in eye of storm amid row over internal dissent allegations

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

BANASKANTHA (TIP): The Election Commission of India (ECI) has ordered a layer of supervision for a top official in charge of IT systems and shared key responsibilities of a senior deputy election commissioner with another officer, against the backdrop of a mounting controversy over allegations of internal dissent in the poll panel.

The November 4 work order comes three months after a controversial July 28 order prompted two election commissioners to write to the cabinet secretary objecting to the changes. To be sure, ECI has told the Supreme Court that the July 28 order was never implemented because of a July 30 order recalling the changes.

According to the new order, director general of IT Seema Khanna will be supervised by senior deputy election commissioner Pawan Kumar Sharma. "She would put up files of above mentioned functional divisions through Sr DEC (PKS)," the order said, describing her responsibilities as IT/ICT and grievance/PGRS (public grievance redressal system).

Khanna is at the centre of a controversy over allegations that ECI centralised digital voter roll infrastructure and implemented restrictions in software to stop state officials from accessing voting lists.

Senior deputy election commissioner Maneesh Garg – who issued the controversial July 28 order – retains election planning but will be assisted by deputy election commissioner Prakash Rajpurohit, who also has charge of delimitation. "He will be supported by



DEC (PR)," the order said.

As per the new order, besides IT and ICT, Pawan Kumar Sharma handles political parties, election expenditure policy, the observer division and coordination. He also oversees the North East-II, East-II and South-II zones. Khanna will put up files of her divisions through him. Garg retains election planning, EVMs and Election Database Management Division, along with East-I (Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh) and North-III (Uttar Pradesh). Deputy election commissioner Bhanu Prakash Yeturu will look after administration, establishment, electoral rolls and RTI, and Rajpurohit will send election planning files through Garg.

"We can't call this order a reversal of the July order because the previous order was never implemented," a senior EC official told HT, adding that the new order was a unanimous decision by the poll panel.

The order assumed significance because it comes roughly three months after election commissioners SS Sandhu and Vivek Joshi wrote nearly identical letters to cabinet secretary TV Somanathan in an unprecedented step on July 29. Sandhu's letter was accompanied by the copy of an order issued by Garg on July 28 allocating work to himself and other EC officials, including Seema Khanna and deputy election commissioner Sanjay Kumar.

According to a Hindustan Times report dated October 3, the commissioners were concerned about Garg's decision to change the routing of files of the IT department under Khanna. The files had earlier gone to Sanjay Kumar.

In their confidential letters to the cabinet secretary, the commissioners said Garg was given additional charge of the Administration Division on July 28, while DEC Bhanu Prakash Yeturu was on leave until August 9. Within hours, they said, he issued a work-allocation order covering officers senior and equivalent to him. The letters said the commissioners were not consulted on the decision. Both cited Sections 18(1) and 18(2) of the 2023 CEC/EC Act. Joshi added that a file he asked for from the Administration Division was not provided.

In the Supreme Court, an ECI affidavit said last month that the July 28 order was never implemented after another direction on July 30. The affidavit argued that the correspondence could not be treated as evidence that key special intensive revision decisions were taken without the concurrence of the other commissioners. The work order and the letters are significant because Khanna and the IT department are at the heart of a controversy after an investigation by the Indian Express said that the new IT protocol/system put in place by Khanna and approved by ECI shut the database of electors (the rolls) from the very people responsible for adding or deleting names, Electoral Registration Officials (EROs).

Source: HT

India must prepare early for ageing population challenge, coercive controls don't work: Experts

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

NEW DELHI (TIP): With the Supreme Court saying that laws penalising having more than two children may have lost their relevance, experts feel India has a limited window to benefit from its demographic dividend, and it is closing.

The experts also want India to prepare early for meeting the twin challenge of an ageing population and a shrinking proportion of young people entering the workforce.

Observing that India's total fertility rate (TFR) has dropped from 3 to 1.9 since 2003, the apex court on Wednesday said that laws aimed at limiting population growth have now lost their significance.

"We are of the strong opinion that laws that penalise having more than two children have lost their relevance. The foundation of such laws, i.e., the fear of overpopulation, has crumbled due to demographic changes in the past few decades," the court noted.

Commenting on the observations, Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, Population Foundation of India, told PTI that India faces the twin task of reaping the remaining demographic dividend while preparing for an ageing society.

It is imperative to revisit the population policy in that context and how it is implemented, she said.

"It means skilling young people, supporting more women to enter the workforce meaningfully, and building social security and care systems for an older population. India's economic future depends a great deal on how well it brings women into the workforce," Muttreja said.



Seema Bhaskaran, gender expert at Transform Rural India, said India's population policy with control over women's fertility and bodies has led to a severe decline in fertility.

"The demographic shift will lead to an ageing population and a reduction in the working-age population. India will have to design social security and health programmes for its senior citizens.

"However, its population will continue growing for some time due to demographic momentum and the working-age population will initially remain large, offering economic opportunities," she said.

Muttreja also said that India's population will continue to grow for some decades, but the change is in our age structure.

"Our projections show the working-age share peaking at around 66 per cent in 2031 and declining thereafter. India has a limited window to benefit from its demographic dividend, and it is closing," she said.

India in history this Week

NOVEMBER 6 TO NOVEMBER 12

NOVEMBER 6

- 1763: British forces captured Patna during their conflict with Mir Qasim, the Nawab of Bengal. The event was part of the larger struggle between the East India Company and regional Indian powers for control over Bengal and Bihar.

- 1913: Mahatma Gandhi led the historic Great March in South Africa to protest discriminatory laws imposed on the Indian community. The march involved Indian workers and highlighted issues such as unfair taxation and the recognition of Indian marriages. It became an important milestone in Gandhi's development of Satyagraha and non-violent resistance.



- 2000: Jyoti Basu stepped down as Chief Minister of West Bengal after serving for more than 23 years, making him one of India's longest-serving chief ministers. His tenure, which began in 1977, was marked by significant political and land reforms, including Operation Barga, aimed at protecting sharecroppers.

NOVEMBER 7

- 1858: Bipin Chandra Pal, one of the prominent leaders of India's freedom movement, was born. He was part of the famous Lal-Bal-Pal trio, alongside Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He strongly advocated Swadeshi, national education and the boycott of British goods.



- 1876: Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay composed Vande Mataram, a patriotic song that later became one of the most powerful symbols of India's freedom struggle. The song was subsequently included in his celebrated novel Anandamath, published in 1882. It inspired generations of freedom fighters and became India's National Song.

- 1888: Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman, popularly known as C. V. Raman, was born in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu. He made the groundbreaking discovery of the Raman Effect in 1928, which transformed the study of light scattering. In 1930, he received the Nobel Prize in Physics, becoming the first Asian scientist to win the Nobel Prize in the sciences.

NOVEMBER 8

- 1627: Mughal Emperor Jahangir died, bringing an end to a significant chapter in Mughal history. He was the fourth Mughal emperor and ruled from 1605 to 1627. His reign was known for its contributions to painting, architecture and cultural development.



- 2008: India's first lunar mission, Chandrayaan-1, successfully entered lunar orbit. Launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on October 22, 2008, the mission marked a major achievement in India's space exploration programme. It helped scientists study the Moon's surface and contributed to the discovery of evidence of water molecules on the lunar surface.



- 2016: Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the demonetization of existing Rs 500 and Rs1,000 currency notes. The decision was aimed at tackling black money, counterfeit currency and corruption. It became one of the most significant economic decisions in modern India, affecting businesses, financial institutions and millions of citizens.

NOVEMBER 9

- 1947: Junagadh came under Indian administration following a political crisis over its accession after Partition. The Nawab of Junagadh had announced accession to Pakistan, despite the state's geographical separation from it. Following political unrest and the Nawab's departure, Indian forces took control. A referendum held in February 1948 overwhelmingly supported accession to India.

- 2000: Uttarakhand was officially established as India's 27th state after being carved out of Uttar Pradesh. The demand for a separate state had emerged from the need for better regional administration, economic development and recognition of the distinct cultural and geographical identity of the Himalayan region. Initially named Uttaranchal, it was renamed Uttarakhand in 2007. November 9 is celebrated annually as Uttarakhand Foundation Day.

NOVEMBER 10

- 1659: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj defeated the forces of the Bijapur Sultanate at the historic Battle of

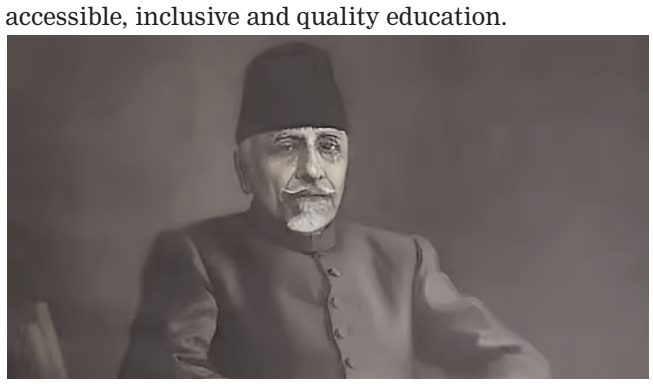


Pratapgad in Maharashtra. The conflict involved the Bijapur general Afzal Khan, who had been sent to suppress Shivaji Maharaj's growing power. During their meeting near Pratapgad Fort, Afzal Khan was killed in a confrontation, and the Maratha forces subsequently defeated the Bijapur army. This victory significantly strengthened Shivaji Maharaj's military and political position and became a defining moment in Maratha history.

NOVEMBER 11

- 1888: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was born in Mecca. He became a prominent freedom fighter, scholar, journalist and political leader. He strongly opposed the Partition of India and advocated national unity and communal harmony. After independence, he became India's first Education Minister and played a crucial role in developing the country's educational and scientific institutions.

- 2008: India officially began observing November 11 as National Education Day to commemorate Maulana Abul Kalam Azad's birth anniversary. The day recognises his contribution to strengthening India's education system and highlights the importance of accessible, inclusive and quality education.



NOVEMBER 12

- 1896: Dr. Salim Ali, popularly known as the Birdman of India, was born in Bombay. He became one of India's most distinguished ornithologists and naturalists. His extensive studies of Indian birds, wildlife surveys and conservation efforts played an important role in developing bird research in the country. His famous book, The Book of Indian Birds, remains an important reference for bird enthusiasts and researchers.

- 1947: Mahatma Gandhi made his first and only visit to the All India Radio broadcasting station in New Delhi. During this historic visit, he delivered a radio address to refugees displaced by Partition, offering them encouragement and comfort during a difficult period in India's history.

- 2000: India began observing November 12 as Public Service Broadcasting Day to commemorate Gandhi's historic visit to All India Radio in 1947. The day highlights the importance of public broadcasting in informing, educating and connecting people across the country.

The INDIAN PANORAMA
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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

GRAMMY NOMINEE PIANIST-COMPOSER CHARU SURI WILL BLEND RAGAS AND JAZZ FOR SIXTH YEAR AT CARNEGIE HALL

BY MABEL PAIS

CHARU SURI, Grammy®-nominated pianist-composer, in collaboration with pianist-vocalist Lizzie Thomas, will perform at her sixth Carnegie Hall, New York performance on November 13, 2026 at 7:30pm. (https://carnegiehall.org/calendar/2026/11/13/an-evening-of-jazz-with-charu-suri-and-lizzie-thomas).

Charu treads fearlessly between genres, blending several styles and fusing Indian ragas with more traditional jazz.

Charu will perform at New York City's prestigious Carnegie Hall on Friday, November 13th, 2026 at 7:30 pm. Her upcoming album, "Bossa Raga," recorded with maestro Ron Carter, will premiere on November 13, 2026 at Carnegie Hall (https://carnegiehall.org/calendar/2026/11/13/an-evening-of-jazz-with-charu-suri-and-lizzie-thomas).

Earlier, she will perform at Detroit's Cliff Bells , November 5-8, where she has her residency (https://cliffbells.com/series/charu-suri) and at Dazzle Denver (https://artscomplex.com/events/detail/charu-suri--173428), November 19th in a "Spirit of New Orleans" show.

PERFORMERS/PRESENTERS

The performers are
Charu Suri, Piano/Composer
Rogério Boccato, Drums
Eduardo Belo, Double Bass
Kersten Stevens, Violin
Lisa Marie Simmons, Spoken Word
Lizzie Thomas, Vocals & Piano
Shedrick Mitchell, Piano and Hammond Organ
Daniel Winshall, Double Bass
Charles Haynes, Drums
V. Selvaganesh, Kanjira
Premik Russell Tubbs, Flute

CHARU SURI

Born in South India, she was a piano prodigy performing in various concert halls at an early age. Charu's latest single is "Journey" (https://charusuri.com/journey), her pioneering raga-based etude featuring "kanjira" legend V. Selvaganesh. It is on the ballot for the upcoming Grammy® awards in Global Music Performance.

Her previous record, "Shayan," (https://linktr.ee/charusuri) was nominated for a Grammy® in the Best Contemporary Instrumental Album (Jazz) category in the 68th Grammy® Awards. "Shayan" debuted in the Top 50 World Albums and blends evening ragas with classical and jazz, encouraging people to sleep better and healthier.

"Rags & Ragas," was recorded with John Patitucci on the double bass, Steve Gadd and Joe Lastie on the drums, and debuted at #3 on the iTunes jazz charts and reached #2 in Kenya. Several albums charted #1 in India in both the jazz and overall albums charts.

With mood-invoking ragas (to be played according to the time of day) for many of her compositions, she weaves techniques and sounds from several places including India, Europe, and Africa.

Her work has been performed by Yo Yo Ma, Ron Carter, Steve Gadd, John Patitucci and many more.

Her work has won numerous awards. She won two Josie Music Awards in 2026 for Musician of the Year (Piano) and Album of the Year in New Age/World. She was named Entertainer of the Year (Gold) by ISSA (International Singer Songwriters Association) at its annual awards ceremony in Atlanta. She has won the Intercontinental Music Awards four times, and she received the Crossover Artist of the Year crystal trophy from Elite Music Awards in 2025.



Charu Suri with Lizzie Thomas. -Credit: https://carnegiehall.org

Charu also became the first Indian artist to collaborate with Preservation Hall Jazz Band in New Orleans. She is a Governor of the Recording Academy New York Chapter.

CHARU SURI PIANO ACADEMY

Charu started her piano academy several years ago with one purpose: to deliver uncompromising levels of instruction to her students and let them shine. Her students range from all ages: from four to forty. They have performed at world-renowned halls including Steinway Auditorium and Carnegie Hall. She is one of the few pianists chosen by Steinway as an Educational Partner, and she hosts several student recitals throughout the year in various auditoriums. Her students have won and/or received honorable mentions in the following:

- The American Protégé International Music
- Talent Competition;
- Saint-Saens Piano Competition;
- AADTG Competition;
- Chopin Piano Competition;
- Charleston Music Competition;
- Bach Piano Competition; and many more.

Learn more at https://charu.suri.com
Follow her @charusurimusic on Instagram, and @CharuSuriTrio on Facebook.



Child lighting a diya (lamp).

Credit: Winston Williams / Brooklyn Children's Museum (https://brooklynkids.org)

BCM OBSERVES INDIA'S FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

BY MABEL PAIS

Diwali, the Festival of Lights celebrated by people in India and the Indian diaspora will be observed at the Brooklyn Children's Museum with The Culture Tree (https://theculturetree.com) on Thursday, November 12, 2-5 PM. This is a free event.

Families are invited to discover the story of Diwali through puppet storytelling, make mithai (Indian sweets), and create their own diya lamps in the Museum's ColorLab art studio. This program takes place during the museum's free Community Access Thursday hours (every Thursday, 2 pm – 5 pm).

RSVP

For more information and to RSVP, visit https://brooklynkids.org/programs/celebrate-diwali.

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

DOC NYC, NYC'S FESTIVAL FOR DOCUMENTARIES, RETURNS FOR 17TH EDITION

BY MABEL PAIS

DOC NYC, the annual US festival for documentaries — for in-person November 11-19, 2026 at IFC Center, SVA Theatre, and Village East by Angelika and continuing online until November 29 — will celebrate its 17th edition.

The 2026 festival presents more than 115 feature-length documentaries (with Short Lists, Winner's Circle, and Selects Encore sections and more sections to be updated), including 26 World premieres and 27 U.S. premieres, among over 200 films and dozens of events, with filmmakers expected in person at most screenings.

"Each year, we are struck by the extraordinary range of stories that documentary filmmakers are bringing to the screen, and this year's main slate is especially rich in its breadth, ambition, and artistry. From intimate portraits and deeply personal journeys to urgent investigations, stories of resistance, and films that explore the natural world, these documentaries offer fresh perspectives on the world around us and the people who shape it. We're thrilled to present such a dynamic group of filmmakers and to give audiences the opportunity to experience their work," said Jaie Laplante, Artistic Director of DOC NYC.

"DOC NYC provides New Yorkers an affordable way to experience the best in documentary filmmaking and get access to unique, raw and truthful storytelling from a diverse range of voices," said Commissioner Rafael Espinal of the NYC Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment. "Congratulations to all the filmmakers on their premieres and for having the courage to share your stories with the audiences of New York City."



The Hummingbird Paints Fragrant Songs, Opening Night. -Credit :https://docnyc.net

Programming List of 2026 DOC NYC Films and Events

The following is a breakdown of programming by premiere statuses, with festival section (for screening details, visit https://docnyc.net)

THE HUMMINGBIRD PAINTS FRAGRANT SONGS (OPENING NIGHT, INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION)

Directors: Èlia Gasull Balada, Matteo Norzi
Producers: Matteo Norzi, Èlia Gasull Balada, Maria Altamirano

At 75, Shipibo artist Sara Flores journeys from the Peruvian Amazon to international acclaim, transforming visionary paintings rooted in Indigenous knowledge into a powerful force for cultural and territorial resistance.

TOTALITY (CLOSING NIGHT)

Directors: David Heilbroner, Kate Davis
Producer: Q-Ball Productions

An immersive portrait of the 2024 total solar eclipse that explores what drew an estimated 50 million North Americans to share in the cosmic spectacle.

UNION TOWN (CENTERPIECE)

Director: Barbara Kopple
Producers: Hannes Hosp, Barbara Kopple, Peter Palandjian

Delivery industry workers in New York City take on some of the world's most powerful corporations, revealing the challenges, passion, and humanity at the heart of the American labor movement.

FILM CATEGORIES

Films are categorized as

Portraits, U.S. Competition, Investigations, Fight the Power, Artists & Artisans, Come As You Are, Game Face Cinema, American Stories, Resilience, Special Presentations, Big Blue, International Competition, Metropolis Competition, NYC Premiere, Sonic Cinema.

VOICES OF CANADA

A showcase of the Canadian titles and directors that are represented throughout the festival's sections. Co-presented by the Consulate General of Canada in New York.

FEATURE FILMS:

DARLENE LOVE: I KNOW WHERE I'VE BEEN ENOUGH
GIMME TRUTH
THE MAD WORLD OF HARVEY KURTZMAN
THE NAVIGATOR
THE SANDBOX
THE SICKLING
UNDER FIRE
UNDERSTORY

SHORT FILMS:

The Deli
Wild East

SHORTS PROGRAMS

There are 72 shorts participating in the juried Shorts Competition, in the following 18 programs:

SHORTS: ARTSCAPES

Cinematic journeys into the lives and minds of artists, each offering a distinct lens on their unique creative process.

Maurice and Marvin (Dir/Prod: David Friend/Prods: Meghna Rao, Katie Schiller)
Print (Dir: Em Vaughn/Prod: Aderet Fishbane)
Respirateur (Dir/Prod: Paul Moakley/Prod: Cressida Leyshon)
SEKKA - Snow Crystals (Dir: Misaki Matsui/Prods: Quarta Kenji, Akio Takai)

SHORTS: BECOMING

Bearing witness to growing up and into one's true self.

Buried Under Years of Dust (Dir/Prod: Sophie Sartain/Prods: Marta Kauffman, Robbie Rowe Tollin, Hannah KS Canter)
Dear Mae (Dirs:Josiah Mendoza, Zoey Franklin/Dir/Prod: Mona Patterson)
Mix (Dir: Klaudia Szott/Prod: Agata Golanska)

SHORTS: BODY & SOUL

Stories of resilience and strength where possibilities lie beyond the confines of the human form.

Anatomy of a Portrait (Dir/Prod: Juan Felipe León/Prod: Cristian Hidalgo)
Animas (Dirs/Prods: Fernando Rocha, Eduardo Rodriguez)
Be Still, My Soul. (Dir/Prod: Simon Cave)
The Hotline (Dir/Prod: Ricki Stern/Dir: Jesse Sweet)

SHORTS: CREATORS

Visionaries using their creativity to provoke, educate, and entertain.

CHRISTIAAN, That's Me! (Dir/Prod: Ilja Willems/Prod: Remco Bikkers)
Dingo (Dir: James Marcus Haney/Prod: Margaret Seid)
A Short Documentary About A Giant Pencil (Dir/Prod: Daniel Straub/Prods: Austin Straub, Bryce Cyrier)

SHORTS: CROSS COUNTRY

Portraits of challenge and triumph from communities across America, revealing diverse threads of everyday life.

Black Soil (Dirs/Prods: Nicholas Weissman, Caitlin Ochs/Prods: Darcy McKinnon, Dr. Emmanuel Harris II)
Escalation (Dir: AJ Schnack/Prod: Shirley Moyers)
A Life Aloft (Dir: Clayton Simoncic)

SHORTS: DIFFERENT DRUMMERS

Celebrating mavericks and makers boldly pursuing their unique paths.

Fred's Basement Bijou (Dir: Michael T. Vollmann/Prod: Chris James Thompson)
Hurt (Dir/Prod: Simon Halsall)
Safety is a Name (Dir: Tim Kressin/Prod: Davis Love)
Sole (Dir: Haneol Lee/Prod: Blake Winston Rice)

SHORTS: GATHERED ECHOES

The past reverberates through our present reality in these conceptual documentaries.

Mother Creature (Dir: Maria Tórgarð/Prod: Gustav Ahnelöv)
Now It's a Strange House (Dirs/Prods: Ethan Rosenthal Grossman, Cate Knothe)
Pelo Lindo (Dir: Josué García Prado/Prods: Ursula Roldan, German Alvarez)

SHORTS: GENERATIONS

Histories, rituals, and links that bind families and communities together across the ages.

Another Day Shall Come (Dir/Prod: Aida Kaadan/Prod: Carol Mezher)
The Floor Remembers (Dir/Prod: Jayme Kaye Gershen/Prod: Joy Castañeda)
Mother's Influence (Dir: Meg Wriggles/Prod: Léa Luiz de Oliveira)
SCREENAGERS (Dir/Prod: Angela Suh-Young Kim)
This is the House: If I Don't See You, I Love You (Dir: Claudia Owusu/Prod: Lauren Todd)

SHORTS: GET UP, STAND UP

CONTD ON PAGE 24

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

CONTD FROM PAGE 23



Union Town, Centerpiece. -Credit : https://docnyc.net

Fighting the power, one good story at a time.

Manufacturing Resilience (Dir/Prod: Rodrigo Guevara)

Tampons & Taxes: Or How to Play The Ole Boys Club and Win (Dir/Prod: Emily Harrold/Prod: Robin Hessman)

Wild East (Dir: Maia Wikler/Prods: Cecilia Brown, Audrey Popa)

Women Count (Dir/Prod: Davina Pardo/Prod: Alisa Payne)

SHORTS: GOTHAM

New York City shorts that exemplify the grit, grace and groove of the great city.

10 Days Later (Dir/Prod: Celia Aniskovich/Prod: Leah Culton Gonzalez)

Bird Aid (Dir/Prod: Catherine Tambini)

The Deli (Dir/Prod: Kabir Birk/Prod: Ekas Rai)

Running Home (Dirs/Prods: Pat Sheils, Gabi Freeda)

Terri & Richard (Dir: Alex Bijan Zandi/Prods: Taylor Ervin, Taylor Brophy, Daniel Pravit Fethke)

SHORTS: HEARTBEATS

Celebrating affairs of the heart and love in all of its wondrous forms.

And I Saw Your Name on the Dust of the Houses (Dir/Prod: Isay Peña)

The Dreaming Game (Dir/Prod: Jordan Salvatoriello)

Jason (Dir/Prod: Gabriella Canal)

Last Days on Hassell Street (Dir/Prod: Ben Strang)

Tag Sale (Dir/Prod: Alison Crouse)

SHORTS: HIDDEN HISTORIES

Explore the untold histories of people and communities whose unknown stories exemplify resilience, self-determination, and courage.

Boomerang Atomic (Dir/Prod: Rachid Bouchareb/Prods: Ruth Yoshie Linton, Bilal Bouchareb, Forest Whitaker)

The Other Roe (Dir/Prod: Wendy Eley Jackson/Prod: Elisa Gambino)

The Right to Forget (Dir/Prod: Lisa Mazenauer/Prods: HGK Basel FHNW, Chus Martínez)

Vanishing Time (Dir/Prod: Zoe Valery)

SHORTS: KEEPING THE FAITH

Perseverance in the face of uncertain futures, and what awaits on the other side.

Gaza Friends Club (Dirs/Prods: Lauren Capps, Isabeau Doucet/Prod: Adrienne Haspel)

Replikka (Dir/Prod: Heloisa Passos/Dir:Piratá Waurá/Prods: Mark Slagle, Yula Rocha)

Testing Testing Sandi Bachom (Dirs/Prods: David France, Paul McGuire/Prod: Rose Arce)

You're Not So Lucky (Dir/Prod: Giles Perkins/Prod: Owen Halstad)

SHORTS: SHE STORIES

Stories of intimacy, strength, and self-determination, made by and about women.

How to Catch a Butterfly (Dir: Kiriko Mechanicus/Prod: Ilja Roomans)

Inside (Dir: Dorota Vlnová/Prod: Roman Pivovarník)

Our Songs: By Way of Revolution (Dir: Alex J. Bledsoe/Prod: Jalena Keane-Lee)

SONIA (Dirs/Prods: Sarah Colt, Emily Schuman)

SHORTS: SHIFTING

Capturing the shifting currents when we have a change of heart and forge a new outlook on life.

Ephemeral River (Dirs/Prods: Bentley Brown, Tahir Ben Mahamat Zene)

Hourglass (Dir: Eric Teo/Prod: Charis Chua)

No Kidding (Dir/Prod: Sarah Ford)

Project Utopia (Dirs/Prods: Frederick Bernas, Nico Muñoz)

The Quiet Invasion (Dir/Prod: Inuk Jørgensen)

Some Kind of Refuge (Dir: Alexandra Kern/Prod: Colin Cadarette)

SHORTS: SING IT PROUD

A program for lovers of instruments, musicians, and rhythm!

A New Day Begun: The Black National Anthem (Dir/Prod: Keith Michael Brown)

Q-Pop (Dir: Adri Murguia/Prods: Jamie Rogers Caballero, Alpita Patel)

A Song for the Snow Lion (Dir/Prod: Pawo Choyning Dorji/Prods: Ben Mandelkern, Charlie Clark, Ryan Booth)

SHORTS: THE PEOPLE VS.

Stories about those who fight for a better future for all.

Awake (Dirs/Prods: Dan Fipphen, Elyse Kelly/Prods: Molly Kaplan, Deema Salem Syed)

Bigger Than Luigi (Dir/Prod: Miléna Mikael-Debass/Prod: Emma V.F.)

Jimmy's Corner: One More Round (Dir/Prod: Olivier Bernier/Prods: Justin Noto, Michael Capone)

Memories of a Window (Dirs/Prods: Mehraneh Salimian, Amin Pakparvar)

SHORTS: WE BELONG TOGETHER

Finding strength in community and friendship.

Maybe Tomorrow (Dirs: Waad Al-Kateab, Wafa Mustafa/Prods: Joanna Natasegara, Abigail Anketell-Jones)

Of Your Tenderness (Dir: Zoulikha Tahar/Prod: Amélie Quéret)

Tamai (Dir: Enoch J. Lui/Prod: Connor Dean)

Update (Dir/Prod:Vicente González Monroy)

PARTNER EVENTS

BLOOMBERG GREEN DOCS

Bloomberg launched the Green Docs competition in 2022. Each year they put out a global call for short documentary films that address the urgency of climate change. Join DOC NYC for screenings of the top five films from the competition and the $25,000 grand prize winner announcement. A filmmaker Q&A will follow.

MAKING AMERICA: IMMIGRANT STORIES (Co-presented by Creatively Speaking, a program of the New School's Institute on Race, Power & Political Economy)

Five intimate portraits reveal the unsung heroes woven into the fabric of our country: immigrants and first-generation Americans whose courage, sacrifice, and determination exemplify the best of the American promise. A cobbler, a lawyer, an equestrian, a singer, and some deli owners; their stories illuminate the many ways immigrants contribute to the beauty and strength of our nation. A filmmaker Q&A will follow.

THE LOUIE AWARDS (Co-presented by Lynn & Louis Wolfson II Family Foundation)

DOC NYC unveils the three short film winners of The Louies, a new $100,000 fund sponsored by the Lynn & Louis Wolfson II Family Foundation. The three films, among the season's top award-contending shorts, will be followed by a conversation with the filmmakers behind each work.

WILL POWER

When a catastrophic stroke destroys the creative half of his brain days before his international breakthrough, a celebrated rebellious Russian performer wakes paralyzed - unable to walk, speak, swallow, or sing. Filmed over several years, Will Power follows his fragile and nonlinear rehabilitation as fame fades and his family turns away. What begins as a medical recovery becomes something deeper: a dramatic confrontation with identity, limitation, and choice. Challenging the certainty of prognosis, the film explores the possibility that the boundaries defined by science are not always the limits of human will. A Q&A with the creative team will follow.

PRODUCER

DOC NYC is produced and presented by IFC Center, a division of AMC Global Media.

TICKETS AND PASSES:

Festival tickets and passes may be purchased at https://docnyc.net

Prices vary for

A. In-Person screenings for

IFC members / general public

In-Person Screenings: general, Opening, Closing & Centerpiece.

Other festival films: general public, seniors & children

Short films: Features, Winner's Circle and Selects Encores sections & Monday-Friday screenings

B. Online screenings for general public / IFC members

C. Passes and Tickets Packs:

Grants access to every film screening during the live, in-person festival,

November 11-19, plus films on the festival's virtual screening platform November 12-30. Grants complimentary access, space permitting, to the Festival Lounge, including daily Breakfasts and Happy Hours.

D. Online Shorts Pass: Grants access to all short films screening on the festival's virtual platform, November 12-30.

E. Ten-Ticket Package for In-Person Screenings

A package of 10 festival tickets for regular in-person screenings at a discounted price.

F. DOC NYC PRO Day Pass:

Grants access to a single DOC NYC PRO day-long programming track, plus complimentary access, space permitting, to the Festival Lounge for that day, including the day's Breakfast and Happy Hour.

G. DOC NYC PRO Multi-Day Packs:

4-Day Pack

7-Day Pack for all PRO Conference Days

Grants access to a selection of any 4 or all 8 DOC NYC PRO programming tracks and events for one person from November 13-20. Grants complimentary access, space permitting, to the Festival Lounge for days selected, including daily Breakfasts and Happy Hours.

H. The Solutions Lab Pass:

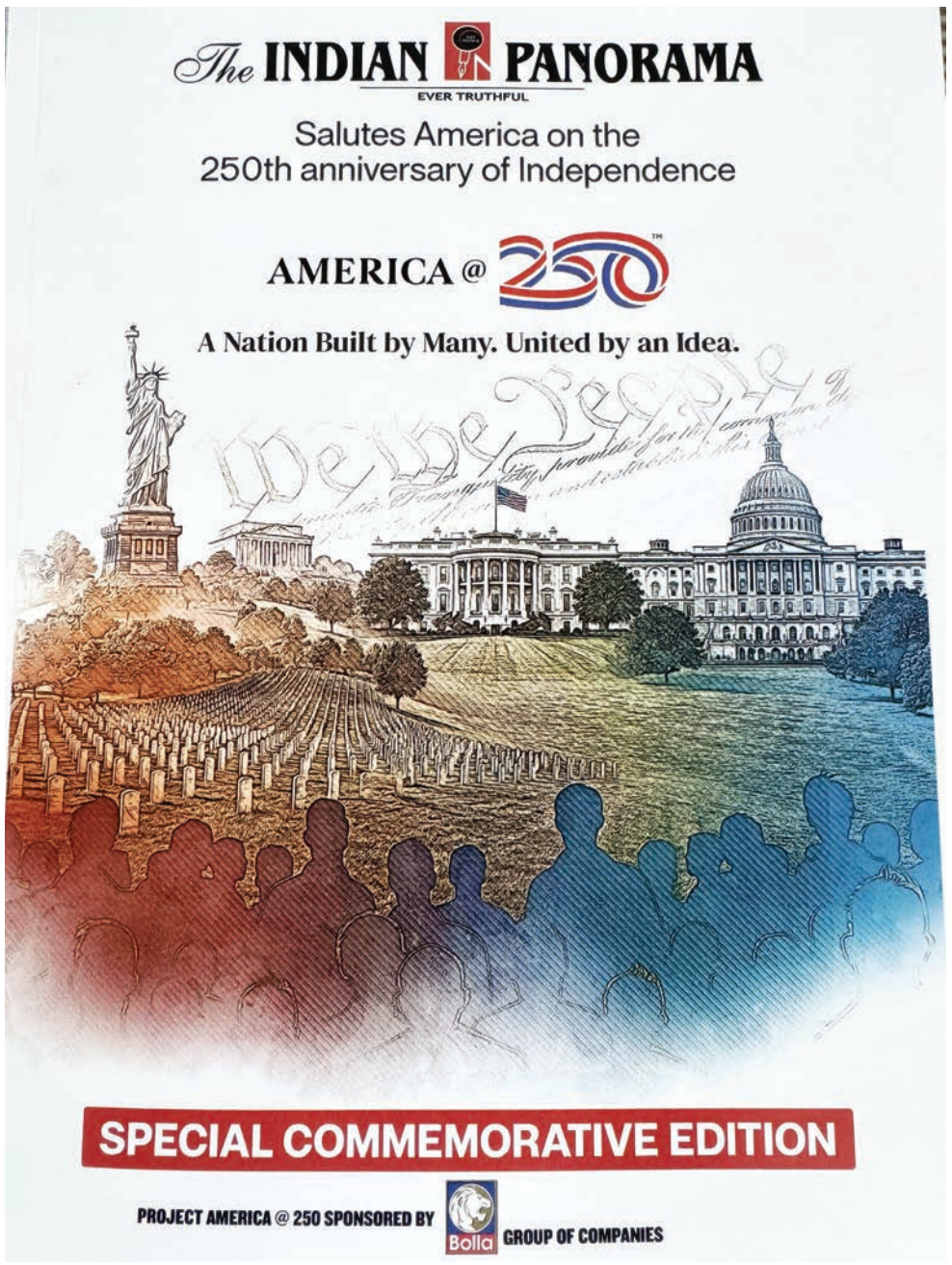
Grants access to The Solutions Lab on November 14, and to that day's Happy Hour at the Festival Lounge.

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

PROF INDRAJIT SALUJA'S 270-PAGE AMERICA@250 EDITION OF THE INDIAN PANORAMA CREATED NEW BENCHMARK IN JOURNALISM

Prof. Saluja and his dedicated team have created far more than a temporary souvenir; they have crafted a permanent educational resource on American history and its founding ideals, and an inspiring blueprint for how immigrant communities can claim their stake in the American experiment, ensuring that the next chapter of the nation's story is stronger, more inclusive, and more united.





Cover page of The Indian Panorama's 270-page America@250 special edition published in July 2026. An enlarged version will be published before July 4, 2027

Unprecedented. Unparalleled. A landmark in publishing. An editorial exercise worthy of emulation by other publications. Deserving of a Guinness Book World Record. Professor Indrajit Singh Saluja's magnum opus, the 270-page special edition of The Indian Panorama commemorating 250 years of America's independence, deserves all the compliments showered on it. The Editor-Publisher released the digital edition in July 2026, followed by a limited edition of print copies.

By July 4, 2027, the 251st Independence Day of America, Prof Saluja plans to add scores of new pages to the edition, with a more in-depth look at the American story, and then submit it for the Guinness World Record for most number of pages of a publication.

A Monumental Achievement in Civic Journalism

The publication of the America@250 special commemorative edition by The Indian Panorama is a crowning achievement in ethnic community journalism, reflecting both ambitious scope and deep editorial vision. Under the steadfast guidance of Founding Publisher and Editor Prof. Indrajit S. Saluja, alongside the generous patronage of business leader Harry Singh Bolla, of Bolla Oil fame, this ambitious project transcends the traditional format of a community newspaper. Instead, it serves as a sprawling, beautifully curated historical volume that bridges continents, cultures, and centuries. By chronicling the complex making of America-from ancient indigenous histories and colonial foundations to the trials of the Civil War and the enduring promises of the U.S. Constitution-the paper has provided its readership with an intellectually rigorous and visually stunning bridge to American history.

Championing Immigrant Integration and Civic Pride

What makes this commemorative edition truly extraordinary is its deliberate focus on the vital, inseparable contributions of immigrant communities, and the Indian American diaspora in particular. Rather than viewing history from the sidelines, Prof. Saluja and his contributors actively frame the Indian American experience as central to the ongoing evolution of the United States. Through insightful essays, prominent diplomatic messages, and inspiring profiles of community builders (some contributed by Yours Truly) like Harry Singh Bolla and Dr. V.K. Raju, the publication powerfully demonstrates that preserving one's cultural heritage does not conflict with patriotic civic engagement; rather, it enriches it. The paper urges its readers to step beyond economic success and participate fully in the democratic processes, public service, and institutional life of their adopted homeland.

A Legacy of Insight and Unity

At a time when public discourse can often feel fractured, The Indian Panorama has delivered an edition anchored by the unifying theme of "We, the People." Through meticulous storytelling that celebrates national triumphs while confronting historical contradictions with honesty and grace, the publication honors America's 250th anniversary with profound depth. Prof. Saluja and his dedicated team have created far more than a temporary souvenir; they have crafted a permanent educational resource and an inspiring blueprint for how immigrant communities can claim their stake in the American experiment, ensuring that the next chapter of the nation's story is stronger, more inclusive, and more united.

Fulsome Praise from all quarters



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar congratulated Prof. Saluja for the historic publication of America@250 special. Also seen in the picture (extreme right) is Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York.

When Prof Saluja presented a copy of the america@250 special edition to India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar in New York at an event recently, the minister said he was impressed. Consul General of India in New York, Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, who introduced Prof Saluja to Jaishankar, also had a word of praise for Prof. Saluja's incredible work.

CONTD ON PAGE 26

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

CONTD FROM PAGE 25



Prof Indrajit Singh Saluja, Editor and Publisher of The Indian Panorama, presenting to Ambassador Binaya Srikanta Pradhan, Consul General of India in New York, a printed volume of the special edition of his weekly commemorating 250 years of Independence of America.



Center For Pluralism President, Mike Ghouse while honoring Prof. Saluja with the International Pluralism award, said his 270-page America@250 special was worthy of recognition in the Guinness Book of World Records

Mike Ghouse, President of Center for Pluralism, in his introduction of Prof. Saluja at the International Pluralism Award presentation to him in Washington, DC in September this year, spoke highly of the America@250 special, characterizing the volume as "unique and stupendous, worthy of a recognition in the Guinness Book of World Records."



Bollywood actor Annu Kapoor described America@250 edition as a historic initiative.

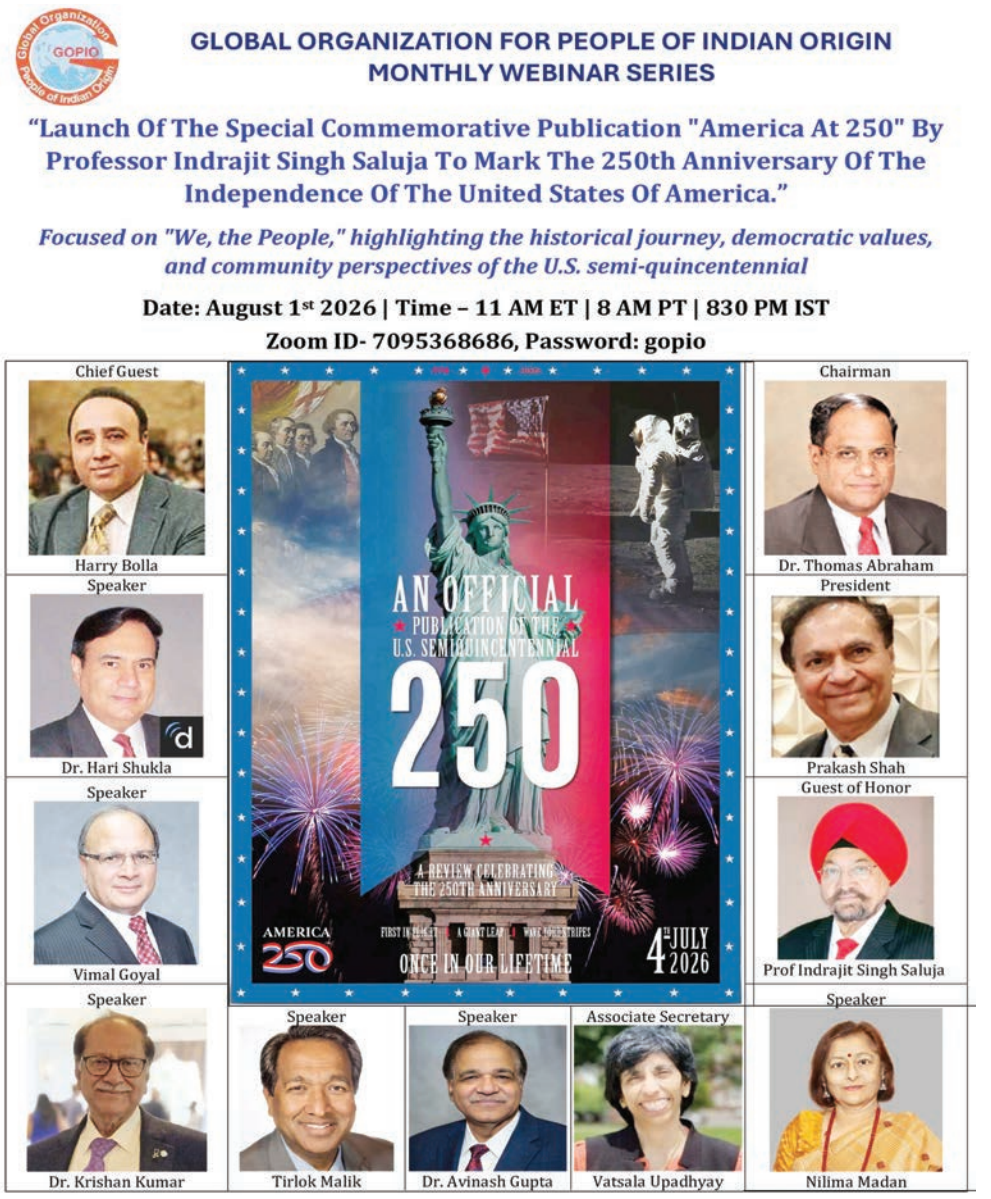
At a mushaira in Texas recently, Bollywood artist Annu Kapoor said he was not aware of any other publication which carried such rich information on America's history, and commended Prof. Saluja's pioneering work.



Encouraging appreciation from colleagues and friends. (From left) Parveen Chopra (A Lotus In The Mud), Kamlesh Mehta (The South Asian Times), and Shanti Fund founder Arvind Vora (right) praised Prof Saluja for the unique America@250 special edition.

Prof Saluja also presented copies of the special edition to fellow publishers Kamlesh Mehta (The South Asian Times) and Parveen Chopra (A Lotus In The Mud), and Shanti Fund founder Arvind Vora, they all praised his unique publication.

Launched by GOPIO



The Launch. The Indian Panorama's America@250 was launched at a webinar organized by GOPIO (Global Organization of People of Indian Origin) on August 1 and moderated by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Tirlok Malik who started by saying "let us all appreciate what a wonderful job Prof Saluja has done with this publication."

CONTD ON PAGE 27

CONTD FROM PAGE 26

The Indian Panorama's America@250 was launched at a webinar organized by GOPIO (Global Organization of People of Indian Origin) on August 1 and moderated by Emmy-nominated filmmaker Tirlok Malik who started by saying "let us all appreciate what a wonderful job Prof Saluja has done with this publication."

Prof Saluja explained that the project was inspired by the concept of "We the people" and aimed to celebrate individuals who built, defended, and will shape America's future. He expressed gratitude to numerous individuals and organizations for their support and encouragement in creating the 270-page publication, which exhaustively chronicles American history from 1776 to 2026, and includes the evolution of India-US relations and the achievements of Indian Americans.

Several community leaders joined Dr Thomas Abraham, GOPIO Chairman, to voice their appreciation for Prof. Saluja's ambitious project. Said Dr Abraham, "This publication is a timely tribute to the ideals upon which America was founded - freedom, democracy, opportunity, and the enduring belief in 'We, the People'. It also recognizes the remarkable journey of the many communities that have helped build this great nation. The Indian American community is proud to be part of that story."



Prof. Saluja presenting a copy of the commemorative edition to Mr. Harry Singh Bolla, the Patron of the Project America@250.

Prof Saluja thanked Harry Singh Bolla, founder of Bolla Oil and Patron of America@250 special, with whom he shares the vision of bringing India and America closer and the need for acquainting the Indian community with American history and ideals on which the country was founded.

Mr Bolla sent a congratulatory message: "Prof. Saluja has worked assiduously to bring the history of America before America, and of America through the 250 years since July 4, 1776. Prof Saluja is an ardent votary of friendship and cooperation between the US and India, has done well to comment on the ever-growing ties between the two democracies."

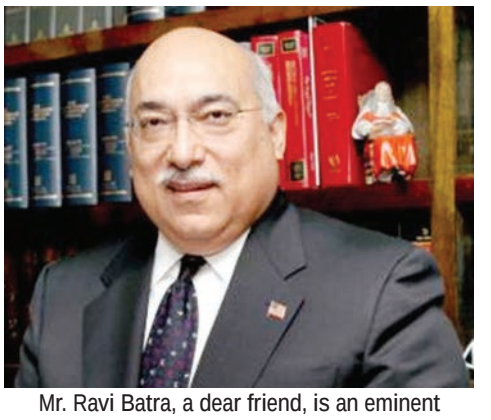


Prof. Saluja presenting a copy of the commemorative edition to John Polsinelli, President of Atlas Roll Off.

A longtime friend of The Indian Panorama, Mr. John Polsinelli admired the publication for its in-depth projection of 250 years of America's Independence.



Dr. VK Raju, Founder of the Eye Foundation of America, is an eminent ophthalmologist.



Mr. Ravi Batra, a dear friend, is an eminent attorney

Prof Saluja thanked Dr V.K. Raju, dedicated to eliminating childhood blindness, for writing the Foreword for the special edition.

Prof. Saluja expressed his gratitude to his dear friend, Attorney Ravi Batra, who was kind enough to write the lead article of the publication.



Announcement of the special edition in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of America's Independence

The Indian Panorama is a premier publication for the Indian community in America, founded by Prof Saluja. Now in its 20th year, the weekly is published simultaneously in New York and Dallas.

(The author is the Founding Editor of ALotusInTheMud.com)



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SIAEA to Hold 44th Annual Gala, "Beyond Boundaries," at Chelsea Piers on Nov. 14

SOCIETY TO HONOR NINE INDUSTRY LEADERS AND PRESENT STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

NOVEMBER 4, 2026
NEW YORK, NY (TIP

The Society of Indo-American Engineers and Architects (SIAEA) will hold its 44th Annual Gala on Saturday, November 14, at 6

p.m. at Pier 60, Chelsea Piers. The black-tie evening, themed "Beyond Boundaries," will bring together engineers, architects, contractors, public agency leaders and students for a night of awards, scholarships and networking.

It will be the second gala led by SIAEA President Mitul Patel, PE. Patel, the founding principal of KeRi Engineering PC, is the 20th president since the society was founded in New York City in 1981 and the youngest in its 44-year history. Last year's gala drew more than 800 members and guests.

"Our founders came together so that Indo-American professionals would have a seat at the table," Patel said. "This gala is where that work shows."

A PRESIDENCY FOCUSED ON CONNECTION

Patel took office in March 2025 and pledged to raise the society's visibility



Mitul Patel, PE
20th President of SIAEA
Funding principal of KeRi Engineering PC

through technology, improve communication with members and share knowledge through focused seminars. This fall SIAEA launched a new website with a member directory and private messaging.

"Our mission is rooted in uniting and recognizing professionals of Indian heritage across the architecture and



Nayan Parikh, Gala Chair
Founder and President of Ashnu International Inc.

engineering industries," said Gala Chair and past president Nayan Parikh. "A special thank you to our President, Mr. Mitul Patel, for his inspiring leadership throughout the year."

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS AND NETWORKING

SIAEA will honor nine industry leaders, and New York City commissioners and regional agency leaders will attend as guests. The evening will also feature the Bansi Shah Memorial Scholarships, from $2,500 to $5,000, for students of Indian origin studying engineering, architecture or related technology.

The program opens with networking, giving small and minority-owned firms and students a chance to meet the people behind the region's public projects.

TICKETS

Tickets are $400 for members, $550 for non-members and $95 for government employees. A table of 10 is $5,000. Tickets and sponsorships are available at siaeany.org/events/44th-annual-gala-dinner-cn15 or gala2026@siaeany.org.

ABOUT SIAEA

The Society of Indo-American Engineers and Architects is a 501(c)(3) professional society founded in New York City in 1981, uniting more than 1,500 engineers, architects, planners and construction professionals of Indian origin. Learn more at siaeany.org.

Villa Roma Resort Brings Traditional Thanksgiving Dining to Alba Nuova with a Festive Holiday Feast

THE THANKSGIVING DAY MENU FEATURES HERB-ROASTED TURKEY, MAPLE-GLAZED VIRGINIA HAM, SEASONAL SIDES, CLASSIC DESSERTS AND FAMILY-STYLE TAKEAWAY MEALS.



NOVEMBER 2, 2026
CALLICOON, N.Y. (TIP)

Villa Roma Resort will celebrate Thanksgiving with a traditional family-style dinner at its Alba Nuova restaurant on November 26, bringing together classic holiday recipes, seasonal ingredients and familiar festive favourites.

The Thanksgiving menu opens with relish and antipasti platters, followed by a choice of classic meat ragù lasagna or butternut squash soup. The salad course features mixed greens with beets, hard-boiled eggs and champagne vinaigrette.

The main course features herb-roasted turkey and maple-glazed Virginia ham, served with turkey gravy, traditional stuffing and homemade cranberry sauce. Accompaniments include Yukon Gold mashed potatoes, maple-glazed sweet potatoes, steamed green beans and Parmesan-crusted cauliflower au gratin.

Dessert completes the meal with pumpkin pie topped with maple whipped cream, pecan pie with whipped cream and apple pie, followed by coffee service. Family-style takeaway meals will also be available for guests who prefer to celebrate Thanksgiving at home.

Commenting on the Thanksgiving dining experience, Sandeep Wadhwa, Chairman, Villa Roma Resort and FAY Investment Group, said, "Thanksgiving has a special place in American food traditions, with families gathering around the table to enjoy recipes that have been part of the celebration for generations. At Alba Nuova, the menu brings together familiar Thanksgiving favourites, from herb-roasted turkey and traditional sides to classic pies. The family-style format makes the meal an occasion to share, whether guests are celebrating at the resort or enjoying takeaway dinner at home."

Through its Thanksgiving dining programme, Villa Roma Resort brings a traditional holiday meal to guests and local families, with a menu centred on the dishes associated with the American Thanksgiving table.

ABOUT VILLA ROMA RESORT

Located across 434 scenic acres in Callicoon, Sullivan County, New York, Villa Roma Resort is an integrated, year-round destination in the Catskills. The resort features 139 guest rooms, 232 timeshare



apartments, an 18-hole championship golf course, an indoor golf simulator, restaurants, cafés, bars and lounges, indoor and outdoor pools, live entertainment, wellness facilities, a fitness centre, bowling, conference spaces, wedding venues and family-friendly recreational experiences. Approximately two and a half hours from New York City, Villa Roma brings together accommodation, dining, recreation, golf and events in one destination, welcoming corporate groups, golfers, families, couples and leisure travellers throughout the year.

Since its acquisition by FAY Hospitality Catskills LLC on September 6, 2024, for $20.7 million, the resort has received more than $11 million in investment towards management operations, renovations and capital improvements. FAY Hospitality remains committed to the resort's continued development as a year-round destination in Sullivan County.

Caribbean immigration advocates, labor union welcome Democratic midterm sweep

NOVEMBER 4, 2026
NEW YORK (TIP)

Caribbean immigration advocates Tuesday night, Nov. 3, welcomed voters' overwhelming rejection of President Donald J. Trump's policies by giving Democrats control of both Houses of Congress.



Yvonne Armstrong, president of 1199SEIU.
Photo / 1199SEIU

"Voters today sent a clear message: we need a government that is responsive to the needs of immigrants, working-class families, our trans and gender-expansive loved ones, young people, women, and Black and brown communities," said Natalia Aristizabal, co-executive director of Make the Road New York (MRNY), an immigrant advocacy group.

"In New York, there is a mandate for progressive policies that make tangible differences in people's lives," she added. "We will continue to work with our elected officials in Albany to deliver real solutions for our communities.

Read full story at
www.theindianpanorama.news

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Diwali: Illuminating traditions, celebrating faith and spreading the light of happiness

FROM THE GLOW OF COUNTLESS DIYAS AND THE FRAGRANCE OF MARIGOLDS TO THE DEVOTION OF LAKSHMI PUJA AND THE EXCITEMENT OF FAMILY GATHERINGS, DIWALI IS MUCH MORE THAN A FESTIVAL. IT IS AN ENDURING CELEBRATION OF LIGHT, KNOWLEDGE, RIGHTEOUSNESS, RENEWAL AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT.



As the autumn evenings grow longer and the festive season reaches its peak, India prepares to welcome one of its most cherished celebrations-Diwali, the Festival of Lights. Homes sparkle with rows of earthen lamps, doorways are adorned with colorful rangolis, markets come alive with festive shoppers, kitchens fill with the aroma of traditional sweets, and families gather to celebrate a festival that carries centuries of history, faith and cultural significance.

Celebrated with immense enthusiasm across India and in Indian communities around the world, Diwali is a festival that transcends geographical boundaries, languages and regional traditions. For some, it marks the homecoming of Lord Rama after fourteen years of exile and his victory over Ravana. For others, it commemorates the triumph of Lord Krishna over the demon Narakasura, honours Goddess Lakshmi, or celebrates the spiritual enlightenment of Lord Mahavira.

Despite these diverse interpretations, the central message remains remarkably universal: darkness cannot overcome light, ignorance must give way to knowledge, and goodness ultimately triumphs over evil.

The word Diwali is derived from the Sanskrit expression Deepavali, meaning a row or series of lights. The humble diya, therefore, is not merely a decorative object. It represents the illumination of the mind, the purity of the soul and the hope of a brighter tomorrow.

The Origins and Historical Significance of Diwali

Diwali has a rich and layered history rooted in ancient Indian religious traditions, mythology, literature and regional folklore. There is no single historical account that explains the origin of the festival for every community. Instead, its significance has evolved through different stories and traditions, each contributing to the festival's remarkable cultural richness.

Lord Rama's Return to Ayodhya

One of the most widely recognized stories associated with Diwali comes from the Hindu epic Ramayana.

According to the traditional account, Lord Rama, the prince of Ayodhya and an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, was sent into fourteen years of exile. Accompanied by his wife, Goddess Sita, and his devoted brother Lakshmana, Rama spent these years away from his kingdom. During their exile, Ravana, the powerful king of Lanka, abducted Sita. What followed was an epic struggle between Rama and Ravana, culminating in Ravana's defeat and the rescue of Sita.

After completing his exile, Lord Rama returned to Ayodhya with Sita and Lakshmana. Overjoyed by the return of their beloved prince, the people of Ayodhya are traditionally believed to have illuminated their homes and streets with rows of earthen lamps.

This homecoming became one of the most enduring explanations for the celebration of Diwali.

The story symbolises the victory of righteousness over wrongdoing, courage over fear and truth over deception. It also highlights the importance of loyalty, sacrifice, duty and devotion.

The Victory of Lord Krishna Over Narakasura

In several parts of India, particularly in southern and western regions, Diwali is associated with another important legend-the defeat of Narakasura.

Narakasura was a powerful demon king whose tyranny brought suffering to the people. According to Hindu mythology, Lord Krishna, with the assistance of his wife Satyabhama, defeated and killed him.

The victory is celebrated as Naraka Chaturdashi, observed on the day before the principal Diwali festivities in many traditions.



The occasion represents liberation from oppression and the destruction of arrogance, cruelty and evil. It is also associated with the idea of cleansing oneself of negativity and beginning anew.

Goddess Lakshmi and the Celebration of Prosperity

Diwali is closely associated with Goddess Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth, fortune, abundance and prosperity.

According to a well-known Puranic account, Goddess Lakshmi emerged during the Samudra Manthan, or the churning of the cosmic ocean, undertaken by the devas and asuras.

Her appearance symbolised the arrival of beauty, abundance and auspiciousness.

Over time, Diwali became especially associated with Lakshmi Puja. Families clean and decorate their homes, light



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shall also happen
for good.

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that you cry for?

What did you bring,
that you have lost?

What did you create,
that was destroyed?

You came empty handed,
and will go empty handed.

Whatever is yours today,
was somebody else's yesterday,
and will be somebody else's tomorrow.



READ IT AGAIN AND AGAIN
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lamps, prepare offerings and pray for prosperity, happiness and well-being.

However, Lakshmi's blessings are traditionally understood to extend beyond material wealth. They also represent generosity, good fortune, harmony, wisdom and spiritual abundance.

Diwali in Jainism and Sikhism

Diwali also holds profound significance beyond Hindu traditions.

For Jains, the festival commemorates the nirvana, or liberation, of Lord Mahavira, the twenty-fourth Tirthankara. According to Jain tradition, Mahavira attained liberation at Pavapuri. The lighting of lamps is associated with honoring his spiritual enlightenment and teachings.

For Sikhs, Diwali coincides with the celebration of Bandi Chhor Divas, commemorating the release of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji from imprisonment at Gwalior Fort. According to Sikh tradition, the Guru secured the release of 52 Hindu kings alongside him. The occasion celebrates freedom, justice, courage and compassion.

Thus, Diwali is not simply one story or one religious observance. It is a festival woven into the spiritual and cultural history of the Indian subcontinent.

The Deeper Significance of Diwali

Beyond mythology and religious observances, Diwali carries several philosophical and social messages that remain relevant in contemporary life.

- The triumph of good over evil: The stories of Rama and Krishna remind people that righteousness, truth and justice must prevail over arrogance, dishonesty and oppression.
- The victory of light over darkness: The lighting of diyas represents the removal of ignorance, negativity and despair. It encourages individuals to cultivate knowledge, understanding and inner peace.
- A celebration of new beginnings: Diwali is traditionally a time to leave behind old grievances, forgive others, renew relationships and welcome fresh opportunities.
- Prosperity with responsibility: Worshipping Goddess Lakshmi reminds devotees to value wealth while practising honesty, generosity, hard work and gratitude.
- Family and community bonding: The festival brings relatives, neighbours and friends together, strengthening relationships and creating lasting memories.

At its heart, Diwali is a reminder that the brightest light is not always the one outside our homes; sometimes it is the kindness, compassion and goodness we nurture within ourselves.

The Five Days of Diwali: A Journey of Celebration

Diwali is traditionally celebrated over five days, with each day having its own rituals, religious significance and festive character. Although the customs vary across regions and communities, the five-day sequence is widely recognised.



Day 1: Dhanteras - Welcoming Wealth and Good Fortune

Dhanteras, also known as Dhantrayodashi, marks the beginning of the Diwali festivities.

The word combines Dhan, meaning wealth, and Teras, referring to the thirteenth lunar day of the dark fortnight of Kartik.

The day is associated with Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Dhanvantari, the divine physician associated with Ayurveda.

Purchasing gold, silver, jewelry, utensils and other household items is considered auspicious in many communities. Markets are especially vibrant, with families shopping for festive decorations, gifts and new household possessions.

People clean their homes, decorate entrances and light lamps in the evening. In some traditions, a diya is placed near the entrance or outside the home in remembrance of Yama, the deity associated with death.

Dhanteras symbolises the importance of health, wealth and well-being.

Day 2: Naraka Chaturdashi - The Victory of Light

Also known as Chhoti Diwali, Naraka Chaturdashi commemorates Lord Krishna's victory over Narakasura.

In many parts of India, people wake up before sunrise, take an auspicious oil bath and wear fresh clothes. This ritual, often called Abhyanga Snan, symbolises purification and the removal of negativity.

Homes are decorated with lamps, and families prepare sweets and festive delicacies.

In some regions, the day is marked by the lighting of crackers, traditional meals and family gatherings.

The deeper message is one of cleansing, renewal and freedom from destructive tendencies.

Day 3: Lakshmi Puja - The Main Festival of Diwali

The third day is the principal day of Diwali for many Hindu communities.

As evening approaches, homes and commercial establishments are illuminated with diyas, candles and decorative lights. Families dress in new or festive clothes, prepare elaborate meals and gather for Lakshmi Puja.

Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped for wealth, prosperity and happiness, while Lord Ganesha is invoked for wisdom and the removal of obstacles.

The puja is one of the most significant spiritual moments of the festival. Families offer flowers, sweets, fruits, incense and prayers, seeking divine blessings for the year ahead.

In many communities, this day also marks the traditional beginning of a new financial year or accounting cycle.

The evening concludes with festive meals, exchanging gifts, meeting loved ones and, traditionally, fireworks.

Day 4: Govardhan Puja and Annakut

The fourth day is celebrated as Govardhan Puja in many parts of northern India.

According to Hindu mythology, Lord Krishna lifted Govardhan Hill to protect the people of Vrindavan from torrential rains unleashed by Lord Indra.

The incident is remembered as a lesson in humility, devotion and the importance of respecting nature.

Devotees prepare Annakut, meaning a mountain of food, consisting of a wide variety of vegetarian dishes offered to Lord Krishna.

In temples, especially those associated with the Vaishnava tradition, elaborate food offerings are arranged and distributed as prasad.

In some regions, the day is also observed as Bali Pratipada, associated with King Bali, and is celebrated as the beginning of a new year in certain Hindu traditions.

Day 5: Bhai Dooj - Celebrating the Bond Between Brothers and Sisters

The five-day festival concludes with Bhai Dooj, also known by names such as Bhai Tika and Bhau Beej.

The occasion celebrates the special relationship between brothers and sisters.

Traditionally, sisters apply a tilak to their brothers' foreheads, perform aarti and pray for their long life, happiness and prosperity. Brothers offer gifts and promise love, care and protection.

The festival is associated with the story of Yama, the god of death, visiting his sister Yamuna.

The occasion reinforces the importance of family relationships and the affection that binds siblings together.

The Rituals and Traditions of Diwali

Diwali is distinguished by its beautiful combination of religious devotion, traditional customs and joyful celebrations. Every ritual, whether performed in a grand temple or a modest household, carries symbolic meaning.

Cleaning and Decorating the Home

The preparations for Diwali often begin days or even weeks before the festival.

Families thoroughly clean their homes, remove unwanted items, organise living spaces and decorate their surroundings. This practice is traditionally associated with welcoming Goddess Lakshmi into a clean, harmonious and inviting environment.

Doors and windows are adorned with torans made of mango leaves, marigolds and other decorative materials.

Colorfl lights, flowers, candles and traditional ornaments add to the festive atmosphere.

The act of cleaning also has a symbolic meaning: making room for new beginnings by letting go of the old.

Lighting Diyas: The Heart of Diwali

The humble earthen diya is perhaps the most iconic symbol of Diwali.

Traditionally made from clay, diyas are filled with oil or ghee and fitted with cotton wicks. They are placed at entrances, windowsills, balconies, courtyards, temples and places of worship.

The light represents knowledge, hope,

We are not physical beings having a spiritual experience,
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purity and spiritual awakening.

In many households, the first lamps are lit during the evening puja, followed by the illumination of the entire home.

The sight of hundreds of tiny flames glowing against the night sky creates one of the most beautiful images associated with Indian culture.



Rangoli: Welcoming Auspiciousness Through Art

Rangoli is a traditional Indian art form in which intricate designs are created on floors, particularly near entrances and courtyards.

Colored powders, rice flour, flower petals, grains and other natural materials are used to create geometric patterns, floral motifs, peacocks, lotus flowers and auspicious symbols.

The lotus, considered sacred in Hindu tradition, is especially popular in Diwali rangolis because of its association with Goddess Lakshmi.

In some households, small footprints symbolising the arrival of Goddess Lakshmi are drawn from the entrance towards the prayer area.

Rangoli is more than decoration. It expresses creativity, hospitality and the desire to welcome prosperity and positive energy.

Wearing New Clothes and Exchanging Gifts

Diwali is also an occasion to dress in new or traditional attire.

Women often wear sarees, suits, lehengas and other festive outfits, while men choose kurta-pyjamas, sherwanis or traditional formal wear.

Families exchange sweets, dry fruits, chocolates, clothing and thoughtful gifts.

The custom of gifting symbolizes affection, gratitude and goodwill. It also strengthens relationships among family members, friends, colleagues and neighbors.

Lakshmi-Ganesh Puja: The Spiritual Centre of Diwali

Among all Diwali rituals, Lakshmi-Ganesh Puja holds special importance for many Hindu families.

Goddess Lakshmi represents prosperity, abundance, fortune and well-being. Lord Ganesha represents wisdom, auspicious beginnings and the removal of obstacles.

Together, they symbolize the idea that prosperity should be accompanied by wisdom and that success should be guided by good judgment and righteous conduct.

The puja is generally performed during the evening, around the locally prescribed auspicious time known as the Pradosh Kaal, with many families consulting a regional panchang for the recommended muhurat.

The exact procedure varies according to family traditions, regional customs and religious lineages. A commonly followed household puja includes the following steps:

1. Preparing the puja area

The place of worship is cleaned and decorated with flowers, rangoli and diyas. A clean cloth is spread on a wooden platform or chowki.

Idols or pictures of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha are placed respectfully on the platform. Some families also worship Goddess Saraswati, Kubera or their traditional household deities.

2. Sankalp

The worshipper takes a sankalp, or sacred resolve, expressing the intention to perform the puja with devotion and sincerity.

3. Invocation of Lord Ganesha

The puja generally begins with Lord Ganesha.

Devotees offer flowers, durva grass, sweets and other traditional offerings while praying for the removal of obstacles and the successful completion of the worship.

A commonly recited mantra is:

Om Gan Ganapataye Namah.

4. Invocation of Goddess Lakshmi

Goddess Lakshmi is invoked with prayers and offerings. Devotees may offer lotus or other flowers, kumkum, turmeric, rice grains, sweets, fruits and fragrant incense.

A popular mantra is:

Om Shreem Mahalakshmyai Namah.

The mantra is a prayer for the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi.

5. Shodashopachara or traditional offerings

In more elaborate forms of worship, devotees perform Shodashopachara, the offering of sixteen traditional services or forms of hospitality to the deity.

These may include welcoming the deity, offering a seat, water, bathing rituals, clothing, flowers, fragrance, incense, lamps, food and prayers.

Not every household performs all sixteen offerings. A simple, sincere puja is also widely practised.

6. Offering of Naivedya



Fruits, sweets, dry fruits, kheer, laddoos and other vegetarian preparations are offered to the deities.

The offerings are subsequently distributed among family members as prasad.

7. Worship of the household's wealth and accounts

Many business families worship cash boxes, account books, business ledgers, calculators and other instruments associated with their work.

This practice expresses gratitude for livelihood and seeks blessings for honest business, financial stability and prosperity.

8. Aarti

The puja concludes with the recitation of aarti.

Devotees move a lit aarti plate before the deities while singing traditional devotional hymns.

Popular aartis include:

- *Om Jai Lakshmi Mata*
- *Jai Ganesh Jai Ganesh Deva*

The entire family often participates, creating an atmosphere of devotion, unity and celebration.

9. Lighting the lamps

After the puja, diyas are placed throughout the home, especially near entrances, windows and prayer spaces.

The illuminated home symbolises the welcoming of prosperity, peace and positive energy.

10. Prasad and family celebrations

The prasad is distributed among family members, relatives and guests. Families then exchange greetings, enjoy festive meals and spend time together.

It is worth remembering that the spirit of Diwali puja lies in faith, gratitude and good intentions rather than the number or cost of the offerings.


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Diwali celebrations across India: One festival, many traditions



As the festive season arrives, an unmistakable transformation sweeps across India. Streets sparkle with decorative lights, homes are adorned with colorful rangolis, temples resonate with devotional hymns, and markets bustle with shoppers searching for gifts, sweets and festive essentials. The fragrance of flowers, the glow of earthen lamps and the warmth of family gatherings create an atmosphere that is unmistakably Diwali.

Known as Deepavali, meaning a row of lights, Diwali is among India's most celebrated festivals. Yet, what makes it particularly fascinating is that the festival is not observed in exactly the same way everywhere. While the underlying message of light overcoming darkness and good triumphing over evil remains common, its stories, rituals, customs and celebrations reflect the extraordinary cultural diversity of the country.

In northern India, Diwali is closely associated with Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya after fourteen years of exile. In parts of southern India, the festival centres on Lord Krishna's victory over Narakasura. In Bengal, Goddess Kali is worshipped with elaborate ceremonies, while in Gujarat, the occasion is intertwined with the beginning of a new financial and business year. For Sikhs, Diwali coincides with the deeply meaningful celebration of Bandi Chhor Divas.

From one state to another, the traditions may change, but the spirit remains the same. Diwali is a celebration of faith, family, prosperity, togetherness and the enduring human desire for happiness and renewal.

North India: The Grandeur of Lord Rama's Homecoming

In much of northern India, Diwali is celebrated with immense enthusiasm and is traditionally associated with the return of Lord Rama, Goddess Sita and Lakshmana to Ayodhya following the completion of fourteen years of exile and Rama's victory over Ravana.

According to the Ramayana, the people of Ayodhya welcomed their beloved prince by illuminating the kingdom with earthen lamps. This tradition is believed to have inspired the festival's association with rows of lights.

Ayodhya: A spectacular celebration of light

Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Rama according to Hindu tradition, becomes one of the most prominent centres of Diwali celebrations. The city takes on a spectacular appearance as temples, ghats, streets and public spaces are decorated with lamps and colourful illumination.

The Deepotsav celebrations along the banks of the Sarayu have become particularly famous. Thousands of volunteers participate in lighting earthen diyas, transforming the riverfront into a breathtaking spectacle.

The celebrations also feature devotional performances, cultural programs, tableaux depicting episodes from the Ramayana and elaborate decorations. For devotees, visiting Ayodhya during Diwali is an opportunity to experience the spiritual atmosphere associated with Lord Rama's homecoming.

Delhi: A festive blend of tradition and modernity

The national capital welcomes Diwali with illuminated markets, decorated homes, colorful exhibitions and vibrant shopping destinations.

Popular markets become centers of festive activity, offering everything from traditional clothing and jewelry to sweets, decorative lights and handcrafted gifts.

Families perform Lakshmi-Ganesh Puja in the evening, exchange gifts and enjoy traditional delicacies. The city reflects a fascinating combination of age-old customs and contemporary celebrations.

Punjab: The spiritual splendor of Bandi Chhor Divas

In Punjab, Diwali holds particular significance for the Sikh community as it coincides with Bandi Chhor Divas.

The occasion commemorates the release of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji from imprisonment at Gwalior Fort. Sikh tradition remembers how the Guru secured the release of 52 Hindu kings along with him.

The Golden Temple in Amritsar becomes the centre of celebrations. Its magnificent architecture is illuminated with countless lights, while the sacred pool reflects the golden glow of the shrine.



Devotees gather for prayers, participate in religious ceremonies and witness the spectacular illumination. The celebrations carry a message of freedom, justice, compassion and standing up for the rights of others.

In Punjabi households, families also light diyas, prepare festive meals, exchange sweets and welcome relatives and friends. The festival is celebrated with warmth and enthusiasm across the state.

Western India: Prosperity, New Beginnings and Business Traditions

In western India, Diwali is closely associated with prosperity, new beginnings and the worship of Goddess Lakshmi. The region's celebrations beautifully combine religious devotion, business customs, traditional cuisine and family gatherings.

Gujarat: A festival of wealth and a new financial year

In Gujarat, Diwali is one of the most important occasions of the year. Homes are decorated with rangolis, flowers, torans and rows of diyas, while markets come alive with festive shoppers.

May the Festival of Lights
bring Peace, Prosperity
and Happiness to All...

Happy Diwali



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One of the most distinctive traditions is Chopda Pujan, the ceremonial worship of account books and business ledgers.

Business owners, traders and shopkeepers worship their financial records and seek blessings from Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha for prosperity, success and a fruitful year ahead.

The occasion is followed by Bestu Varas, the Gujarati New Year, celebrated on the day after Diwali. Families visit relatives, exchange greetings, seek blessings from elders and begin the new year with optimism.

Traditional Gujarati delicacies, sweets and savories add to the festive atmosphere.

Maharashtra: A five-day celebration of family and faith

In Maharashtra, Diwali is celebrated over several days, with each day having its own rituals and significance.

The festivities begin with Vasu Baras in communities that observe it, followed by Dhanteras, Naraka Chaturdashi, Lakshmi Puja, Padwa and Bhau Beej.

An important custom is the early morning Abhyanga Snan, an oil bath taken before sunrise on Naraka Chaturdashi. It symbolises purification and the removal of negativity.

Maharashtrian kitchens prepare a special assortment of Diwali delicacies, popularly known as Faral. This includes chakli, chivda, karanji, ladoos, shankarpali and anarse.

Families exchange faral with neighbours and relatives, making food an important expression of affection and hospitality.

Goa: Diwali and the burning of Narakasura effigies

In Goa, Diwali is particularly associated with Naraka Chaturdashi and the legend of Lord Krishna's victory over the demon Narakasura.

One of the most distinctive features of Goan celebrations is the preparation of large effigies of Narakasura. These figures, often made using paper, bamboo and other materials, are displayed in neighbourhoods and later burnt as a symbolic representation of the destruction of evil.

The celebrations often begin early in the morning, with traditional oil baths, prayers, new clothes and festive meals.

The ritual symbolizes the triumph of righteousness and the elimination of negative forces.

South India: The Victory of Lord Krishna Over Narakasura

In several southern Indian communities, Diwali celebrations focus particularly on Naraka Chaturdashi, commemorating Lord Krishna's victory over the demon Narakasura.

Unlike the elaborate evening celebrations commonly associated with northern India, the festivities in many southern households begin early in the morning.

Tamil Nadu: An early morning celebration of tradition

In Tamil Nadu, Deepavali is celebrated with devotion and enthusiasm.



The day begins before sunrise with an oil bath, traditionally called Ganga Snanam. This ritual symbolizes purification and is considered an auspicious beginning to the celebrations.

Families wear new clothes, perform prayers, visit temples and exchange greetings.

The festive breakfast is an important part of the occasion. Traditional preparations include idli, dosa, vadai and a variety of sweets and savories.

The famous Deepavali legiyam, a traditional herbal preparation, is also associated with the celebrations in many households.

Sweets such as adhirasam, Mysore pak and murukku are prepared or purchased for sharing with relatives and friends.

Karnataka: Celebrating the destruction of evil

In Karnataka, Diwali is celebrated through a series of rituals associated with purification, devotion and prosperity.

Naraka Chaturdashi is an important day, marked by an early morning oil bath, traditional prayers and the wearing of new clothes.

Homes are decorated with colorful rangolis, flowers and oil lamps. Families prepare festive dishes and sweets, while temples organise special prayers.

In different parts of the state, the celebrations also include traditions associated with Bali Padyami, which honours King Bali and symbolises prosperity and the importance of humility.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana: A vibrant blend of rituals and festivities

In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, Diwali is celebrated with great enthusiasm.

Families wake up early for traditional oil baths, wear new clothes and perform puja at home. Homes and courtyards are decorated with rangolis, flowers and diyas.

The festive menu includes traditional sweets such as ariselu, boorelu and other regional delicacies.

In many households, families also worship Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha, praying for prosperity, happiness and well-being.

Kerala: A more understated celebration

Although Diwali is not traditionally as prominent in Kerala as Onam and Vishu, it is celebrated by many communities across the state.

The festival is associated with Naraka Chaturdashi, and families observe prayers, light lamps, wear new clothes and prepare traditional delicacies.

The celebrations vary considerably across communities and regions, reflecting Kerala's distinctive religious and cultural landscape.

Eastern India: The Divine Power of Goddess Kali

In eastern India, particularly West Bengal, Diwali takes on a distinctive spiritual character through the celebration of Kali Puja.

While much of India worships Goddess Lakshmi on the main Diwali evening, Bengali households and temples offer prayers to Goddess Kali, the powerful form of the Divine Mother.

West Bengal: Kali Puja and the grandeur of pandals

Kali Puja is among the most important religious celebrations in West Bengal.

Kolkata becomes especially vibrant as temples, neighborhoods and community pandals are decorated with elaborate lights and artistic installations.

Devotees worship Goddess Kali with flowers, incense, lamps and traditional offerings. Special prayers are performed, and many temples remain open to devotees throughout the night.

The Dakshineswar Kali Temple and Kalighat Temple are among the prominent centres of devotion.

The festival represents the triumph of divine feminine power over evil and the destruction of ignorance and negative forces.

The cultural side of the celebration is equally impressive. Elaborate pandals, artistic installations, traditional music and festive food create a memorable atmosphere across the city.

Assam: Diwali and the worship of light

In Assam, Diwali is celebrated with the lighting of earthen lamps, household prayers and festive decorations.

Families illuminate their homes and temples, worship deities and exchange sweets.

The celebrations reflect a combination of regional customs and broader Hindu traditions, with local variations in rituals and offerings.

Odisha: A unique ancestral remembrance tradition

Odisha has a distinctive observance associated with Diwali, known as Badabadua Daka. In this tradition, families light lamps and offer prayers in remembrance of their ancestors. The ritual is connected with the belief of guiding departed family members towards peace and the spiritual realm.

Traditional practices may include lighting jute stems and reciting prayers invoking the blessings of ancestors.

This observance gives Diwali a special dimension of remembrance, gratitude and respect for family heritage.

Central India: A Blend of Tradition, Devotion and Community Celebrations

In central India, Diwali is celebrated through a combination of household rituals, temple visits, traditional food and community gatherings.

In Madhya Pradesh, cities such as Indore, Bhopal and Ujjain take on a festive appearance. Markets are decorated with lights, homes are adorned with rangolis and diyas, and families perform Lakshmi-Ganesh Puja.

Ujjain, an important centre of Hindu pilgrimage, witnesses special religious activity during the festive season.

In Chhattisgarh, Diwali celebrations blend mainstream Hindu traditions with local customs and community practices. Families light lamps, prepare traditional delicacies and celebrate with relatives and neighbors.

The festival also provides an opportunity for communities to preserve regional crafts, culinary traditions and local forms of celebration.

The Himalayan Region: Diwali Amidst Mountain Traditions

The Himalayan states celebrate Diwali with their own distinctive cultural expressions.

In Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, families light lamps, decorate homes, worship Goddess Lakshmi and prepare traditional sweets. The festival is often marked by community gatherings, temple visits and local fairs.

In parts of Uttarakhand, particularly the Kumaon region, the broader festive period includes distinctive local traditions and celebrations.

Some communities also observe ancestral customs and regional fairs that reflect the cultural heritage of the mountain communities.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Diwali is celebrated by many Hindu families with household pujas, temple visits, festive meals and the illumination of homes.

The natural beauty of the Himalayan landscape provides a distinctive setting for the festival, with traditional lamps and lights bringing warmth to homes and neighborhoods.

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& Bandi Chhod Diwas



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Chhoti Diwali: The dawn before the Festival of Lights



The soft glow of earthen lamps, the fragrance of freshly prepared herbal ubtan and the gentle hum of festive anticipation fill the air as India welcomes Chhoti Diwali, also known as Naraka Chaturdashi. Celebrated on the second day of the traditional five-day Diwali festivities, it is an occasion steeped in mythology, spiritual symbolism and age-old customs.

Often overshadowed by the grandeur of the main Diwali celebrations, Chhoti Diwali has a distinct identity and significance of its own. It is not merely a day of preparation before the festivities reach their peak; it is a celebration of purification, liberation and the victory of divine consciousness over evil.

While Diwali celebrates the triumph of light over darkness, Chhoti Diwali reminds us that the journey towards illumination begins with cleansing ourselves of negativity. Its rituals, legends and traditions encourage us to leave behind arrogance, ignorance and destructive tendencies and embrace a renewed sense of hope, positivity and spiritual well-being.

In many ways, Chhoti Diwali is the dawn before the festival of lights-a moment of quiet reflection before the magnificent celebrations unfold.

The origins of Naraka Chaturdashi are rooted in Hindu mythology and the fascinating tale of Narakasura, the powerful demon king of Pragjyotishpur, traditionally associated with present-day Assam.

According to Hindu legends, Narakasura was born to Bhudevi, the Earth Goddess, and Varaha, the boar incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Blessed with extraordinary powers, he became a formidable ruler. However, as his power increased, so did his arrogance. Gradually abandoning righteousness, he began committing terrible atrocities.

Narakasura imprisoned thousands of celestial women and seized the magnificent earrings of Aditi, the mother of the devas. His tyranny spread fear throughout the heavens and the earth, leaving the gods helpless.

Unable to endure his growing oppression, the devas approached Lord Krishna and sought his intervention.

Responding to their prayers, Lord Krishna set out to defeat the demon king, accompanied by his wife Satyabhama. Riding upon his celestial mount Garuda, Krishna attacked Narakasura's heavily fortified kingdom, and a fierce battle followed.

In one widely narrated version of the legend, Satyabhama ultimately delivered the fatal blow to Narakasura. According to the tradition, she was an incarnation of Bhudevi herself, making the demon's defeat a symbolic liberation from his own mother's divine power.

Before his death, Narakasura realized his wrongdoing and repented. He requested that the day of his defeat be celebrated with joy and illumination rather than mourning.

His wish was honored, and Naraka Chaturdashi came to be observed as a celebration of the destruction of evil, the restoration of righteousness and the liberation of those who had suffered under oppression.

The story carries a timeless message: no matter how powerful arrogance, cruelty or injustice may appear, they cannot prevail forever against truth and righteousness.

A Day of Cleansing and Spiritual Renewal

Unlike the elaborate celebrations associated with the main Diwali evening, Chhoti Diwali traditionally places considerable emphasis on purification and preparation.

One of the most significant rituals of the day is the early-morning ceremonial bath known as Abhyang Snan. It is believed to cleanse the body, refresh the mind and prepare devotees for the auspicious celebrations ahead.

The tradition is associated with the belief that after defeating Narakasura, Lord Krishna bathed to cleanse himself of the impurities of battle. Devotees symbolically recreate this act through their own morning bathing rituals.

The practice is much more than a physical cleansing routine. It represents the removal of accumulated negativity, emotional burdens and undesirable tendencies, making way for a fresh beginning.

Abhyang Snan: The Sacred Ritual of the Festive Bath

One of the most beautiful aspects of Chhoti Diwali is the traditional Abhyang Snan, performed before sunrise on Naraka Chaturdashi.

The ritual usually begins with the application of warm oil, traditionally sesame or coconut oil, to the body. In some households, the oil is infused with herbs or aromatic ingredients.

This is followed by the application of ubtan, a traditional cleansing paste prepared using ingredients such as gram flour, turmeric, sandalwood and other natural substances.

After the application, devotees take a bath, often using warm water, as part of the ritual of purification.

The various elements carry their own symbolism:

- Oil application: Represents nourishment, relaxation and rejuvenation.
- Herbal ubtan: Symbolises cleansing and the removal of impurities.
- The ceremonial bath: Represents purification of the body and renewal of the spirit.
- Wearing fresh clothes: Signifies a new beginning and readiness to welcome auspiciousness.

In several regions, taking an early-morning bath on Naraka Chaturdashi is considered especially auspicious. The ritual is believed to bring health, protection and prosperity.

Beyond religious beliefs, the practice also reflects India's traditional relationship with natural ingredients, seasonal wellness and personal care.

Yamadeepdaan: Lighting Lamps for Longevity and Protection

As evening approaches, another meaningful ritual associated with Chhoti Diwali is Yamadeepdaan, the offering of lamps to Yamraj, the Hindu deity associated with death and justice.

The custom is rooted in a popular legend about a young prince whose life was destined to be cut short.

According to the story, the sixteen-year-old son of King Hima was predicted to die from a snake bite on the fourth day of his marriage.

When his newly married wife learned about the prophecy, she decided to challenge fate. On the appointed night, she gathered gold and silver ornaments, jewelry and lamps and placed them near the entrance of their home. She then kept her husband awake throughout the night by singing songs and narrating stories.

When Yamraj arrived in the form of a serpent to claim the prince's life, the dazzling brilliance of the lamps and ornaments temporarily overwhelmed him. He sat near the entrance, listening to the princess's songs, and eventually departed without taking the young man's life.

Since then, according to this popular tradition, people light lamps in honor of Yamraj, praying for protection from untimely death and for the long life and well-being of family members.

In many households, a small diya is placed outside the home, traditionally facing south, the direction associated with Yamraj.

The ritual is a poignant reminder of the value of life and the protective power of love, devotion and faith.

Lighting Diyas: Preparing the Home for Diwali

Although Chhoti Diwali is often celebrated on a smaller scale than the main festival, lighting lamps remains an important part of the occasion.

As evening descends, homes are decorated with rows of earthen diyas, candles and decorative lights. Entrances are adorned with colourful rangolis and marigold garlands, creating a welcoming festive atmosphere.

In some households, footprints symbolising the arrival of Goddess Lakshmi are drawn near the entrance, while others prepare their prayer areas for the following evening's Lakshmi-Ganesh Puja. The lighting of diyas carries a deeper meaning. Each flame represents the awakening of wisdom, the removal of ignorance and the triumph of positivity over negativity.

It also marks the transition from the quiet purification of Chhoti Diwali to the joyous illumination of the main festival.

Heartiest Diwali Greetings

Eye Foundation of America

Diwali (Deepawali) celebrates the victory of humanity, the triumph of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, and good over evil. During Diwali, the Festival of Lights, we light our lamps, let us also reflect on the darkness that still surrounds millions of lives through poverty, illiteracy, disease, and preventable suffering – including avoidable blindness.

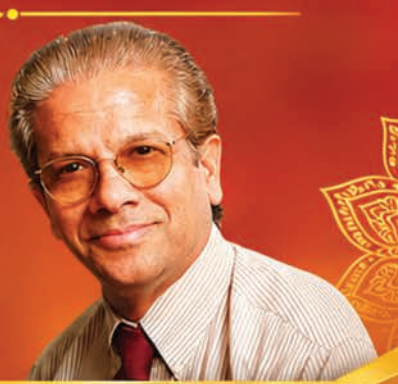
The true spirit of Diwali lies, not merely lighting lamps in our homes, but bringing light, hope, and happiness into the lives of those less fortunate. May this Diwali remind that the greatest worship is compassion, the noblest prayer is service, and the brightest light is humanity.

And we would be remiss at the **Eye Foundation of America** to not remind everyone that if they celebrate with fireworks this Diwali, please protect your eyesight and wear safety glasses. Even a sparkler burns at **2000 degrees** and can cause permanent damage.

Wishing everyone a safe, happy, peaceful, and meaningful Diwali.



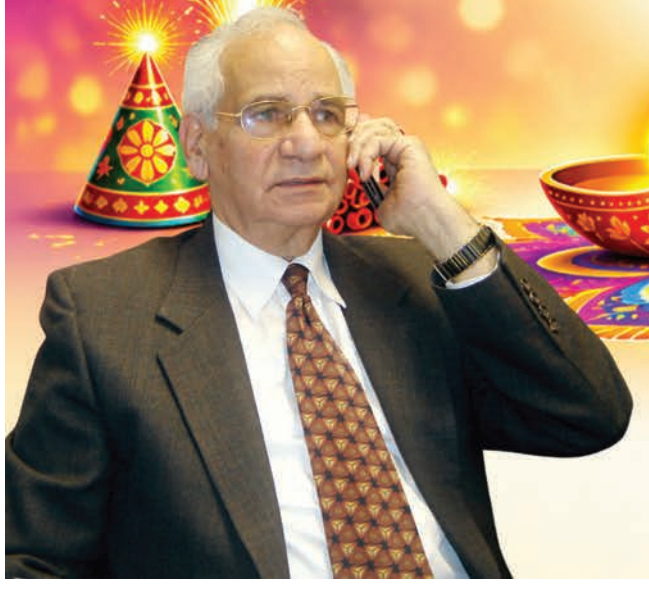
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Lakshmi Puja: Invoking the blessings of wealth, wisdom and prosperity

Diwali is a festival of countless traditions, but the worship of Goddess Lakshmi remains at its spiritual heart for millions of Hindu families. Celebrated on the main Diwali evening, Lakshmi Puja is among the most eagerly awaited rituals of the festive season.

As dusk approaches, homes take on a magical appearance. Entrances are decorated with colourful rangolis, marigold garlands and traditional torans. Earthen lamps are arranged along balconies, windowsills and courtyards, while the prayer area is adorned with flowers, fresh cloth and beautifully decorated idols of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha.

Families dress in their finest traditional attire and gather around the puja altar. Sweets, fruits, flowers, incense and other offerings are arranged with devotion. The atmosphere becomes serene and spiritually uplifting as prayers begin.

For devotees, this is the moment to express gratitude for the blessings received during the year and seek divine grace for the days ahead.

The underlying belief is that Goddess Lakshmi blesses homes where cleanliness, sincerity, harmony and righteousness are valued. Thus, the preparations for Lakshmi Puja begin long before the actual evening ceremony.





Goddess Lakshmi: The Divine Embodiment of Abundance

In Hindu tradition, Goddess Lakshmi is revered as the goddess of wealth, prosperity, fortune, beauty and abundance. She is the divine consort of Lord Vishnu, the preserver of the universe, and represents the grace and prosperity that sustain life.

Her iconography is rich in symbolism. She is commonly depicted seated or standing upon a blooming lotus, dressed in beautiful red or pink garments, with gold ornaments and a serene expression.

Her four hands are often interpreted as representing the four aims of human life in Hindu philosophy: dharma (righteousness), artha (material prosperity), kama (desires) and moksha (liberation).

The lotus on which she sits represents purity, spiritual growth and detachment. Despite growing in muddy water, the lotus remains untouched by its surroundings, reminding devotees that prosperity should never compromise one's values.

Gold coins flowing from one of her hands symbolize abundance and generosity, while the elephants often depicted alongside her represent strength, dignity, royal power and auspiciousness.

Importantly, Lakshmi is not merely the goddess of material wealth. Her blessings are also associated with good health, knowledge, courage, fertility, harmony and spiritual fulfillment.

In Hindu tradition, the idea of prosperity is therefore much broader than financial success. It encompasses a balanced, meaningful and fulfilling life.

The Legend of Goddess Lakshmi's Appearance

One of the most celebrated legends associated with Goddess Lakshmi is the Samudra Manthan, or the churning of the cosmic ocean.

According to Hindu mythology, the devas and asuras joined forces to churn the ocean of milk in search of Amrit, the nectar of immortality.

Mount Mandara was used as the churning rod, while the serpent Vasuki served as the rope. Lord Vishnu guided the process, taking the form of Kurma, the divine tortoise, to support the mountain. As the cosmic ocean was churned, numerous divine treasures and celestial beings emerged. Among them was Goddess Lakshmi, radiant in beauty and surrounded by divine splendour.

Her appearance was celebrated as the arrival of prosperity, fortune and auspiciousness. She chose Lord Vishnu as her eternal consort, symbolizing the union of preservation and prosperity.

This legend gives Lakshmi Puja a deeper meaning. It reminds devotees that abundance is a divine blessing and that prosperity must be accompanied by balance, responsibility and righteousness.

Why Is Lakshmi Puja Celebrated on Diwali?

The association of Goddess Lakshmi with Diwali has developed through centuries of religious beliefs, regional customs and devotional traditions.

According to popular Hindu belief, Goddess Lakshmi visits homes on the night of Diwali, blessing those that are clean, illuminated and filled with devotion.

The lighting of diyas is therefore considered a way of welcoming her divine presence.

The festival also marks a period of renewal. In many business communities, Diwali is associated with the closing of old financial accounts and the beginning of a new accounting year.

Shopkeepers, traders and business owners perform special prayers, worship their account books and seek blessings for prosperity and success.

Lakshmi Puja thus connects the spiritual and material dimensions of life, reminding people that wealth is most meaningful when earned honestly and used responsibly.

The Auspicious Preparations: Welcoming Goddess Lakshmi

The preparations for Lakshmi Puja begin days before Diwali. Traditionally, cleanliness and decoration are considered essential because they symbolise readiness to welcome auspiciousness.

Cleaning and Purifying the Home

Families thoroughly clean their homes, organize their surroundings and remove unwanted clutter.

This practice is traditionally associated with welcoming Goddess Lakshmi into a clean and harmonious environment.

Doors and windows are decorated with mango-leaf torans, marigold flowers and other auspicious ornaments.

The prayer room receives special attention, with idols and pictures carefully cleaned and arranged.

Rangoli: A Beautiful Invitation to Prosperity

Rangoli is an essential part of Diwali decorations.

Intricate patterns are created near entrances and courtyards using coloured powders, rice flour, flower petals and natural materials.

Lotus designs are particularly popular because the flower is associated with Goddess Lakshmi.

In many households, small footprints representing the goddess's arrival are drawn from the entrance towards the prayer area. These symbolic footprints express the hope that prosperity and happiness will enter the home.

Decorating the Puja Area

A wooden platform or chowki is covered with a clean, preferably red or yellow cloth.

Idols or pictures of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha are placed on it. Fresh flowers, garlands, lamps and decorative ornaments add to the beauty of the sacred space.

A kalash, containing water and traditionally decorated with mango leaves and a coconut, may also be placed as part of the worship.

Lakshmi-Ganesh Puja: The Sacred Rituals of Diwali Evening

The main Lakshmi Puja is traditionally performed during the evening, with many families following the auspicious Pradosh Kaal and consulting their local panchang for the recommended muhurat.

Lord Ganesha is worshipped before Goddess Lakshmi because he represents wisdom, auspicious beginnings and the removal of obstacles.

The ceremony can be simple or elaborate, depending on family traditions and religious practices.


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Govardhan Puja to Padwa: A festival of divine Grace, nature's abundance and new beginnings

From Lord Krishna lifting Govardhan Hill to the magnificent Annakut offerings and the celebration of relationships through Padwa, the day after Diwali is a beautiful expression of devotion, gratitude and renewal. Rooted in diverse traditions, it reminds us to honour nature, share our blessings and cherish the bonds that enrich our lives.

As the glow of Diwali lamps lingers and the fragrance of festive delicacies fills Indian homes, the celebrations move into another spiritually significant day- Govardhan Puja, also known as Annakut or Bali Pratipada. Observed on the first day of the Shukla Paksha of Kartik, this occasion holds different meanings across India's cultural and religious traditions.

For Krishna devotees, it commemorates the miraculous lifting of Govardhan Hill to protect the people of Vrindavan. For temple communities, it is an occasion to prepare elaborate Annakut offerings, presenting a mountain of food to the deity. In Maharashtra, the day is celebrated as Diwali Padwa, symbolising marital affection and prosperity, while in Gujarat, it marks the beginning of the New Year, known as Bestu Varas. In Vaishnavite traditions, it is also associated with King Bali and his devotion to Lord Vishnu.

Despite their regional differences, these celebrations share a common message: gratitude towards nature, faith in the divine, generosity towards others and love within families.



The Legend of Govardhan Puja: When Krishna Lifted a Mountain

One of the most cherished stories associated with Govardhan Puja comes from the Bhagavata Purana and centres on Lord Krishna's childhood in Braj.

According to the legend, the people of Vrindavan traditionally worshipped Lord Indra, the king of the devas and the deity associated with rain. They believed that elaborate rituals and offerings would ensure timely rainfall, fertile fields and abundant harvests.

Young Krishna questioned this practice, encouraging the villagers to recognise the importance of Govardhan Hill, which provided fertile pastures, vegetation, water and shelter for their cattle. He explained that their lives depended upon nature's generosity and that the mountain and its surrounding environment deserved their gratitude.

Persuaded by Krishna, the villagers offered their prayers and food to Govardhan Hill instead of Indra. Angered by this decision, Indra unleashed torrential rains and devastating storms upon Vrindavan.

Seeing the villagers and their cattle in danger, Krishna lifted the enormous Govardhan Hill on the little finger of his left hand, providing shelter beneath it. For seven days and seven nights, he protected the people from the relentless downpour. Eventually, Indra realised his arrogance and recognised Krishna's divine nature. He withdrew the storm and sought forgiveness.

The incident became a timeless lesson in humility, devotion and respect for nature, giving rise to the tradition of Govardhan Puja.

Annakut: A Mountain of Food and Gratitude

One of the most spectacular aspects of Govardhan Puja is Annakut, a Sanskrit expression meaning 'mountain of food'. Devotees prepare an extraordinary variety of vegetarian delicacies and arrange them in an elaborate display before Lord Krishna, symbolising Govardhan Hill and expressing gratitude for nature's abundance.

The offerings include sweets, savouries, fruits, vegetables, rice preparations, pulses and milk-based dishes. Among the most celebrated is Chhappan Bhog, comprising 56 different food preparations.

According to a popular devotional belief, the tradition is associated with Krishna's seven days of protecting the villagers beneath Govardhan Hill. As he could not take his usual eight meals each day during this period, devotees offered 56 dishes afterwards as an expression of love and gratitude.

In temples across Mathura, Vrindavan, Nathdwara and ISKCON centres, Annakut is celebrated with extraordinary devotion. Food preparations are arranged in impressive tiers resembling a mountain, while the deity is beautifully decorated with flowers and ornaments.

Following the offering, the food is distributed as prasad among devotees. This tradition highlights an important message: abundance becomes truly meaningful when it is shared.

Govardhan Parikrama: A Sacred Journey of Faith

For Krishna devotees, Govardhan Parikrama is among the most significant observances associated with the festival.

Situated in Uttar Pradesh's Braj region, Govardhan Hill is considered sacred because of its association with Krishna's childhood. Devotees undertake a traditional circumambulation route of approximately 21 kilometres, passing temples, sacred ponds and places connected with Krishna's life.

Many pilgrims walk barefoot, chanting devotional hymns and offering prayers along the way. For them, the journey represents surrender, faith and an enduring connection with the divine.

Govardhan Puja Rituals: Honoring Nature and Divinity

In many households, a symbolic Govardhan Hill is created using cow dung or clay and decorated with flowers, leaves and miniature representations of trees and animals. It represents the sacred mountain that sheltered the people of Vrindavan.

Devotees worship Lord Krishna with flowers, incense, lamps, fruits and traditional sweets. Prayers and hymns recalling Govardhan Leela are recited, followed by aarti. Another important custom is Gau Puja, the worship of cows. Associated closely with Krishna, cows are decorated with flowers, garlands and tilak, and offered food. The ritual expresses gratitude for their traditional contribution to agriculture and rural livelihoods.

The celebrations conclude with the distribution of prasad and prayers for the well-being of families, animals and communities.

Padwa and Bali Pratipada: Celebrating Love and New Beginnings

While Govardhan Puja is central to Krishna devotees, the same day carries other important meanings across India.

In Maharashtra, Diwali Padwa celebrates the bond between husband and wife. Traditionally, wives perform aarti and apply tilak to their husbands, praying for their long life and prosperity. Husbands express their affection through gifts. The occasion symbolises mutual respect, companionship and marital harmony. It should not be confused with the springtime Marathi New Year festival of Gudi Padwa.

In Gujarat, the day marks Bestu Varas, the Gujarati New Year. Families visit temples, seek blessings from elders, exchange greetings and welcome fresh beginnings. Business communities also consider the occasion auspicious for new ventures and financial activities.

The day is additionally associated with King Mahabali and the Vamana incarnation of Lord Vishnu. According to Hindu mythology, Bali was a generous and powerful ruler. Lord Vishnu appeared before him as Vamana, a young Brahmin dwarf, and requested three steps of land. Once Bali agreed, Vamana assumed a gigantic form, covering the Earth and heavens with two steps. For the third, Bali offered his own head.

Impressed by his devotion and generosity, Vishnu granted him a place in the underworld and, according to popular tradition, the blessing to visit his people once every year.

Bali Pratipada thus celebrates humility, sacrifice, generosity and unwavering devotion.

A Festival That Teaches Us to Respect Nature

Perhaps the most relevant message of Govardhan Puja today is its connection with environmental awareness.

Krishna's story reminds us that human survival depends upon the natural world. Mountains, forests, rivers, fertile soil and animals sustain life and deserve respect and protection.

At a time when environmental degradation, deforestation, water scarcity and climate change pose serious challenges, the festival encourages us to become responsible guardians of the Earth. Conserving water, protecting green spaces, reducing food waste, supporting sustainable agriculture and treating animals compassionately are meaningful ways to embrace its message.

Annakut further reinforces the values of sharing and community service. Food is a blessing, and distributing it through prasad, charitable giving and community meals reflects the spirit of seva (selfless service) and daan (charity).

Happy Diwali & Bandi Chhod Diwas

May the divine light of Guru's blessings remove darkness, bring peace, happiness and prosperity in everyone's life.



Gurmej Singh
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Former President, Gurdwara
Baba Makhan Shah
Lobana Sikh Center, New York



Daler Singh
917-849-9033
Former President, Gurdwara
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Bhai Dooj: A timeless celebration of love, blessings and sibling bonds



As the glow of Diwali lamps slowly fades and the fragrance of festive sweets lingers in Indian homes, the celebrations culminate in Bhai Dooj, one of the most heartwarming festivals dedicated to family relationships. Celebrated on the fifth and final day of the traditional Diwali festivities, Bhai Dooj honors the enduring bond between brothers and sisters through prayers, blessings, gifts and cherished rituals.

Also known as Bhaiya Dooj, Bhau Beej, Bhai Phonta and Yama Dwitiya, the festival falls on the second day of the Shukla Paksha in the Hindu month of Kartik. While Raksha Bandhan celebrates sibling affection through the tying of a sacred thread, Bhai Dooj reaffirms this relationship through the ceremonial tilak and prayers for each other's happiness and well-being.

Sisters welcome their brothers with beautifully decorated puja thalis, perform aarti and pray for their long lives and prosperity. Brothers, in return, express their affection through gifts and promises of love and support. Beyond the rituals, the occasion celebrates childhood memories, shared laughter and the unconditional companionship that defines sibling relationships.

The Mythological Origins: The Tale of Yamuna and Yama

The origins of Bhai Dooj are associated with a touching legend involving Yamuna, the sacred river, and her brother Yama, the Hindu deity of death and justice.

According to popular mythology, Yama had been away for a long time, occupied with his divine responsibilities. His sister Yamuna missed him dearly and repeatedly invited him to visit her home. Eventually, on the auspicious second day of Kartik Shukla Paksha, Yama accepted her invitation.

Overjoyed by his arrival, Yamuna welcomed her brother warmly, prepared a special feast, applied a ceremonial tilak to his forehead and performed aarti. She also prayed for his happiness and well-being.

Moved by her affection and devotion, Yama offered her a boon. He declared that any brother who visited his sister on this auspicious day and received her blessings would be blessed with happiness, prosperity and longevity.

This divine encounter gave rise to Yama Dwitiya, popularly celebrated as Bhai Dooj. The legend beautifully illustrates how the affection between siblings transcends worldly responsibilities and remains one of life's most treasured relationships.

The Rituals: Expressions of Love and Protection

The rituals of Bhai Dooj are simple yet deeply meaningful, with every gesture symbolising affection, gratitude and prayers for well-being.

- The Tilak Ceremony: The most important ritual involves sisters applying a tilak, usually made of kumkum, sandalwood or vermilion, to their brothers' foreheads. Rice grains may also be applied as a symbol of auspiciousness and prosperity. The ceremony represents a sister's heartfelt prayers for her brother's happiness and protection.
- The Aarti: Sisters perform aarti using a decorated thali containing a lit diya, flowers, sweets and other traditional offerings. The ritual invokes divine blessings and symbolizes the wish for a bright and prosperous life.
- The Festive Feast: Following the ceremony, brothers are welcomed with homemade delicacies and traditional sweets. Food plays an important role in the celebration, bringing families together over lovingly prepared meals.
- The Exchange of Gifts: Brothers traditionally present gifts, clothes, jewellery or money to their sisters as tokens of affection and appreciation. The exchange reflects mutual love rather than material obligation.

Celebrations Across India: Different Names, Shared Emotions

Although the sentiment behind Bhai Dooj remains universal, its customs and culinary traditions vary across regions.

- North India: Widely known as Bhai Dooj or Bhaiya Dooj, the festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. Sisters perform tilak and aarti, prepare festive meals and pray for their brothers' well-being. Brothers visit their sisters and exchange gifts, making the occasion a joyful family gathering.
- Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka: Known as Bhau Beej or Bhai Beej, the festival features distinctive regional customs. In some Maharashtrian households, sisters draw a sacred square on the floor where their brothers sit during the ceremony. Special delicacies are prepared, and families celebrate the occasion with traditional warmth.
- Bengal: In West Bengal, the festival is celebrated as Bhai Phonta. Sisters traditionally observe a fast until they apply the ceremonial phonta to their brothers' foreheads. The ritual is followed by prayers, blessings and an elaborate feast featuring Bengali favourites such as sandesh and mishti doi.
- Nepal: Celebrated as Bhai Tika during Tihar, the festival is one of the most important occasions honoring sibling relationships. Sisters apply colorful, multi-hued tikas to their brothers' foreheads and adorn them with marigold garlands, praying for their long lives, happiness and protection.

Despite the differences in names and rituals, the underlying emotion remains the same: love, gratitude and lifelong companionship.

The Modern Meaning: Love Beyond Distance

In today's fast-paced world, families are often separated by geographical boundaries, professional commitments and changing lifestyles. Yet, Bhai Dooj continues to provide a meaningful opportunity for siblings to reconnect and celebrate their relationship.

Those living in different cities or countries mark the occasion through video calls, online gifts and heartfelt messages. Although physical distance may prevent them from performing traditional rituals together, the emotions behind the celebration remain unchanged.

The spirit of Bhai Dooj has also expanded beyond biological relationships. Cousins, close friends and individuals who share sibling-like affection increasingly embrace the occasion as an opportunity to celebrate chosen family.

At its heart, the festival reminds us that relationships thrive through care, understanding, mutual respect and the willingness to stand by one another through life's challenges.

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The changing glow of Diwali: From traditional clay lamps to a modern festival of lights

As twilight descends and the first lamps of Diwali flicker to life, India transforms into a spectacular canvas of light and color. Homes sparkle with decorative illuminations, markets glow with festive displays, and courtyards come alive with beautifully arranged diyas. Yet, the light that brightens today's celebrations is vastly different from that of earlier generations.

Once, Diwali was defined by the gentle glow of earthen lamps filled with oil and cotton wicks. Their delicate flames symbolized devotion, purity and the triumph of good over evil. Today, traditional diyas share space with LED strips, fairy lights, illuminated installations and digital displays. The festival of lights has evolved from sacred simplicity into a modern spectacle, reflecting India's changing lifestyles, aspirations and technological progress.





The Timeless Charm of the Earthen Diya

For centuries, the humble earthen diya has remained at the heart of Diwali celebrations. Crafted by village potters, dried in the sun and filled with oil and cotton wicks, these little lamps represent a beautiful connection between spirituality, nature and traditional craftsmanship.

Lighting a diya is more than a festive ritual. It symbolizes the awakening of inner consciousness, the removal of ignorance and the welcoming of prosperity. In Hindu philosophy, the lamp is also associated with the five elements of nature: earth, water, fire, air and space.

For generations, families gathered to light rows of diyas along doorways, windows and courtyards. Their golden glow created an atmosphere of warmth and serenity, recalling the popular tradition of illuminating Ayodhya to welcome Lord Rama, Sita and Lakshmana after fourteen years of exile.

The diya was not merely a source of illumination; it represented India's rural heritage, handmade artistry and a spiritual tradition rooted in simplicity.

The Arrival of Electric Lights

The introduction of electricity gradually transformed the visual landscape of Diwali. During the twentieth century, electric bulbs began appearing in homes, shops and public spaces, offering a convenient alternative to traditional oil lamps. What initially seemed like a novelty soon became a popular festive choice. By the later decades of the century, colorful electric bulb strings and decorative lighting had become familiar sights in urban neighborhoods, markets and temples.

The transformation introduced a new aesthetic to Diwali. Unlike the soft, flickering glow of diyas, electric lights offered brightness, uniformity and convenience. Streets could be illuminated on a larger scale, while commercial establishments began using elaborate displays to attract festive shoppers.

The festival's visual identity expanded, blending traditional rituals with the excitement of modern urban life.

LEDs and the Era of Digital Brilliance

The twenty-first century has taken Diwali illumination into an entirely new dimension. The widespread adoption of LED technology has made decorative lighting more accessible, versatile and energy-efficient than conventional incandescent bulbs.

Today, homes feature cascading LED curtains, colorful fairy lights, illuminated rangolis and decorative lamps. Shopping malls and markets compete to create spectacular festive displays, while temples and public buildings are transformed through elaborate lighting arrangements.

Technology has also introduced newer forms of celebration, including laser displays, projection mapping and drone light shows. Solar-powered lamps and rechargeable decorative lights are finding their way into environmentally conscious households. Diwali has increasingly become an occasion for creative expression, with lighting and decoration reflecting contemporary design trends and individual preferences.

Changing Traditions, Changing Lifestyles

The evolution of Diwali lighting reflects a broader transformation in Indian society. Traditionally, celebrations were largely intimate and family-centered, with preparations involving homemade sweets, hand-painted diyas, rangolis and prayers.

Modern celebrations retain these customs but increasingly incorporate shopping festivals, designer decorations, online gifting and social media trends. Beautifully illuminated homes and elaborate festive arrangements have become popular expressions of celebration.

Yet, the change does not necessarily signal a departure from tradition. In many households, the first diya is still lit during the evening puja before decorative electric lights are switched on. The old and the new coexist, creating a celebration that remains rooted in heritage while embracing innovation. The medium of illumination may have changed, but the symbolism of hope, positivity and renewal continues to endure.

The Green Diwali Movement

Growing environmental awareness has encouraged families to rethink their festive choices. Conventional firecrackers contribute to air and noise pollution, while excessive plastic decorations and discarded electrical accessories add to festive waste.

In response, eco-conscious celebrations are gaining popularity. Energy-efficient LEDs, solar-powered lamps, reusable decorations and biodegradable materials offer more sustainable alternatives.

Traditional clay diyas are also enjoying renewed appreciation among families seeking to support local artisans and preserve handmade crafts. Natural rangoli colors, fresh flowers and reusable decorative items further encourage responsible celebrations.

However, sustainability requires thoughtful choices. Although LEDs consume less electricity than conventional incandescent bulbs, electronic decorations should also be reused and disposed of responsibly.

The modern Diwali is gradually becoming a celebration in which technology, tradition and environmental responsibility can complement one another.

The Potters' Plight: Keeping Traditional Craftsmanship Alive

Behind the changing landscape of Diwali lies the story of India's traditional potters, or kumhars, for whom the festival has historically been an important source of livelihood.

For generations, potter families have prepared thousands of earthen lamps in anticipation of Diwali. Their work involves shaping clay, drying the lamps, firing them in kilns and supplying them to local markets.

However, competition from mass-produced decorative lights, plastic lamps and inexpensive factory-made products has created challenges for many traditional artisans.

Some have adapted by introducing painted diyas, designer terracotta lamps, decorative holders and contemporary ceramic products. Others continue to depend on seasonal sales, facing uncertain demand and rising production costs.

Supporting these artisans by purchasing handmade diyas is therefore more than a festive choice. It helps preserve traditional skills, strengthens local livelihoods and keeps an important part of India's cultural heritage alive.

Tradition Meets Modernity

Perhaps the most beautiful aspect of contemporary Diwali is the way it brings together different generations and traditions. In many homes, grandparents continue to insist on lighting traditional oil lamps, while younger family members experiment with LED decorations and innovative designs.

Clay diyas glow beneath colorful fairy lights, paper lanterns hang beside illuminated installations, and traditional puja ceremonies remain central to celebrations. This coexistence reflects India's ability to embrace change without abandoning its cultural roots. The challenge is to ensure that modern convenience does not overshadow the values that have made Diwali meaningful for generations.

WISHING YOU AND
YOUR FAMILY A VERY

Prosperous Diwali

May this festival of lights illuminate
your lives and bring you prosperity.

Dr. Hari K. Shukla,
MD, Pediatrics



- Associate Professor of Pediatric, NYU School of Medicine
- President and Founder, South Asians of New York Inc.
- Established in 2004, Not for profit organization.
- President Children's Medical Center, Flushing.
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The Sacred Diya: Unveiling the spiritual science and symbolism of light in Hinduism

When a small clay lamp flickers to life at dusk, its flame may appear fragile against the vastness of darkness. Yet, within that delicate glow lies an ancient spiritual truth: even the smallest light can dispel the deepest darkness. Across Hindu households, temples and sacred celebrations, lighting a diya is much more than a customary act of devotion. It is a symbolic invocation of wisdom, purity, positivity and divine consciousness.

From the morning prayers performed in household shrines to the spectacular illumination of homes during Diwali, the diya occupies a special place in Hindu spiritual life. Its significance is deeply rooted in the Vedas, Upanishads and yogic traditions, where light represents knowledge, the eternal soul and the ultimate reality.



The Flame as a Symbol of the Soul

In Hindu philosophy, the flame is often associated with Atman, the eternal soul or divine consciousness that resides within every living being. The light of the lamp symbolizes Chaitanya, the pure awareness that gives life its meaning and purpose.

The Upanishadic tradition repeatedly explores the relationship between light and consciousness. The celebrated prayer from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya, meaning "Lead me from darkness to light", expresses humanity's eternal aspiration to move from ignorance towards knowledge and spiritual awakening.

When a devotee lights a diya, the act becomes an outward expression of this inner journey. The steady flame reminds us to nurture qualities such as clarity, compassion, discipline and devotion.

Just as a lamp requires oil or ghee to sustain its flame, spiritual growth requires knowledge, self-discipline and righteous conduct. The diya therefore becomes a reminder that the inner light must be continuously nurtured through conscious living.

Jyoti: Light as the Essence of Divinity

In Hinduism, Jyoti, meaning divine light, is closely associated with the presence of God. The sacred flame is an important element of temple worship, yajnas, aarti and household puja.

In Vedic tradition, Agni, the deity of fire, occupies a central position as the divine messenger who carries offerings from human beings to the gods. The Rig Veda opens with an invocation to Agni, recognising its sacred role in connecting the earthly and celestial realms.

Similarly, the Gayatri Mantra invokes the divine radiance of Savitur, the cosmic source of illumination, seeking the awakening of human intellect and wisdom.

The diya thus represents more than physical brightness. It symbolises the divine consciousness that illuminates the universe and guides human beings towards truth.

During aarti, devotees move a lighted lamp before the deity as an offering of reverence. The flame becomes a symbol of surrender, gratitude and the recognition that all light ultimately originates from the divine.

The Five Elements: A Diya as a Microcosm of the Universe

One of the most fascinating interpretations of the diya comes from the Hindu concept of Panchamahabhutas, or the five fundamental elements that constitute the material universe.

Each component of the lamp can be associated symbolically with one of these elements:

- Prithvi (Earth): The clay body of the diya represents stability, grounding and our connection with Mother Earth.
- Jala (Water): The oil or ghee represents nourishment and sustenance.
- Agni (Fire): The flame symbolises transformation, energy and illumination.
- Vayu (Air): The air that sustains combustion represents the breath of life.
- Akasha (Ether): The surrounding space represents the vastness of existence and the field in which all creation unfolds.

Together, these elements create a symbolic representation of the universe in miniature. Lighting a diya therefore becomes an expression of harmony between nature, the cosmos and the human spirit.

The Science of the Flame and the Yogic Connection

The spiritual importance of the flame also finds an interesting connection with meditation and the workings of the human mind.

In yogic practice, Trataka is a traditional concentration technique in which practitioners gaze steadily at a fixed point, often the flame of a lamp. The practice is described in Hatha Yoga traditions as a method of developing concentration and mental steadiness.

Observing a steady flame encourages the mind to withdraw from distractions and focus on a single point. With regular and appropriate practice, it may help improve attention and cultivate a sense of calm.

The flame is also symbolically associated with Manipura Chakra, the energy centre located around the solar plexus. In yogic philosophy, this chakra is connected with willpower, confidence and transformation.

From a scientific perspective, a burning diya produces visible light through the combustion of its fuel. Its gentle illumination can create a peaceful atmosphere, while the act of focusing on the flame may support relaxation and mindfulness.

Although traditional spiritual interpretations and modern scientific explanations belong to different frameworks, both offer interesting ways of understanding why the lamp has remained such a powerful symbol of contemplation.

Light Over Darkness: The Deeper Philosophy

The central message of lighting a diya is the victory of light over darkness. In Hindu philosophy, darkness represents Avidya, or ignorance, while light signifies Vidya, or knowledge.

The flame also represents the triumph of Dharma over Adharma, truth over falsehood and wisdom over confusion.

This symbolism becomes especially meaningful during Diwali, celebrated on the darkest night of the lunar month of Kartik Amavasya. Millions of lamps illuminate homes, temples and public spaces, transforming darkness into a celebration of hope and renewal.

The tradition is popularly associated with the return of Lord Rama to Ayodhya after fourteen years of exile and his victory over Ravana. The lamps represent the restoration of righteousness and the return of divine order.

Thus, every diya lit during Diwali becomes a symbolic declaration that goodness and knowledge can overcome even the deepest darkness.

Different Diyas and Their Symbolic Meanings

The diversity of lamps used in Hindu rituals reflects the richness of Indian devotional traditions.

- Single-wick diya: Symbolizes concentration, unity of purpose and focused devotion.
- Two-wick diya: Often interpreted as representing harmony, duality and the balance between different aspects of life.
- Four-wick diya: Commonly associated with completeness, auspiciousness and prosperity in all directions.
- Five-wick diya: Represents the five elements and is frequently used during elaborate aarti ceremonies.

The choice of fuel also carries traditional symbolism. Ghee lamps are generally considered especially auspicious in many Hindu worship practices and are associated with purity and devotion. Oil lamps symbolise perseverance, discipline and the continuity of spiritual practice.

Different communities and religious traditions follow their own customs regarding the number, placement and direction of lamps.

Lighting the Lamp of Inner Awareness

The diya also offers a powerful lesson in spiritual psychology. Its flame can be understood as the inner fire of awareness that gradually burns away ego, ignorance and negative tendencies.

A beautiful reference appears in the Bhagavad Gita (10.11), where Lord Krishna explains that he dispels the darkness born of ignorance through the luminous lamp of knowledge within the hearts of devotees.

This image of the lamp of knowledge captures the deeper purpose of spiritual practice. True illumination is not simply about lighting an external space; it is about awakening the understanding that enables individuals to recognise their true nature.

The diya therefore becomes a symbol of self-realisation, reminding us to overcome anger, greed, jealousy and arrogance through wisdom and conscious action.

Cleaning for Diwali: The sacred tradition of purification, prosperity

From scrubbing floors and decluttering cupboards to decorating doorways with rangolis and diyas, pre-Diwali cleaning is much more than a household ritual. Rooted in Hindu philosophy, this age-old tradition symbolises the removal of negativity, the purification of the mind and the welcoming of Goddess Lakshmi, prosperity and positive beginnings.

Every year, as Diwali approaches, a familiar rhythm fills Indian homes. The sound of sweeping, scrubbing, dusting and polishing becomes part of the festive atmosphere. Cupboards are emptied, walls are repainted, windows are washed and old belongings are sorted. From city apartments to traditional village homes, every corner receives attention as families prepare to welcome the festival of lights. Yet, beneath this annual ritual lies a deeper spiritual significance. Cleaning before Diwali is not simply about physical tidiness; it represents purification, renewal and the readiness to welcome auspiciousness. It reflects an age-old belief that a clean and harmonious environment encourages inner peace and creates a positive atmosphere for spiritual growth.

As families prepare their homes for Goddess Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, they also symbolically prepare their minds and hearts for new beginnings.



The Spiritual Roots of Cleanliness

Cleanliness, known as Shaucha in Sanskrit, occupies an important place in Hindu philosophy. It extends beyond physical hygiene to include purity of thoughts, intentions and actions.

In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Shaucha is identified as one of the five Niyamas, or personal observances, essential to yogic discipline. The Bhagavad Gita also recognizes purity as an important divine quality. From this perspective, cleaning the home before Diwali becomes an expression of spiritual discipline. It encourages individuals to cultivate order, simplicity and mindfulness while preparing their surroundings for the sacred celebrations.

The concept of the three Gunas offers another interpretation. Sattva represents purity, harmony and clarity, while Tamas is associated with inertia, darkness and ignorance. A clean, organized environment is traditionally considered conducive to cultivating Sattvic qualities. Thus, Diwali preparations begin with cleansing because illumination is not merely about lighting lamps; it is also about creating an atmosphere in which peace, wisdom and positivity can flourish.

Removing the Inner Dust: The Symbolism of Decluttering

The act of sweeping and scrubbing carries a beautiful symbolic meaning. Just as dust accumulates in neglected corners, negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, greed and resentment can gradually settle within the human mind.

Pre-Diwali cleaning offers an opportunity to reflect on these inner impurities and consciously let them go.

Sorting through old belongings, removing unnecessary objects and organizing neglected spaces can also create a sense of emotional release. It encourages people to reconsider their attachment to material possessions and distinguish between what is genuinely valuable and what has simply accumulated over time.

This practice resonates with the Hindu principle of Aparigraha, or non-possessiveness. It encourages people to avoid excessive accumulation and develop a healthier relationship with material possessions.

In this sense, discarding unnecessary belongings becomes a symbolic reminder that new beginnings often require letting go of the past.

Welcoming Goddess Lakshmi: Cleanliness and Prosperity

One of the strongest associations of pre-Diwali cleaning is with Goddess Lakshmi, who is worshipped on the main Diwali night. In Hindu tradition, Lakshmi represents wealth, prosperity, beauty, abundance and auspiciousness. Devotees believe that she favours homes that are clean, welcoming and filled with positive energy.

This belief explains why families pay special attention to entrances, courtyards, prayer rooms and living spaces before Lakshmi Puja.

Doorways are decorated with rangolis, fresh flowers and mango-leaf torans. Lamps are placed near entrances and windows, while incense and traditional fragrances create a devotional atmosphere.

Many households illuminate their entrances during the evening, symbolically welcoming the goddess and inviting prosperity into their lives.

The deeper message is that prosperity should always be accompanied by discipline, cleanliness, gratitude and responsible living.

The Psychology Behind the Ritual

Interestingly, modern psychology offers another perspective on this traditional practice. Our surroundings can influence our emotional well-being, concentration and everyday behaviour.

Cluttered spaces may contribute to distraction and mental overload, while clean and organised surroundings can make daily activities easier and create a greater sense of calm.

The process of cleaning can also be therapeutic. Sorting belongings, arranging cupboards and refreshing living spaces provide a sense of accomplishment and control.

Pre-Diwali cleaning therefore becomes an opportunity for both physical and mental renewal. It encourages families to work together, reconnect with their homes and create an environment that feels welcoming and peaceful.

Its timing is also practical. Diwali arrives after the monsoon season, when dampness, accumulated dust and household wear may require attention. Cleaning and repairing homes helps prepare them for the coming winter months.

The tradition of cleaning and preparing homes before Diwali is observed across India, although customs differ from region to region.

- North India: Families begin cleaning weeks in advance. Homes are painted, furniture polished, silverware cleaned and courtyards decorated with colorful rangolis and diyas. Special attention is given to the prayer room in preparation for Lakshmi Puja.
- Gujarat and Rajasthan: Along with household cleaning, business communities organise their workplaces and prepare for the new financial year. Account books are worshipped during Chopda Pujan, seeking blessings for prosperity and success.
- South India: Deepavali preparations include cleaning and decorating homes, arranging traditional oil baths and preparing festive delicacies. Mango leaves, flowers and lamps add to the auspicious atmosphere.
- Bengal: Homes and temples are cleaned and decorated for Kali Puja, which coincides with Diwali. The celebrations honour Goddess Kali and symbolise the destruction of ignorance and negative forces.

Despite regional differences, the underlying sentiment remains the same: cleanliness and preparation are expressions of devotion, gratitude and renewal.

Beyond Cleaning: Letting Go of Emotional Clutter

Perhaps the most meaningful dimension of Diwali cleaning lies in extending the process beyond physical surroundings.

Just as families discard broken objects and unused belongings, the festival offers an opportunity to release emotional burdens. Unresolved disagreements, resentment, unnecessary worries and past disappointments can weigh heavily on relationships.

Diwali provides a beautiful occasion to reconnect with loved ones, seek forgiveness, express gratitude and begin afresh.

The spirit of renewal can also inspire acts of charity and kindness. Donating usable clothes, helping those in need and supporting local artisans extend the meaning of cleansing beyond individual households and into the wider community.

From Outer Cleanliness to Inner Illumination

Ultimately, pre-Diwali cleaning is not about achieving a perfectly decorated home. It is about preparation: preparing the surroundings for celebration, the mind for clarity and the heart for positivity. As families polish brass lamps, arrange flowers, create rangolis and illuminate their homes, they participate in a tradition that connects everyday actions with deeper spiritual values.

The message is simple yet profound: before welcoming light into our homes, we must make room for it within ourselves.

The true beauty of Diwali lies not merely in spotless homes and sparkling decorations, but in purified thoughts, harmonious relationships and hearts ready to welcome the light of goodness.

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Diwali across the world: Celebrating light, heritage and humanity

From the illuminated streets of India to the vibrant celebrations of Singapore, Nepal, Mauritius, the United Kingdom and the United States, Diwali has travelled far beyond its homeland. Today, the festival of lights is a global celebration of cultural identity, faith, family and togetherness, bringing communities across continents together through the timeless message of light over darkness and hope over despair.

As autumn evenings descend and the first lamps begin to glow, millions of people across the world prepare to celebrate Diwali, one of the most cherished festivals of Indian culture. Homes sparkle with colorful lights, doorways bloom with intricate rangolis, the fragrance of traditional sweets fills the air, and families come together to celebrate an occasion deeply rooted in faith, heritage and happiness.

Once primarily associated with the Indian subcontinent, Diwali has gradually crossed geographical boundaries to become an internationally recognised cultural celebration. Carried across oceans by generations of Indian migrants, traders and communities, the festival has found a home in countries far removed from its birthplace.

From grand celebrations in Leicester and Singapore to spectacular illuminations in Mauritius, Nepal, Fiji and the United States, Diwali reflects the enduring influence of Indian traditions on the global cultural landscape.

Yet, despite differences in customs, languages and local practices, its central message remains universal: the triumph of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance and light over darkness.

From an Indian Festival to a Global Celebration

The global journey of Diwali is closely connected with the movement of Indian communities across the world. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Indians migrated to different parts of Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, taking their religious beliefs, festivals, food and cultural traditions with them.

Over generations, these communities preserved Diwali as an important link with their ancestral heritage. They established temples, cultural associations and community organisations where traditional celebrations could continue.

As Indian communities grew internationally, Diwali gradually became more visible in public life. Festivals moved beyond homes and temples into city squares, cultural centres, shopping districts and public institutions.

Today, Diwali celebrations are attended not only by Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and other communities who traditionally observe the festival but also by people from different cultural backgrounds who participate in its festivities.

This transformation has made Diwali a symbol of cultural exchange and shared humanity.







Nepal: Tihar, the Festival of Lights and Relationships

In Nepal, Diwali is celebrated as Tihar, a five-day festival that shares many similarities with India's Diwali but has its own distinctive traditions.

Tihar honors different relationships between humans, animals and the divine. Each day carries a special significance.

Kaag Tihar honours crows, Kukur Tihar celebrates dogs, and Gai Tihar is dedicated to cows. On Govardhan Puja or Goru Tihar, oxen are worshipped for their contribution to agricultural life. The final day, Bhai Tika, celebrates the bond between brothers and sisters.

Homes are decorated with oil lamps, colorful electric lights and marigold garlands. Beautiful rangoli-like designs known as mandalas adorn entrances, while groups of children and young people go from house to house singing traditional Deusi and Bhailo songs.

Tihar is a beautiful expression of gratitude, compassion and family affection, demonstrating how the spirit of Diwali adapts to local cultural traditions.

Singapore: A Spectacular Festival in Little India

In Singapore, Deepavali is one of the most prominent cultural festivals, celebrated with extraordinary enthusiasm by the Indian community.

The heart of the festivities is Little India, where streets are transformed into dazzling displays of colorful arches, decorative lights and traditional motifs. Serangoon Road becomes a vibrant centre of celebration, attracting residents and visitors from across the city. The Deepavali bazaars offer everything from traditional Indian clothing and jewelery to sweets, savories, flowers and decorative items. Temples are illuminated, families exchange gifts, and special prayers are organized.

Singapore's celebrations also highlight the multicultural character of the country. People from different ethnic and religious backgrounds visit Little India to experience the food, music, shopping and festive atmosphere.

Here, Diwali becomes more than a religious occasion; it is an important celebration of multicultural harmony and cultural identity.

Malaysia: Deepavali and the Spirit of Togetherness

Malaysia celebrates Deepavali with great enthusiasm, particularly among its sizeable Indian-origin population.

The festival is a public holiday in most parts of the country, and preparations begin days in advance. Homes are cleaned and decorated, colorful kolams are created at entrances, and families prepare traditional delicacies.

One of the most significant customs is the early-morning oil bath, followed by prayers at home or visits to Hindu temples. New clothes are worn, relatives exchange greetings and traditional sweets are shared.

Kuala Lumpur's Brickfields, popularly known as Little India, becomes a major attraction during the festive season. Markets brim with colorful garments, jewelery, flowers and decorative items.

The Malaysian celebration reflects the successful preservation of Indian heritage within a diverse national culture.

Mauritius: Diwali as a Celebration of Cultural Identity

In Mauritius, Diwali holds special

Happy Diwali

Wishing you a sparkling Diwali filled with peace, prosperity, and happiness.



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20TH YEAR

importance because of the island's strong Indian cultural heritage.

Descendants of Indian indentured labourers who arrived during the nineteenth century have preserved many traditions brought from the subcontinent. Diwali is among the most cherished of these celebrations.

As the festival approaches, homes are thoroughly cleaned and decorated with rows of diyas, electric lights and colorful rangolis. Families prepare sweets such as ladoos and barfis, exchange gifts and gather for prayers.

The sight of illuminated houses across towns and villages creates a beautiful festive landscape.

Diwali in Mauritius is also a celebration of cultural continuity. It reminds younger generations of their ancestral roots while reinforcing the island's multicultural identity.

United Kingdom: Leicester's Grand Diwali Celebrations

The United Kingdom is home to one of the world's most celebrated Diwali festivals, particularly in Leicester, where the occasion attracts thousands of people every year.

Belgrave Road, popularly known as the Golden Mile, becomes the centre of the celebrations. Streets are illuminated with spectacular decorations, while cultural performances, music, dance and community gatherings create an atmosphere of extraordinary excitement.

The annual Diwali lights switch-on attracts large crowds, with families gathering to witness the illuminated streets and participate in the festivities.

Temples and community organizations arrange prayers, cultural programs and charitable activities. Indian restaurants and sweet shops become especially busy as people enjoy traditional festive delicacies.

London, Birmingham and other British cities also organize Diwali celebrations, bringing together diverse communities.

For the Indian diaspora, these celebrations represent a connection with home. For others, they offer an opportunity to discover Indian traditions and participate in a festival that celebrates hope, happiness and togetherness.

United States and Canada: Diwali Goes Mainstream

In North America, Diwali has grown from a community-centered religious festival into a major cultural celebration.

Across the United States, Indian associations, temples, universities and cultural organisations arrange Diwali gatherings featuring classical dance, music, food festivals and traditional performances.

New York, New Jersey, California, Texas and other regions with significant Indian communities witness large-scale celebrations. Public Diwali events bring together people from different backgrounds through cultural programs and festive markets.

Schools and educational institutions increasingly organize activities that introduce students to the festival's history and significance.


New York


United Kingdom


Singapore

In Canada, cities such as Toronto, Brampton and Vancouver host community celebrations, while homes and temples are decorated with lamps and flowers.

The growing popularity of Diwali in North America reflects the influence of the Indian diaspora and the increasing appreciation of India's cultural traditions.

Fiji and the Caribbean: Preserving Traditions Across Generations

In Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname, Diwali has deep historical connections with Indian migration.

Indian communities in these regions have preserved their cultural and religious practices across generations, making Diwali an important part of their collective identity.

In Fiji, families celebrate with prayers, sweets, lamps and colorful decorations. Cultural programs and community gatherings reinforce the importance of Indian heritage.

In Trinidad and Tobago, Diwali is celebrated on a particularly grand scale. The national Diwali Nagar celebrations feature cultural performances, traditional food, devotional music and illuminated displays. The festival is a significant part of the country's multicultural calendar.

In Guyana and Suriname, Hindu families celebrate with traditional Lakshmi Puja, lighting rows of diyas and sharing festive meals.

These celebrations demonstrate the remarkable ability of cultural traditions to survive and flourish even after generations of geographical separation.

The Universal Message Behind the Lights

Although Diwali celebrations differ across countries, their deeper significance remains remarkably consistent.

The lighting of diyas symbolizes the victory of light over darkness. Cleaning homes represents purification and renewal, while prayers express gratitude and hope for prosperity.

The exchange of sweets and gifts strengthens relationships, and community gatherings encourage friendship and generosity.

For Hindus, Diwali is associated with different religious traditions, including Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya and the worship of Goddess Lakshmi. For Jains, it commemorates Lord Mahavira's attainment of Nirvana, while Sikhs observe Bandi Chhor Divas, celebrating the release of Guru Hargobind Sahib and other prisoners.

These diverse traditions enrich the festival's global character.

In an increasingly interconnected world, Diwali also offers an opportunity to promote environmental responsibility. Eco-friendly decorations, traditional clay lamps, reduced firecracker use and charitable initiatives are encouraging more thoughtful celebrations.

One Festival, One World

Diwali's journey across continents is a remarkable story of migration, cultural preservation and shared celebration. From the traditional courtyards of India to the illuminated streets of Singapore, Leicester and Mauritius, the festival continues to bring people together through its timeless message.

For those living far from their ancestral homeland, every diya carries memories of family, childhood and belonging. For younger generations, Diwali offers a meaningful connection with their cultural roots. And for people discovering the festival for the first time, it provides a glimpse into India's rich spiritual and cultural heritage.

Ultimately, Diwali belongs not only to those who celebrate it through religious rituals but also to everyone who embraces its message of hope, kindness, compassion and renewal.

As millions of lamps illuminate homes and public spaces around the world, they remind us of a beautiful truth: light has no language, heritage has no boundaries, and humanity shines brightest when people come together.


Happy Diwali
& Bandi Chhod Diwas
Kuldeep Singh Khalsa, Former President
Gurdwara Baba Makhan Shah Lobana Sikh Center
Phone: 917-687-5560


Happy Diwali
Wishing you and your family
a Bright, Happy and
Prosperous Diwali.
Alicia, Harinder (Harry),
Manjeet, Ajooni

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20TH YEAR

Bandi Chhor Divas: The Sikh festival of freedom, faith and light

CELEBRATED ALONGSIDE DIWALI, BANDI CHHOR DIVAS HOLDS A SPECIAL PLACE IN SIKH HISTORY AND SPIRITUALITY. COMMEMORATING THE RELEASE OF GURU HARGOBIND SAHIB JI FROM IMPRISONMENT AT GWALIOR FORT, THE FESTIVAL CELEBRATES FREEDOM, COMPASSION, COURAGE AND THE TRIUMPH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. AS THE GOLDEN TEMPLE ILLUMINATES THE NIGHT SKY WITH THOUSANDS OF LIGHTS, THE OCCASION REMINDS HUMANITY THAT TRUE FREEDOM IS MEANINGFUL ONLY WHEN IT EXTENDS TO OTHERS.

As the autumn evening settles over Punjab and the first lamps begin to glow, one of the most significant celebrations in Sikh history unfolds. Known as Bandi Chhor Divas, the festival marks a defining moment of courage, compassion and spiritual leadership in the life of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, the sixth Sikh Guru.

Celebrated on the same day as Diwali, Bandi Chhor Divas commemorates the Guru's release from imprisonment at Gwalior Fort in 1619, along with 52 Hindu kings who had been held captive. Rather than accepting his freedom alone, the Guru ensured that the imprisoned rulers were also released.

The occasion is therefore much more than a festival of lights. It is a celebration of liberation, justice, selflessness and the responsibility to stand up for the freedom of others.





Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji and the 52 Kings

The origins of Bandi Chhor Divas take us back to the early seventeenth century, during the reign of Mughal Emperor Jahangir.

Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji, who became the sixth Sikh Guru in 1606 following the martyrdom of his father, Guru Arjan Dev Ji, introduced an important dimension to Sikh leadership. He emphasized the need to combine spiritual devotion with the courage to defend justice and protect the oppressed.

This philosophy found expression in the concept of Miri-Piri, represented by two swords. Piri symbolized spiritual authority, while Miri represented temporal responsibility. Together, they expressed the Sikh belief that spirituality and social responsibility must go hand in hand.

According to Sikh historical tradition, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji was imprisoned at Gwalior Fort by Emperor Jahangir. During his imprisonment, he encountered 52 Hindu rulers who were also being held captive.

When the Guru's release was eventually ordered, he refused to leave while the other prisoners remained behind.

According to the popular account, the Guru agreed to leave only if the imprisoned rulers could accompany him. A condition was reportedly imposed that only those who could hold on to his specially designed robe could leave with him.

The Guru arranged for a robe with 52 tassels, allowing each king to hold one. As he walked out of the fort, all 52 rulers walked alongside him, gaining their freedom.

This remarkable episode earned him the title Bandi Chhor, meaning the Liberator of Prisoners.

The story remains one of the most powerful examples of selflessness in Sikh history. The Guru did not consider personal freedom complete while others continued to suffer.

The Return to Amritsar: A City Illuminated with Joy

The Guru's arrival in Amritsar coincided with the Diwali celebrations of 1619. The Sikh community welcomed him with immense happiness and devotion.

The Harmandir Sahib, popularly known as the Golden Temple, was illuminated with lamps to celebrate his return. The city glowed with light, creating a moment that became deeply associated with Bandi Chhor Divas.

Over the centuries, the tradition of illuminating the Golden Temple has become one of the most recognisable features of the festival.

Today, thousands of devotees gather at Sri Harmandir Sahib to witness its breathtaking illumination. The reflection of the golden shrine in the sacred Amrit Sarovar, surrounded by countless lights, creates an atmosphere of extraordinary spiritual beauty.

The celebrations remind devotees of the historic return of the Guru and the timeless message of freedom that the occasion represents.

The Spiritual Significance: Freedom Beyond Imprisonment

At its heart, Bandi Chhor Divas represents a much deeper understanding of freedom.

The word Bandi refers to a prisoner or captive, while Chhor means one who releases or liberates. Together, the words describe the Guru's role as the liberator of those held in captivity.

However, Sikh philosophy also encourages people to look beyond physical imprisonment. Human beings can become prisoners of ego, greed, hatred, fear and attachment.

The teachings of the Sikh Gurus emphasise liberation through remembrance of the Divine, truthful living, humility and selfless service.

The Guru's decision to secure the freedom of the 52 kings offers another important lesson: personal happiness should not come at the expense of others.

True leadership is demonstrated through compassion, and true freedom is incomplete when others remain oppressed.

These values make Bandi Chhor Divas relevant far beyond its historical setting.

How Bandi Chhor Divas Is Celebrated

Bandi Chhor Divas is observed with great devotion across Punjab and Sikh communities throughout the world. The celebrations combine religious observances, community participation and festive illumination.

Gurudwara Decorations and Illumination

Gurdwaras are beautifully decorated with flowers, lights and lamps. Sri Harmandir Sahib becomes the centre of celebrations, with its golden architecture illuminated against the night sky.

Devotees gather to experience the spiritual atmosphere and remember the historic liberation of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji.

Prayers and Gurbani Kirtan

Special prayers, recitations of Gurbani and devotional kirtan are organized in gurdwaras. The hymns create an atmosphere of reflection and devotion, allowing the Sikh community to reconnect with the teachings of the Gurus.

Nagar Kirtans and Community Gatherings

In many places, Nagar Kirtans and religious processions are organized. Devotees participate in singing hymns, listening to spiritual discourses and celebrating the festival together.

Langar and Seva

One of the most meaningful aspects of the celebration is the tradition of Langar, the free community kitchen established in Sikh religious practice.

Volunteers prepare and serve meals to everyone, irrespective of religion, caste, background or economic status.

The spirit of Seva, or selfless service, is central to Sikh identity. During Bandi Chhor Divas, it becomes a living expression of the Guru's message of equality, generosity and compassion.

Fireworks and Festive Lights

In many communities, the celebrations also include fireworks and elaborate lighting arrangements. Families visit gurdwaras, exchange greetings and share festive meals.

The illumination of religious spaces symbolizes the victory of spiritual wisdom over ignorance and the arrival of hope after hardship.

Bandi Chhor Divas and Diwali: Shared Light, Distinct Histories

Although Bandi Chhor Divas is celebrated alongside Diwali, the two occasions have distinct religious and historical significance.

Diwali, particularly in Hindu traditions, is associated with different legends, including Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya and the worship of Goddess Lakshmi. For Sikhs, Bandi Chhor Divas commemorates Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji's release and his decision to secure the freedom of the 52 imprisoned rulers.

Both celebrations, however, share the symbolism of light, hope, renewal and the triumph of righteousness.

This shared festive atmosphere also reflects the cultural richness of India, where different religious traditions coexist and contribute to the country's collective heritage.

The Global Celebration: Carrying the Message Across Borders

With Sikh communities spread across the world, Bandi Chhor Divas is now celebrated internationally.

Gurdwaras in the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, Australia and other countries organize special prayers, kirtan programs, community meals and illuminated celebrations.







For Sikh families living away from Punjab, the festival provides an opportunity to preserve their religious identity and pass historical traditions to younger generations.

The celebrations also introduce people from other communities to Sikh history and philosophy, particularly the principles of equality, courage, justice and service.

The Contemporary Relevance: A Message for Humanity

In today's world, where societies continue to struggle with inequality, discrimination, conflict and injustice, the story of Bandi Chhor Divas carries a powerful message.

Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji's liberation of the 52 kings reminds us that freedom should never be viewed as an individual privilege alone. It carries a responsibility towards those who remain vulnerable or oppressed.

The festival encourages us to practice compassion, defend human dignity, respect differences and extend a helping hand to those in need.

Its emphasis on selfless service also reminds us that meaningful change often begins with small acts of kindness.

Whether through feeding the hungry, helping disadvantaged communities, supporting education or standing up against injustice, the spirit of Bandi Chhor Divas can find expression in everyday life.

The Eternal Light of Freedom

As thousands of lamps illuminate the Golden Temple and the sacred waters of Amritsar shimmer with golden reflections, Bandi Chhor Divas brings alive a remarkable chapter of Sikh history. It celebrates a Guru who chose collective freedom over personal comfort, compassion over indifference and justice over privilege.

More than four centuries after the historic event, the festival continues to inspire generations with its message of courage, humility and humanity.

The light of Bandi Chhor Divas is not confined to illuminated gurdwaras or festive celebrations. It shines through every act of kindness, every effort to protect human dignity and every gesture that helps someone break free from hardship.

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20TH YEAR



Stunt coordinator Geeta Tandon alleges disrespect on Anil Kapoor's show

Stunt coordinator and performer Geeta Tandon has spoken out about her experience on the sets of Anil Kapoor-hosted show India Ke Top 1%, alleging that she and her son were made to wait for nearly nine hours without proper communication from the production team. She also claimed that a production manager responded dismissively when she questioned the delay.

In an eight-slide post shared on social media, Geeta said she was invited as a guest on the show along with her son. She agreed to appear without payment, hoping the appearance would give her some visibility. However, she alleged that the experience left her feeling disrespected.

Geeta said she reached the set at 12.30 pm and was told that her segment would be filmed in a few hours. The wait, she claimed, stretched through the day, with little communication from the team. She and her son were made to sit in a tent and were not given clear updates about when they would be called.

"I gave up a day's work and even called my son back from Goa specifically for the shoot," she wrote, adding that she repeatedly asked the team for updates but was only told that they would get back to her.

Geeta said she eventually confronted the production team over the delay and the way they had been treated. According to her post, the production manager, Jaydeep, responded, "If they want to leave, let them leave. But they can't leave without signing."

Questioning why she and her son were not allowed to leave without signing a document, Geeta said she was not willing to accept the attitude. She added that they finally left the set at 9.15 pm, after spending nearly nine hours there.

Farah Khan responded to Geeta's post and apologised for what had happened. She said she had not known that Geeta was waiting on the set, as she was shooting for the second episode in the evening.

"Geetaji apologies.. I had no idea you were there as I was shooting for the 2nd episode in the evening.. otherwise would have made you sit in my van. As would Anil if he knew.. we have tremendous respect for you and your hard work," Farah wrote.

Koffee with Karan 9: Ibrahim Ali Khan calls Kareena Kapoor the 'coolest stepmother'

Saif Ali Khan and Kareena Kapoor recently appeared on Koffee with Karan 9, where they opened up about their family dynamics and bond with their children. During the episode, Ibrahim Ali Khan called Kareena the coolest stepmother and thanked her for always being there for him. Kareena also spoke about Taimur and Jeh's loving bond with their elder siblings, Sara and Ibrahim.

The couple received special video messages from Sara Ali Khan and Ibrahim Ali Khan. Addressing the couple, Ibrahim said, "Hello Abba and Bebo.... Dad, you're my role model. My hero. But it's not who you are but it's more of what you have been through. High highs and then the low lows. Heart attack. Thumb injury. Chaaku waaku (knife) and all. And that's why Dad, you're my hero. And you always will be. And Bebo, I want you to know you are the coolest stepmother. You've always been there. So, I want to thank you. And lots of love to you, of course. Who should win the hamper? Dad, I think."

Sara Ali Khan also sent a warm message, celebrating her father's personality while expressing her admiration for Kareena's iconic screen presence.

Speaking about Kareena's bond with Sara and Ibrahim, Saif said, "It's been amazing. Everyone has been wonderful and understanding. Of course, I credit Kareena, and these things go both ways. K makes it easy and is wonderful with Sara and Ibrahim, and they also reciprocate. Ibrahim has a lovely equation with Tim and Jeh."

Adding to Saif's comments, Kareena said, "Tim and Jeh also love Ibrahim. They really look after him and make



nice efforts."

For the uninitiated, Saif and Kareena's love story blossomed on the sets of Tashan, which also starred Akshay Kumar and Anil Kapoor.

The two eventually fell in love while filming the action entertainer and went on to become one of Bollywood's most celebrated couples. They also worked together in films such as Omkara, Kurbaan and Agent Vinod. However, there have also been instances when Kareena turned down projects that could have featured her alongside Saif. To note, Kareena was the first choice for Kal Ho Naa Ho and Race.

Saif and Kareena eventually tied the knot in October 2012. The couple are now parents to two sons, Taimur Ali Khan and Jehangir Ali Khan.

Major 'Love Is Blind' Season 11 spoiler leaks days before reunion

Fans of Netflix's hit dating reality series Love Is Blind are in for another round of shocking revelations as major spoilers from the Season 11 reunion have surfaced just days before its official release. From an unexpected marriage breakdown to failed post-show romances and alleged cheating revelations, the latest leaks suggest that the reunion could deliver some of the season's most explosive moments.

The Boston-based eleventh season has already delivered plenty of relationship drama, but reports emerging ahead of the reunion indicate that several cast members have experienced significant changes in their love lives since filming wrapped.

The Season 11 reunion is scheduled to premiere on Sunday, November 8, 2026, at 9 p.m. ET on Netflix, with Nick and Vanessa Lachey returning as hosts.

One of the biggest revelations involves Sarah Williams and John Shannon, who were the only couple to get married during the Season 11 finale.

Despite appearing to have found lasting love at the altar, reports suggest that their marriage eventually fell apart. According to spoilers shared by reality TV personality Rikkii Wise, also known as StorytimeWithRikkii, the couple had reportedly separated by the time the reunion was filmed.

The allegations surrounding their breakup are particularly controversial. Reports claim that John allegedly exchanged explicit messages with an escort while out with other cast members, contributing to the couple's separation.

The reunion trailer has further fuelled speculation,



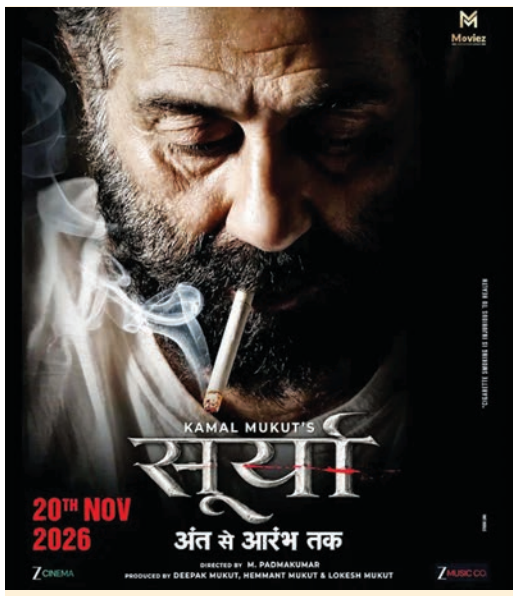
featuring host Nick Lachey asking someone, "Did you cheat on your wife?"

Although the trailer does not explicitly identify the person being questioned, viewers have speculated that the question could be directed at John, given that he was the only contestant to marry during the season.

These claims have not yet been independently confirmed, and viewers will have to wait for the reunion to hear the cast members' accounts.

Another major spoiler concerns Michaella Giorgio and Matt Waldrip, the season's beekeeper.

After ending her engagement to Rob Feeley, Michaella reportedly explored a romantic connection with Matt after filming concluded. However, the relationship allegedly did not develop into anything lasting.



Sunny Deol's Suryaa gets relief as Delhi HC rejects PIL seeking stay on release

The Delhi High Court has refused to entertain a PIL seeking a stay on the release of Sunny Deol-starrer upcoming Hindi film Suryaa: Ant Se Aarambh Tak, scheduled to release in theatres on November 20.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Nitin Wasudeo Sambre and Justice Sanjay Sharma said the court was not inclined to entertain the public interest litigation (PIL) as the issue has already been raised by the doctor fraternity in another writ petition which is pending before a single judge.

On November 2, the single judge issued notice to the authorities and asked them to respond to the petition alleging that the movie portrays doctors in private hospitals as corrupt and that it encourages violence against healthcare professionals.

It is listed for hearing on November 16.

The division bench said even if these petitioners are also doctors, "we see no reason for multiplicity of proceedings".

The court said the petitioners may join the proceedings before the single judge and also granted them liberty to pursue their representation before the authorities.

The PIL was filed by Dr Nachiketa Bhatia and Dr Dhruv Chauhan seeking to stay the release of the movie on the ground that its official trailer depicts physical violence against medical practitioners as heroic and unfairly generalises corruption in the healthcare profession.

The petitioners said the movie threatens public law and order and sought a direction to the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) to examine and modify or delete allegedly objectionable scenes or dialogues from the film.

On being asked by the bench as to why it should entertain the plea when a similar petition is already pending before another bench of the high court, the petitioners' counsel said the issue is sensitive and the scope in a PIL is more as compared to a writ petition.

Janhvi is still numb from cold but all warm and fuzzy from what she shot

Bollywood actress Janhvi Kapoor has offered fans a glimpse into her latest professional assignment, sharing a series of pictures from a shoot in a breathtaking snow-covered location. While the actress appeared to be enjoying the picturesque surroundings, she also revealed that the freezing weather had left her physically numb. However, the experience of shooting for the project had made her feel equally excited and happy.

Janhvi shared the photographs on Instagram on Wednesday, November 4, giving followers a peek into her recent shoot. Although she did not disclose the location or reveal what she was filming, her caption suggested that the experience had been particularly special.

The actress's post has attracted attention because of its combination of stunning winter scenery and her cheerful reaction to the shoot.

Along with the pictures, Janhvi shared a playful caption expressing her disbelief and happiness about the experience.

She wrote, “Pinch me. No but really you could pinch me as hard as u want and I wouldn’t feel a thing because I’m still numb from the cold but all warm and fuzzy from what we shot.”

Her words captured the contrast between the freezing conditions at the shooting location and the excitement she felt about the work she had completed.

The actress did not share further details about the project, leaving fans curious about what she has been working on. She also kept the exact location under wraps, making the snowy photographs the main highlight of her social media update.

The photographs shared by Janhvi feature her posing against a striking mountainous landscape covered in snow. The natural surroundings give the pictures a distinctly wintery atmosphere.

Although the actress did not identify the location, the terrain appears to feature snow-covered peaks and relatively sparse vegetation. The location has not been officially confirmed, so it would be premature to identify it as a particular hill station or shooting destination.

Janhvi's caption also suggests that the shoot involved working in particularly cold conditions. Despite the discomfort, she seemed delighted with the experience and what the team had managed to capture.



The actress frequently shares glimpses of her professional assignments and personal moments with followers. This latest post offers another look at her life behind the scenes, although the details of the project remain undisclosed.

Ramayana Part 2 confirmed for Diwali 2028 release, trilogy on cards

Producer Namit Malhotra hasn't ruled out the possibility of turning Ramayana into a trilogy after all. While the makers settled on a two-part format for Nitesh Tiwari's ambitious retelling of the epic, the plan could change depending on how audiences respond to the first film. Malhotra has also confirmed that the second instalment, originally scheduled for 2027, will now arrive in theatres during Diwali 2028, giving the team another year to bring the story to the screen.

For those who've already watched the first instalment of the epic in theatres, the end credits confirmed that the second part will arrive the year after next.

In an interview with E! ahead of the first film's release, Malhotra said, "So the idea was, now that we’ve got so much excitement that the world has had, we want to take a little bit more time to make sure that when we present the grand finale, we have a little bit more time to do what we did on Part One."

He continued, "That extra year is what I genuinely believe we need to do justice for a film of this size. When you see part 2 coming in, that will be a whole other story. We didn’t want to do a rush job or get ahead of ourselves. We want to deliver the finale in the most grand way that it deserves."



Malhotra said the audience's response to Part 1 would play a major role in deciding whether there's more to explore. The producer also pointed out that the team has already created two versions of the first film, with different running times and approaches for Indian and international audiences. One of these was written specifically for English-speaking viewers, with changes to how the story is presented.

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20TH YEAR



Robert Downey Jr, Pedro Pascal swap Avengers: Doomsday roles for Halloween

Actors Robert Downey Jr and Pedro Pascal traded their Marvel identities for Halloween, offering fans a playful preview of the rivalry at the heart of Avengers: Doomsday. Downey stepped into Pascal's blue Fantastic Four suit as Mister Fantastic, while Pascal became Doctor Doom in a hooded green sweatshirt, silver mask and cloak.

The role reversal comes before the film reaches Indian cinemas on December 17, a day ahead of its US release. Downey and Chris Evans recently announced the Indian release in a Diwali video, confirming that the film will be available in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

Downey and Pascal shared photographs and videos taken on a street at night. Their light-hearted poses gave the outing a casual trick-or-treat feel, even as the costumes pointed to their characters' coming confrontation.In Avengers: Doomsday, Downey will play Victor von Doom, while Pascal will appear as Reed Richards, also known as Mister Fantastic. Their characters will be rivals as Marvel's heroes and villains clash in the film.

Johnny Depp is open to returning as Jack Sparrow in Pirates of the Caribbean 6

Hollywood actor Johnny Depp says he is open to reprising his role as Jack Sparrow in another Pirates of the Caribbean film and is always up for collaborating with producer Jerry Bruckheimer on any project.

Depp is currently promoting his film Ebenezer, which will release on November 13 and features the actor alongside Ian McKellen, Rupert Grint and Andrea Riseborough among others.

In a recent interview with the entertainment news outlet Entertainment Tonight, the actor was asked about his return to the franchise. "If things are exactly where they need to be with regard to how they are going to top off the 'Pirates' franchise... the only involvement I really want to have, truly, is just to send them off on a better note," he said.

"I will go to work with Bruckheimer tomorrow for anything. Doesn't matter... if it is Jerry. We have a deep friendship," he added.

Earlier, Bruckheimer also spoke of Depp's return to the franchise. He said the script is in development. "We're talking with Johnny, we're working on a screenplay, and trying to get this done," he said at the D23 event.

The actor has appeared in five Pirates of the Caribbean films as Captain Jack Sparrow. The first film, The Curse of the Black Pearl, was released in 2003, followed by Dead Man's Chest in 2006, At World's End in 2007, On Stranger Tides in 2011, and Dead Men Tell No Tales, which was released in 2017.

Depp's role in the film series remains among the actor's most notable and even earned him an Academy Award nomination. The films revolve around the misadventures of the eccentric pirate Captain Jack Sparrow. The stories blend historical pirate lore with supernatural elements, featuring treasure, sea monsters, undead villains, and battles at sea.

The films have collectively earned over $4.5 billion globally. Dead Man's Chest and On Stranger Tides have crossed the mark of $1 billion at the global box office.



Comedian Russell Brand found guilty of rape, sexual assault

Russell Brand has been convicted of rape and sexual assault, and is now expected to face a substantial prison sentence.

A jury found the entertainer guilty of one count of rape and three counts of sexual assault, following a four-week trial at Southwark Crown Court in London.

He was found not guilty of two other counts of rape, and one count of attempted indecent assault. The jury deliberated for eight-and-a-half hours.

The 51-year-old was refused bail and will spend the weekend in custody before he is due to return to the same court on Monday for sentencing.

It can now be reported that Brand is also facing further rape allegations made by two women and has already been questioned by officers in relation to the complaints. The Metropolitan Police said its investigation "remains ongoing".



During the trial, Brand faced allegations from six women spanning the decade between 1999 and 2009, when he rose to fame as one of Britain's most high-profile entertainers.

The women came to court to reveal how Brand used his immense fame to force them into sexual activity.

Brand, who told his wife Laura Brand "I love you" after entering the dock, displayed no emotion as the jury delivered its verdicts.

Afterwards he mouthed "I'm good, I'm good" to his defence counsel as he left the dock. His walk was steadily paced, and he continued to show little emotion.

The judge, Mr Justice Bennathan, told Brand to expect "a significant custodial term" after the verdicts were delivered.

The jury found Brand guilty of raping a fan after meeting her at a 2009 stand-up show at the Hammersmith Apollo.

Brand was found guilty of groping an MTV worker during a party at a Soho bar in 2004, but not guilty of going on to rape her in a toilet. He was convicted of kissing and groping a Choice FM worker after encountering her in a corridor at the Capital Radio building in 2004 or 2005.

Brand was also convicted by the jury of sexually assaulting a Channel 4 worker in 2009 when she had been forced to give him a massage.

Brand was found not guilty by the jury of raping a woman he met at a cabaret show on the fringes of the 1999 Labour Party conference in Bournemouth.

He was also cleared of trying to drag an MTV worker in to a toilet to indecently assault her in 2001.

Brand had claimed to be the victim of a media conspiracy to paint him as a sexual predator and insisted in court that consent was "more important than sex itself".

But he faced the compelling evidence of six women who accused him of crimes over the course of a decade.

Brand was also confronted with his own words from his 2007 book in which he claimed sex was a "birthright" and friends who revealed his relentless pursuit of sleeping with 5,000 women.

Mr Justice Bennathan ruled that Brand must be remanded into custody until sentencing on Monday, when he is expected to receive a lengthy prison sentence.

Putin Will Not Be Invited To Britain's G20 Summit: UK PM Andy Burnham

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

LONDON (TIP): British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said Russian President Vladimir Putin would not be invited to next year's G20 summit in Britain, The Economist newspaper reported on Thursday, Nov 5.

When asked by The Economist if Putin would be invited, Burnham said: "No."

Burnham's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in September that Washington had invited Putin to a G20 meeting in Miami in December, saying it would provide an opportunity for him to engage with President Donald Trump and other world leaders.

Russia remains a member of the G20 despite Western efforts to isolate it following its invasion of Ukraine. Leaders of host nations traditionally invite all members of the bloc to attend its annual summit.

Next year's annual G20 summit will be held in November in the city of Manchester, the centre of a region in northwestern England where Burnham was mayor.



Andy Burnham

Trump raises prospect of 'big, beautiful' Russia-Ukraine deal

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

ANKARA (TIP): US President Donald Trump said that he met with senior Russian officials in Washington on Thursday Nov 5, , raising the prospect of a "big, beautiful deal" to end the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. While speaking to reporters in the Oval Office, Trump went on to pledge that a Ukraine peace deal "might involve all of Europe".

Trump said he met with "the head person of Russia" at the White House earlier in the day, an apparent reference to Kirill Dmitriev, an envoy for Russian President Vladimir Putin. Dmitriev had come to Washington for an event with US First Lady Melania Trump. "I can't tell you what I discussed," Trump told reporters, "but I'm just telling you, there's going to be an agreement, it's going to be a big agreement, and it's going to involve more than Ukraine."

Trump's remarks on the matter came after his son-in-law and US envoy Jared Kushner said the United States, Nato, and European partners held "productive and substantive discussions" on resolving the war in Ukraine Thursday.

"Our objective is to address the security concerns of all sides through practical, mutually agreed arrangements that reduce the risk of future conflict," he wrote on X, ahead of discussions next week in Abu Dhabi involving Kyiv and Moscow.

In the past, the American president has been widely criticised by the Democrats and even some Republicans for being "too solicitous" to his Russian counterpart. When asked in the Oval Office on Thursday about the Russian attack on Ukrainian civilians, Trump insisted that Ukraine was also culpable. "The other way, they kill, too," he said.

Dmitriev and a Russian delegation were hosted by Melania Trump at the White House on Thursday. The American first lady also gathered Ukrainian officials to discuss a recent cease-fire she helped broker to evacuate a Russian-occupied Ukrainian town, Oleshky. It is pertinent to note that Dmitriev also runs Russia's flagship state investment fund, has led the Kremlin's effort to pitch business deals to the Trump administration and has sought sanctions relief for his fund in those talks. While speaking at the White House, the Russian envoy thanked the first lady for her "distinguished humanitarian role" in securing the six-day truce. He added that Putin personally gave instructions as part of the operation and sent his thanks to Melania Trump.

The head of the parliamentary faction of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's party, Davyd Arakhamia, and Ukraine's human rights ombudsman, Dmytro Lubinets, also spoke at the event. Arakhamia noted that Melania did an



US President Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally at the Salina Regional Airport, Sunday, Nov. 1, 2026, in Salina Kan. AP

"amazing job" and encouraged her to keep helping the Ukrainian people. "Definitely, we would like to ask you to keep going and to find new missions and to de-escalate as much as possible," Arakhamia said.

Iran's security chief meets Putin, delivers message from Khamenei

Russia's President Vladimir Putin has met Iran's security chief Mohsen Rezaei in Moscow to discuss regional security as diplomatic efforts gather pace to end the United States and Israel's war on Iran. During the meeting on Thursday, Rezaei also delivered a letter to Putin from Iran's Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei, according to the Iranian state broadcaster Press TV. Speaking after the meeting, Rezaei said the talks had focused on security arrangements in the region, as well as Russia's support for ending what he called the US's "aggression" against Iran. "Important regional issues were discussed with Putin and significant conversations took place regarding the post-war period and regional security arrangements," he said.

Other topics, he said, included plans to deepen energy cooperation, including building gas pipelines from Russia to Iran. Rezaei, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said Khamenei had wanted him to deliver the message to Putin as soon as possible. The trip to Moscow had been planned nearly a month earlier, he said, but was postponed due to "daily discussions about the military situation in the region".

Saudi coalition intercepts missile fired towards Medina

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

SANAA (TIP): The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis has said it intercepted a ballistic missile fired by the Iran-aligned armed group towards the Medina region, home to one of Islam's holiest cities.

The announcement on Thursday, Nov 5, came just minutes after Saudi Arabia's civil defence agency warned of potential danger in the area near the strategic port of Yanbu.

"Air defence intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by the terrorist Houthi militia toward the Medina region," coalition spokesman Turki al-Malki said in a post on X.

The Houthis, an armed group also known as Ansar Allah (Arabic for Supporters of God), have rejected any suggestion they were targeting the city, saying such accusations were a "blatant and grave falsehood".

Houthi Military spokesman Yahya Saree wrote on X that "our operations target only oil facilities and military bases" and called the allegation a lie.

Among their attacks on airports, energy infrastructure and military sites, the Houthis have targeted the port of Yanbu on several occasions in recent months.

"A warning has been issued by the National Early Warning Platform in Yanbu Governorate to alert of a potential danger," read a statement published by the agency online.

The agency later announced that the threat had passed.

Yanbu is a ??major oil export hub ??and a ??key ??outlet for oil shipments transported through the kingdom's East-West pipeline.

The port and pipeline have played a key role since the outbreak of the United States-Israeli war on Iran in February, helping Riyadh ship crude and fuel to global markets.

Separately, Yemen's internationally recognised government forces made gains in the Sanamat area in Taiz governorate, where fighting continues to rage.

Colonel Majed Abdullah al-Nazili said on Thursday that government forces carried out 1,298 "targeting operations" against the Houthis in the past 24 hours and "managed to gain control" of Sanamat.

The latest operations killed about 400 Houthi fighters and destroyed 132 vehicles, cars or heavy weapons placements, he said. Al Jazeera could not independently verify the claims.

Yemeni government forces previously reclaimed Taiz's Dhubab district and key positions near the critical Bab al-Mandeb strait.

Meanwhile, on the al-Jawf front, military engineering units continue to clear recaptured sites of mines and booby traps, al-Nazili added.

Late last month, the government said 16,100 Houthi operatives and commanders had been killed or wounded since October 5.

The Houthis have not confirmed a death toll and have in the meantime been firing missiles regularly towards Saudi Arabia, hitting multiple airports and disrupting air traffic over the kingdom.

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Kenyan starvation cult leader faces death sentence over child murders

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

NAIROBI (TIP): The leader of a Kenyan starvation cult found guilty of murdering 190 children faces a possible death penalty as he is sentenced on Friday, Nov 6.

Hundreds of bodies have been discovered since 2023 at the sect's base near the coastal resort of Malindi, in what became known as the "Shakahola Forest Massacre".

Self-proclaimed pastor Paul Mackenzie was accused of inciting his followers to starve themselves to death to "meet Jesus".

Last month, he was convicted of murdering 190 children and one adult between January 2021 and September 2023, alongside 28 co-accused. His lawyer said he would appeal.

He also faces separate manslaughter and terrorism charges, which he denies.

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions this week urged the court to sentence Mackenzie to death, citing the scale of the loss of life and the danger posed by his actions.

"The prosecution supports the imposition of capital punishment for Mackenzie, subject to consideration of his mitigation, remorse, regret and prospects of rehabilitation," Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions Jami Yamina said.

Although Kenya's law provides for the death penalty, the country has not carried out an execution since 1987.

Prosecutors also asked the court to sentence Mackenzie's co-accused to life imprisonment, arguing they had "been deeply indoctrinated by Mackenzie and were at risk of reoffending".

Around 120 prosecution witnesses testified during the trial.

Israel president to name PM candidate on Sunday as Arab parties back Gadi Eisenkot over Netanyahu

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

JERUSALEM (TIP): Israeli President Isaac Herzog will announce on Sunday, November 8, which lawmaker he will ask to form the next government after opposition leader Gadi Eisenkot received more recommendations than Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

During consultations with political parties on Thursday, 67 members of the 120-seat Knesset backed Eisenkot, while 46 recommended Netanyahu. Seven lawmakers did not support either candidate, according to AFP.

Although Eisenkot received more recommendations, he still faces challenges in putting together a coalition that can command a majority in parliament. The backing of Arab-led parties has strengthened his position, but disagreements within the opposition could affect government formation.

Herzog said the final decision would depend on which candidate he believes can successfully form a government.

"The results of the consultations may appear clear, but the authority vested in me by law is to determine who has the ability to form a government, and that is not entirely clear, given the mutual vetoes between the blocs and within the blocs themselves," he said on Thursday.

"I will try to determine this directly and quickly, in personal talks with some of the party leaders."

The Joint List, which holds 11 seats, and the eight-member Ra'am party both recommended Eisenkot during their meetings with Herzog. Both parties announced their support on Thursday, AFP reported.

Their support brought his total recommendations to 67, above the 61 needed for a majority in the Knesset.

However, the recommendations do not guarantee that all 19 Arab lawmakers will join an Eisenkot-led government. The opposition remains divided over whether to include Arab parties in a future coalition.

Avigdor Liberman, leader of Yisrael Beiteinu, has previously opposed a government that depends on Arab-party support. He has criticised Arab lawmakers for not explicitly describing Hamas as a terrorist organisation, although Arab parties have condemned its October 7, 2023 attack on Israel.

Netanyahu also faced a setback when United Torah Judaism declined to recommend him to Herzog. The ultra-Orthodox party, which has seven seats, also refused to back Eisenkot.



Gadi Eisenkot receives 67 recommendations, while Netanyahu gets 46 as Israel's president prepares to choose the next government leader. (Photo by Maya LEVIN and Jewel SAMAD / various sources / AFP) (AFP)

The disagreement centres partly on military service exemptions for ultra-Orthodox religious students. Netanyahu has maintained the exemption but has not passed legislation to secure it permanently. The issue has created tensions as Israeli reservists continue to serve during the wars involving Gaza, Lebanon and Iran.

United Torah Judaism lawmaker Isaac Pindrus said the issue would remain a priority for the party in the next government.

"In whatever government is next formed, our immediate item is sorting out the status of Torah students," he said.

Eisenkot's Yashar party called for a new national emergency government, saying voters had expressed a desire for political change. The party made the statement on Thursday, according to AFP.

However, the opposition will need to resolve its differences before it can put together a working coalition.

Under Israeli law, the candidate appointed by Herzog will have 28 days to form a government, with a possible extension of 14 days. If the attempt fails, the president can give another lawmaker the opportunity.

Netanyahu will remain prime minister until a new government is formed. Herzog has also urged political leaders to avoid another election and reach an agreement on the country's next administration.

The president is expected to announce his decision on Sunday, November 8.

Australia opens applications for 2026-27 Maitri Grants and Fellowships to deepen ties with India

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

CANBERRA (TIP): Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong on Thursday announced that applications are now open for the 2026-27 Maitri Grants and Fellowships programmes. The initiative is aimed at strengthening collaboration and ties between Australia and India, according to an official press release.

"Today, I am pleased to announce that applications are now open for the 2026-27 Maitri Grants and Fellowships programs."

"Since its establishment in 2023, the Centre for Australia-India Relations' flagship Maitri (meaning friendship in Sanskrit) programs have supported over 110 projects."

The press release stated, "The Maitri Grant Program will fund projects that facilitate greater exchange and collaboration between Australian and Indian business, cultural, education, research, and sporting communities."



Penny Wong

"Importantly, this program will play a pivotal role in supporting the implementation of A New Roadmap for Australia's Economic Engagement with India."

It added, "The Maitri Fellowships Program will fund Australian organisations to engage an Australian or Indian fellow to undertake research on geostrategic or geoeconomic policy issues."

"Through these programs, the Centre will continue to deepen connections between Australia and India and will energise the bilateral relationship across priority areas of strategic interest for both nations, including clean energy, education, advanced technology, agribusiness, and tourism."

The press release further noted, "Strengthening economic collaboration, policy connections, and cultural links with India is critical for Australia's economic security and prosperity."

"Australia's partnership with India has never been more consequential for the peace, prosperity, and stability of our shared region."

These flagship initiatives are administered by the Centre for Australia-India Relations (CAIR) under the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

They are tailored to expand bilateral, economic, and strategic links between Australia and India.

U.S. judge temporarily blocks deportation of detained Afghans to Afghanistan or Pakistan

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

MIAMI (TIP): A federal judge in New York temporarily blocked the Trump administration's plans to deport Afghans detained in the United States to Afghanistan or Pakistan on Tuesday (November 3, 2026), after advocates and dozens of members of Congress warned that their lives would be at risk.

The government told the court on Tuesday (November 3, 2026) that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) had no chartered or commercial flights to deport Afghan nationals to Afghanistan or Pakistan at least until the end of the week. Judge Valerie Caproni's order, which expires on Saturday (November 7, 2026), directs officials to adhere to that statement. ICE books deportation flights weeks in advance.

A letter led by California Democratic Representative Scott Peters and signed by 65 other members of the House and Senate said they were "extremely concerned that sending vulnerable people" would expose them to "persecution, torture, or even death". The letter was sent on Monday (November 2, 2026) to Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin.

Immigrant rights organisations have also warned that those deported could face retaliation from the Taliban.

Thousands of Afghans fled persecution and feared for their lives after helping the U.S. military and aid groups in Afghanistan.

According to court documents obtained by the Associated Press, the U.S. planned to deport Afghan immigrants on Monday on flights from Louisiana, where ICE has detention and processing facilities, to Pakistan.

Turkish lawmakers approve defence pact with Pakistan, Saudi Arabia

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

ANKARA (TIP): Turkish legislators on Thursday ratified a defense cooperation agreement among Turkey, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia as Riyadh seeks increased regional support in its conflict with Iran-backed Houthi rebels in neighboring Yemen.

The vote also came as countries in the region remain anxious about the prospects of a new escalation in the US-Iran war, which would likely spill over into neighboring countries. During previous rounds of fighting, Iran has lashed out at US-allied Gulf Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia.

The 16-article Mecca Joint Defense Agreement, signed in August, commits the three countries to regard an attack against one as an attack on all three, to work together to deter threats and deepen military cooperation, share intelligence and strengthen defense industry ties.

It was approved by 279 votes to 119 in the 600-seat parliament, despite objections from opposition parties who argued that the agreement could embroil Turkey in regional wars and put Turkish soldiers in harm's way.

"They brought this agreement to send Turkish soldiers to the deserts of Yemen," said Murat Emir, deputy leader of opposition New Party lawmakers. The loss of Ottoman soldiers in early 20th century conflicts in Yemen looms large in Turkish cultural memory. Fuat Oktay, chairman of parliament's foreign affairs committee and a member of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's ruling party, said Turkey would "not be drawn into an uncontrolled process against its will." He added that the deployment of troops would only be possible with future parliamentary approval.

The Turkish officials have said Ankara is considering sending military assistance to Saudi Arabia but insist that the agreement is defensive and that no Turkish troops would be deployed to fight in Yemen or to attack the Houthis.

Turkish troops, backed by a rapidly developing defense industry, make up the second-largest military in NATO. Any deployment of Turkish troops would require a separate approval by Turkey's parliament.

Turkish and Pakistani officials have stressed that the agreement does not target Iran or any other country.

The agreement was signed in the Saudi holy city of Mecca by Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Erdogan and Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. It is seen as part of Saudi Arabia's efforts to reduce its dependence on the United States and diversify its security partnerships.

The deal showcases how close relations between Saudi Arabia and Turkey have grown, after being highly strained just a few years ago, including over the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi in Istanbul by Saudi operatives.



From left, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif pose after signing a trilateral defense agreement in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, August 7, 2026. (Saudi Press Agency via AP)

Ministers from the grouping have already met twice - in Istanbul and in Riyadh - while high-level delegations from the three countries held talks in Tehran last month to try to avert renewed fighting in the Iran war.

During their meeting in Riyadh in September, the three countries agreed to immediately implement what they said were their collective defense commitments, including arrangements for the rapid deployment of agreed upon military forces and capabilities to Saudi Arabia. They did not elaborate.

Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shibani said last week during a conference in Bahrain that discussions were underway about Syria joining the pact. Syria has close relations with both Turkey and Saudi Arabia, and joining the pact could give it more strategic leverage against Israel, which has launched strikes in Syria and occupied part of the country's south since a rebel offensive ousted former Syrian President Bashar Assad in December 2024.

A Turkish official confirmed that the issue of Syria joining is being discussed, but said the existing members of the pact were focused on efforts to "institutionalize" the agreement and until they do, "there will be no question of any third country participation." The official was not authorized to publicly discuss the issue.

According to the agreement, the grouping's secretariat will be based in Saudi Arabia, and retired Pakistani Gen. Nauman Mahmood has been selected as its first secretary-general. He will serve a three-year term.

Will return from exile in December at any cost: Bangladesh ex-PM Hasina

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

DHAKA (TIP): Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, ousted in a mass uprising in 2024, has told The Associated Press that she remains committed to returning to Bangladesh from exile in India next month, despite being sentenced to death over her government's deadly crackdown on protesters.

Hasina fled to India after student-led protests forced her from power and has remained there ever since.

In 2025, a Bangladeshi special tribunal sentenced her to death for crimes against humanity, ruling that she was responsible for ordering the crackdown, which left hundreds of people dead and thousands of others injured.

The United Nations has said in a report that nearly 1,400 people were killed. Hasina denies any wrongdoing. She also has rejected the tribunal's verdict and challenged the legitimacy of the trial.



Sheikh Hasina

Bangladesh has repeatedly sought Hasina's extradition, but India has declined to hand her over. She had first announced in August her intention to return in December.

"If death is my destiny, I would rather die on the soil of my own country, among my own people," she told The Associated Press in response to questions by email. "So, I will return to Bangladesh. That decision has not changed." Questions were submitted to her last week and she responded on Wednesday.

Hasina, who was prime minister from 2009-2024, didn't disclose how she plans to return from India. She could face arrest upon arrival in Bangladesh.

"I know that I may be arrested when I return. I may be imprisoned, tortured or even killed. I am fully aware of those possibilities. But I cannot spend the rest of my life watching my people suffer from a distance," she told the AP.

Following Hasina's ouster, Nobel Peace Prize laureate Muhammad Yunus took charge of an interim administration, leading the country for the next 18 months.

In February, Tarique Rahman, son of former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia and a longtime political rival of Hasina, swept to power in a landslide election held under Yunus' administration. Hasina's Awami League party was barred from contesting the vote.

Hasina's planned return comes as her party faces an uncertain future amid a sweeping crackdown. The party remains banned, with senior leaders arrested or driven into exile.

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Ways to prevent dry, chapped and cracked lips

While drinking plenty of water is essential to keeping your body hydrated, your lips also need extra care and protection. Experts recommend incorporating nourishing ingredients such as coconut oil, argan oil and shea butter into your daily lip-care routine. Here are some simple yet effective tips to protect your lips from winter dryness.

Avoid Licking Your Lips

Licking your lips might provide temporary relief when they feel dry, but it can actually make the problem worse. Saliva evaporates quickly, taking away the natural moisture from your lips and leaving them even drier. Repeated licking can also irritate the delicate skin around your mouth. Instead, reach for a nourishing lip balm whenever your lips feel dry.

Nourish Your Lips with Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is an excellent natural moisturizing ingredient that helps soften dry lips and reduce moisture loss. Its nourishing properties make it a great addition to your winter lip-care routine. Look for lip treatments containing coconut oil and other moisturizing ingredients, such as lemon butter, for added nourishment. Choosing a lip treatment with SPF can also help protect your lips from sun damage, even during winter.

Make Argan Oil Your Lip-Care Essential

The delicate skin on your lips loses moisture quickly, particularly when exposed to cold temperatures and harsh winds. Argan oil is rich in fatty acids and vitamin E, making it a beneficial ingredient in lip-care products. Choose lip balms and lipsticks enriched with argan oil or shea butter to help keep your lips soft, supple and moisturized throughout the day.

Exfoliate Gently with a Lip Scrub

Dry, flaky lips can benefit from gentle exfoliation, but it is important not to overdo it. A mild lip scrub can help remove loose flakes and leave your lips feeling smoother. For a simple homemade scrub, mix a little brown sugar with honey. Gently massage the mixture over your lips without applying too much pressure, then rinse with lukewarm water and pat dry. Follow up immediately



with a nourishing lip balm. Avoid exfoliating lips that are cracked, bleeding or severely irritated, as scrubbing can worsen the damage.

Keep a Lip Gloss Handy

If you love wearing matte lipsticks, winter dryness can make your lips feel uncomfortable. Matte formulas may accentuate dry patches, so keep a hydrating lip gloss handy for an extra layer of comfort.

Make lip moisturizing the first step of your makeup routine. Apply a thin layer of petroleum jelly, allow it to sit for a minute and gently blot away any excess before applying your lipstick. Whenever possible, choose lip products with moisturizing ingredients.

Choose the Right Lip Balm

A good lip balm is a winter essential. It helps seal in moisture, protect the delicate skin and support the healing of minor cracks and splits. Look for ointment-based formulas containing ingredients such as petrolatum, glycerin, shea butter or other nourishing oils. Don't forget sun protection. Your lips need SPF protection during winter too, as UV rays can still cause damage on cold or cloudy days. It is equally important to avoid lip balms containing ingredients such as camphor, menthol and eucalyptus if they irritate or worsen your dryness. These ingredients can cause a cooling sensation but may aggravate already sensitive lips.

FOOD CORNER

Chicken 65

Ingredients

400 gms Boneless Chicken cut into small pieces, 1 Egg, 2 1/2 tblsp Cornflour, 1 tblsp Rice Flour, 1/2 cup thick Curd (Dahi), 1 1/2 tsp Ginger Garlic Paste, 1 1/2 tsp Red Chilly Powder, 1/4 tsp Black Pepper Powder, 1/2 tsp Coriander Powder, 1/2 tblsp Lemon Juice, 1 Sprig Curry Leaves, 2 - 3 cloves Garlc chopped Finely, 2 - 3 Green chillies Slit lengthwise, 1 tblsp finely chopped Coriander leaves, Salt To Taste, Oil for frying, 1 pinch Tandoori Color (Or Orange Color), Few sliced thin onions, Few lemon wedges, Chopped green coriander.

Method

- Take a bowl mix together ginger garlic paste, red chilly powder, black pepper powder, lemon juice, color, salt, coriander powder and whisked thick curd. Now add the chicken pieces. Cook the bowl and marinate them for 2 - 3 hours in a refrigerator.
- Before start frying to the marinated chicken pieces add a beaten egg and then cornflour and rice flour. Mix well so that all the chicken pieces are well coated with the flours. Make sure no lumps are formed. Heat oil in a kadai. Once it becomes hot drop the chicken pieces one by one in the oil and fry them till golden crisp. Do not put too many pieces but fry them in small batches so that all pieces are cooked evenly. Keep turning with a slotted spoon once in a while. Take them out on a paper towel and keep aside. In a separate pan heat 1 tblsp of oil. When it is hot add the curry leaves and chopped garlic. Once the garlic gets slightly golden brown add the slit green chillies.
- To this add the tomato ketchup and add the fried chicken pieces. Mix well.
- Dish out the pieces in a serving platter and garnish with thin sliced onions and lemon wedges and coriander leaves.



Amazing beauty benefits of caffeine you should know

Coffee is more than just your favorite morning beverage. The caffeine it contains can also offer several benefits for your skin. From reducing puffiness and inflammation to minimizing the appearance of dark circles and cellulite, caffeine has become a popular ingredient in many skincare products. Thanks to its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, caffeine can help improve the appearance of tired, dull-looking skin and leave it looking smoother and more refreshed. Incorporating caffeine-infused products into your skincare routine may help you achieve a more even-toned and radiant complexion. Here are three ways caffeine can benefit your skin.

Helps Reduce Skin Inflammation and Redness

Caffeine is known for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, which make it a useful ingredient in skincare formulations designed to soothe the appearance of irritated skin. It may help reduce puffiness, redness and inflammation while supporting a



healthier-looking complexion. Some skincare formulations combine caffeine with other soothing ingredients to help calm the skin and improve its overall appearance. Its antioxidant properties may also help protect the skin against oxidative stress caused by environmental factors.

Reduces the Appearance of Dark Circles and Puffy Eyes

Dark circles and under-eye puffiness can develop due to several factors, including lack of sleep, dehydration, allergies, genetics and ageing.

Caffeine is a popular ingredient in under-eye creams because it can temporarily constrict blood vessels and help reduce puffiness. It may also improve the appearance of dark circles associated with visible blood vessels beneath the delicate under-eye skin.

For a refreshed appearance, look for eye creams or serums containing caffeine. You can also try placing cool, damp tea bags over your closed eyes for a few minutes to temporarily soothe puffiness.

Helps Minimize the Appearance of Cellulite

Cellulite is a common skin concern that creates a dimpled or uneven appearance, particularly around the thighs, hips and buttocks.

Caffeine is frequently used in anti-cellulite creams because it may temporarily improve the appearance of cellulite. It works partly by stimulating circulation and temporarily tightening the skin's appearance. Some formulations may also help reduce the appearance of localized puffiness.

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20TH YEAR

Arthritis: don't ignore early signs of joint pain

Joint pain, stiffness and swelling are often dismissed as signs of ageing. However, arthritis is no longer just an old-age problem. It can affect people across different age groups, including those in their 30s and 40s. What may begin as occasional discomfort can gradually develop into a condition that interferes with everyday activities, mobility and overall quality of life.

Arthritis is a broad term used to describe several conditions that affect the joints, causing pain, inflammation, swelling and restricted movement. While some forms develop due to the gradual wear and tear of cartilage, others occur when the immune system mistakenly attacks healthy joint tissues. Osteoarthritis is one of the most common forms and generally develops as the protective cartilage between bones breaks down over time. Other types include rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis and lupus-related arthritis, which involve inflammation and may affect different parts of the body.

One of the biggest challenges with arthritis is that its early symptoms are often ignored. Persistent joint pain, morning stiffness, swelling, tenderness and difficulty performing routine activities can all be warning signs. Some people may also experience fatigue, particularly those suffering from inflammatory arthritis. If these symptoms continue or interfere with daily life, consulting a doctor is important rather than relying on painkillers for temporary relief.

Early diagnosis plays a crucial role in managing arthritis. Since different types of arthritis require different treatment approaches, identifying the underlying condition is essential. A rheumatologist may recommend a physical examination, blood tests and imaging investigations to establish the diagnosis. Timely treatment is especially important in inflammatory arthritis, as uncontrolled inflammation can lead to permanent joint damage.

Another important aspect of arthritis management is



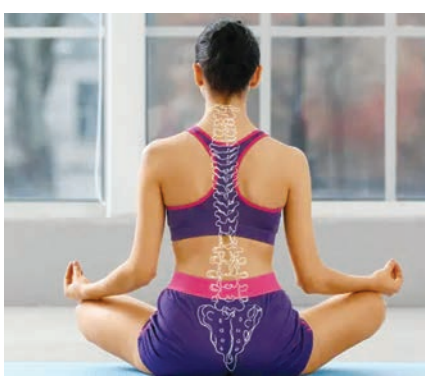
avoiding excessive use of painkillers. Although these medicines may provide temporary relief, frequent use without medical supervision can cause complications, including kidney problems, stomach irritation and cardiovascular risks. Depending on the type and severity of arthritis, doctors may prescribe anti-inflammatory medicines, disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs or advanced biologic therapies. These treatments can help control inflammation, reduce symptoms and prevent further joint damage.

Staying physically active is equally important for maintaining healthy joints. Many people with arthritis avoid exercise because they fear it will worsen their pain. However, prolonged inactivity can increase stiffness and weaken the muscles that support the joints. Gentle activities such as walking, swimming, cycling and yoga can help improve flexibility, strengthen muscles and maintain mobility. Exercise should always be suited to the individual's condition, and a physiotherapist can recommend an appropriate routine. Maintaining a healthy weight is another important step towards protecting joint health.

Healthy spine: Get enough calcium, protein and walk 8,000 steps daily

A healthy spine is essential for maintaining good posture, balance, flexibility and overall mobility. However, sedentary lifestyles, long working hours, poor posture and nutritional deficiencies can gradually affect spinal health. Experts recommend combining a balanced diet with regular physical activity to keep the spine strong and reduce the risk of bone-related problems.

Calcium is one of the most important nutrients for maintaining healthy bones. It helps build and maintain bone density, keeping the vertebrae that make up the spine strong. Include calcium-rich foods such as milk, yoghurt, paneer, cheese, almonds and green leafy vegetables in your daily diet. Vitamin D is equally important as it helps the body absorb calcium effectively. Adequate exposure to sunlight and vitamin D-rich foods can support bone health.



Protein is another essential nutrient that should not be overlooked. It helps maintain muscle strength and supports the muscles and tissues surrounding the spine. Strong back and abdominal muscles provide stability and help maintain proper posture. Include protein-rich foods such as eggs, lentils, pulses, fish, chicken, nuts and dairy products in your meals.

Physical activity is equally important for spinal health. Walking is one of the simplest and most effective ways to stay active. Aim for approximately 8,000 steps a day, gradually increasing your daily movement according to your fitness level. Regular walking helps strengthen supporting muscles, improve circulation, maintain a healthy body weight and support overall musculoskeletal health.

Apart from diet and exercise, pay attention to your posture. Avoid sitting continuously for long hours, take regular movement breaks and use proper back support while working. Gentle stretching and strengthening exercises can also help improve flexibility and spinal stability. Remember, maintaining a healthy spine requires consistent effort. A combination of adequate calcium and protein intake, regular walking and good posture can go a long way in supporting strong bones, healthy muscles and better mobility as you age.

Late dinners and bedtime habits may trigger night-time acidity

You finish dinner, get into bed and prepare to sleep, but a burning sensation in your chest keeps you awake. Sometimes, you may wake up with a sour or bitter taste in your mouth, throat irritation or a feeling that stomach contents are coming back up. While many people experience acidity occasionally, recurring symptoms at night can affect sleep and everyday life.

Night-time acidity is often linked to eating habits, meal timings and lifestyle choices. Eating a heavy dinner late at night, drinking too much coffee or lying down immediately after a meal can make symptoms worse, particularly among people who are already prone to acid reflux. However, these symptoms should not always be dismissed as ordinary acidity, especially when they occur frequently.

Acid reflux happens when stomach contents flow backwards into the oesophagus, the tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach. When this happens frequently and causes troublesome symptoms, it may be a sign of gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

A busy work schedule often affects eating habits. People may skip or delay lunch, depend on tea or coffee to get through the day and eventually have a heavy dinner late in the evening. Going to bed soon after eating can further increase the chances of acid reflux.

A full stomach takes time to empty. When a person lies down immediately after eating, stomach contents can move upwards more easily, particularly if the valve between the stomach and oesophagus does not close properly. Night-time reflux can also be uncomfortable because the body produces less saliva and swallowing becomes less frequent during sleep. This reduces the natural process through which the oesophagus clears refluxed stomach contents.

Heartburn is one of the most common symptoms of acid reflux, but not everyone experiences it in the same way. Some people wake up with a bitter taste in their mouth, while others experience fluid rising into the throat, persistent irritation or coughing.

Explaining the connection between everyday habits and digestive health, Dr Saurabh Bansal, General Minimal Access and Gastrointestinal Surgeon, Director and Founder of THE CLINICS, highlights the importance of understanding what triggers recurring reflux symptoms.

Although throat irritation and coughing can sometimes be associated with reflux, they do not always indicate an acidity problem. Other medical conditions may also cause similar symptoms and should be evaluated when necessary.

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ChatGPT can now turn your photos into animated GIFs, here's how it works

Want to make your GIF game stronger? Well, ChatGPT can now help you do just that. OpenAI has introduced Images 2.6, its latest image-generation model, which brings native GIF creation to ChatGPT. So, instead of settling for a static image, you can now upload a photograph, describe the animation you want and let ChatGPT bring it to life.

The new update also makes image generation faster and gives users more control over their creations. You can adjust animation speed, edit individual frames and share the finished GIF, all without leaving ChatGPT.

Want to give it a try? Here's how the new feature works and what else Images 2.6 brings to the table.



How to create GIFs using ChatGPT

To get started, open ChatGPT, upload a photograph of yourself, your pet or anything else you want to animate, and describe the kind of GIF you have in mind. You can also create an animation using just a text prompt, without uploading a photo.

For instance, OpenAI suggests trying prompts such as: "Animate me peeking over a mountain of Diwali gift boxes. Playful cartoon style, looping GIF."

Once ChatGPT generates the GIF, you can play around with it. The new Images 2.6 model lets you adjust playback speed, ranging from 0.5x to 2x, and edit individual frames.

You can also use the existing editing controls to resize elements or remove unwanted objects. This means you don't have to settle for the first version ChatGPT creates. You can tweak the animation until it looks just right.

What else is new with Images 2.6?

Interestingly, GIF creation is not the only addition. Images 2.6 also introduces faster image generation and the ability to save and tag reference images of people, pets and characters. This means you can reuse a familiar face or character in future creations without uploading the same photograph every time.

OpenAI says people now generate more than 4 billion images every week across ChatGPT and its API, up from over 3 billion reported eight weeks ago when Images 2.5 launched.

For developers, OpenAI has introduced GPT-Image-2.6 Flare and Sunburst through its API. The company claims these models offer 50 per cent faster image generation. Flare can generate images in as little as six seconds at low quality, while Sunburst focuses on higher-quality results and greater consistency across edits at medium or high quality.

Availability and India access

Images 2.6 is available to all ChatGPT users, including those on the free tier, across the web, desktop and mobile apps. The feature is also available in ChatGPT Work and Codex. So, users in India can try the new GIF-making and image-editing capabilities directly through ChatGPT.

For developers, GPT-Image-2.6 Flare and Sunburst are available through OpenAI's API.

India's NavIC is back: NVS-03 reaches its destination, desi GPS now operational

India's home-grown navigation system, NavIC, has received a major boost after Isro successfully completed the third and final orbit-raising manoeuvre of its latest satellite, NVS-03, placing it in its designated geosynchronous orbit.

The Indian Space Research Organisation, or Isro, launched the satellite aboard its GSLV-F18 rocket from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota on October 30, 2026.

Following its successful launch, NVS-03 was placed in an initial transfer orbit before undergoing a series of manoeuvres to climb higher.

Isro has now successfully completed the third and final orbit-raising manoeuvre, placing the satellite in a geosynchronous orbit of 35,842.6 34,594.9 km. The successful deployment marks an important step towards restoring the full positioning capabilities of India's independent navigation network.



NavIC, short for Navigation with Indian Constellation, is India's own satellite-based navigation system, similar to the US Global Positioning System (GPS). It provides location and accurate timing information across the Indian landmass and an area extending approximately 1,500 km beyond the country's borders. Its signals can be used by smartphones, vehicles, ships, trains and other devices for navigation and tracking.

However, problems with the atomic clocks aboard some earlier satellites had weakened the constellation.

A previous replacement satellite, NVS-02, also failed to reach its intended orbit because of a propulsion-system issue. This left NavIC with fewer than the four operational satellites required to independently provide full positioning services. NVS-03 is expected to restore this minimum requirement.

The satellite carries an indigenously developed atomic clock, which helps maintain precise time, along with additional clock systems.

It also supports the L1 frequency band, making NavIC signals more accessible to commonly used smartphone chips and navigation receivers.

An operational NavIC gives India greater control over critical navigation and timing services instead of relying entirely on foreign satellite networks.

Such capabilities are important for everyday navigation as well as emergency response, transportation, maritime operations, infrastructure and strategic applications.

India launches three new AI models, including two that work without the internet

India has taken a massive step toward self-reliance in the technology sector. The IT ministry, with backing from the IndiaAI Mission, has just introduced three brand-new artificial intelligence models to the public. These tools were developed within the country to focus on Indian languages and local business needs, reducing the nation's reliance on technology from abroad.

The three models, named EKA-1, Dhir 2B, and Dhir 5B, were officially showcased during an event in New Delhi. Government officials, including IT Ministry Secretary S. Krishnan, noted that these tools are built to lift productivity across government offices, research facilities, schools, and private industries.

The most exciting part of this launch is that two of these models are compact enough to work directly on your devices without any internet connection.

EKA-1 is the largest of the newly launched tools, created by a Bengaluru-based startup named Soket Labs. It is a highly powerful, open, and sparse hybrid language model designed to handle complex tasks like advanced mathematics, software programming, logical reasoning and acts as an AI agent that can complete a chain of tasks on its own.

The sheer size of EKA-1 is impressive. It is powered by 26.3 billion parameters and was trained on a massive 7.5 trillion tokens of text data. Its biggest selling point, however, is its language flexibility.

EKA-1 can easily understand English as well as all 22 scheduled Indian languages. Because of its heavy-duty reasoning skills, Soket Labs specifically designed this AI with major sectors like banking, financial services, and cybersecurity in mind.

While EKA-1 is a massive system, the Dhir 2B and Dhir 5B models are built for a totally different use. Created by ZenteiQ AiTech Innovations, these two open-source models are much smaller and are meant for local, everyday use. They can understand English along with 10 different Indian languages.

Instead of focusing on heavy coding or maths, the Dhir models are built to easily search through documents, pull out important information, and automate boring, routine jobs. While the exact parameter counts were not explicitly stated at launch, the numbers in their names likely point to their size in billions, keeping them compact enough for everyday gadgets.

The biggest game-changer for the Dhir 2B and Dhir 5B models is that they do not need an active Wi-Fi connection or a massive cloud server to work. You can download them directly onto a mobile phone or laptop and run them entirely offline.

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

Crude oil prices jump; Brent tops $100, WTI nears $92 as fresh attacks on tankers stoke supply fears

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

NEW YORK (TIP): Oil prices surged Thursday, Nov 5, recovering some of Wednesday's staggering losses as traders reconsidered whether the U.S. midterm election results would actually bring a swift end to the Iran war.

Brent crude had climbed to $98.01 per barrel by early afternoon, gaining $3.39, or 3.58%, while West Texas Intermediate rose $2.21, or 2.51%, to $90.33. Both benchmarks continued climbing later in the session. The rebound followed Wednesday's extraordinary selloff, when Brent plunged $8.98, or 8.7%, to settle at $94.62. WTI shed $7.97, or 8.3%, closing at $88.12. Both benchmarks recorded their lowest settlements since August 31.

The catalyst was the Democratic sweep of both chambers of Congress in Tuesday's midterm elections, which prompted speculation that President Donald Trump would face greater pressure to end the eight-month conflict with Iran.

That speculation helped drive Brent down roughly 18% this week, with traders aggressively shedding positions as expectations for an eventual diplomatic settlement increased.

But by Thursday, the prospects for a quick resolution appeared considerably less certain.

Eurasia Group lowered its estimated probability of a negotiated agreement to just 10%, down from 20%, while putting the likelihood of renewed U.S. strikes at 60%.

Meanwhile, shipping risks haven't disappeared. Reuters reported at least



five vessel incidents in the Persian Gulf since Sunday with threats to commercial traffic persisting despite a recovery in crude shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. Iran is reviewing proposals delivered through regional mediators, although Washington and Tehran remain divided over the conditions for an agreement.

Wednesday's collapse was amplified by heavy liquidation in crude futures, according to market participants cited by Bloomberg. With prices approaching technically oversold territory, Thursday's recovery may reflect traders reversing some of those positions.

The physical oil market has changed considerably as Gulf crude exports have recovered toward pre-war levels, albeit at higher transportation costs. But the geopolitical risk surrounding those shipments remains unresolved.

Iran Reports More Tanker Fires in Strait of Hormuz

Two oil tankers and a tugboat caught fire in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) said on Thursday, as Iran continues to report a growing number of incidents with vessels trying to transit the Strait on routes unauthorized by the Islamic Republic.

One of the oil tankers hit a naval mine while it was attempting to move south of the Strait. Another tanker caught fire as it was on its way out in the eastern part of the Strait, and a tugboat that had approached it to help also caught fire, according to Iran's elite force.

Separately, UK Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO), which is affiliated with the Royal Navy, said on Thursday that it had received a report of an incident 50 nautical miles north of Madinat ash Shamal, Qatar, in which a tanker has been struck by two unidentified projectiles. The status of the crew, damage assessment, and environmental impact are unconfirmed at present, UKMTO said early on Thursday.

Attacks on vessels in the region have intensified in recent weeks, while crude oil flows have dipped from recent highs.

IRGC on Wednesday said that four oil tankers were destroyed after hitting naval mines in an area south of the Strait of Hormuz proscribed by Iran as prohibited for navigation.

While flows have recovered substantially from the lows in the spring, the security situation in and near the Strait of Hormuz has actually deteriorated, with a higher number of attacks on tankers in recent weeks.

Paraguay faces biggest-ever banking crisis, over 3 million customers hit

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

ASUNCIÓN (TIP): A banking crisis in Paraguay has quickly turned into a major political challenge for President Santiago Pena. The country's central bank has intervened in digital lender Ueno Bank, leaving nearly 3 million customers unable to access their accounts and triggering public anger.

The fallout has also led to the resignation of the central bank chief, the detention of eight Ueno executives and growing calls for Pena's impeachment.

Opposition lawmakers have stepped up efforts to remove Pena from office, accusing him of conflicts of interest, misuse of pension funds and covering up institutional failures linked to the banking crisis.

According to Reuters, 35 lawmakers in the 80-member lower house submitted impeachment articles on Wednesday. They also asked congressional leaders to call an extraordinary session on Thursday to discuss Pena's future.

However, the opposition does not have the two-thirds majority required to move the impeachment proceedings forward. It has, however, received support from some members of the ruling Colorado Party who have broken ranks.

Pena has not publicly responded to the impeachment move. In a social media post, he urged political leaders to focus on protecting depositors and said those responsible for irregularities would face justice without exceptions.

Paraguay's central bank intervened in Ueno after finding that the lender had failed to meet minimum solvency requirements.

The bank, which grew rapidly from a small fintech player into a mid-sized lender, is also facing scrutiny over allegations of excessive lending to companies linked to its controlling group, Grupo Vazquez.

Pena was a shareholder in the group until March 2025, raising questions about potential conflicts of interest. Ueno currently administers close to $850 million in public funds.

The crisis has affected nearly 3 million customers in a country with a population of around 6.5 million.

The crisis also led to the resignation of central bank chief Carlos Carvallo on Tuesday, after Pena sought his departure.

Meanwhile, eight Ueno executives were detained as prosecutors widened their investigation. The executives later surrendered to authorities, and courts ordered their assets to be frozen.

Ueno has not publicly commented on the developments.

The crisis has also raised concerns about confidence in Paraguay's wider banking system, with several banking apps reporting outages on Wednesday.

However, the Association of Banks of Paraguay said lenders were working to manage the increase in customers moving their accounts away from Ueno. It also maintained that the country's banking system continued to operate normally.

Sensex opens in red day after 2,000-point spike; rout in global markets

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

MUMBAI (TIP): Indian equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty opened in the red on Friday, Nov 6, following their six-day winning streak, following a sharp tech selloff in global markets.

Sensex fell 227 points and Nifty opened about 104 points lower, triggered by a global rout in technology stocks and mounting concerns over slowing investments in artificial intelligence infrastructure.

This came after both indexes posted their biggest single-day gains in seven months on Thursday, buoyed by falling crude oil prices and strong foreign fund inflows. Both had gained for six sessions in a row.

The BSE Sensex rallied nearly 2,009 points and the NSE Nifty surged 576 points on Thursday, even as results of the United States midterm elections handed control of the Congress to the Democratic Party.

In the past six consecutive sessions, the Sensex had surged 6,063.98 points, or 8.27 per cent, while the Nifty had rallied 1,837.75 points, or 8 per cent. On Thursday, the 30-share BSE Sensex opened about 1,300 points up, and zoomed 2,008.61 points, or 2.60 per cent, to settle at 79,310.01, according to news agency PTI.

The 50-share Nifty surged 576 points, or 2.40 per cent on Thursday, to end at 24,536.60. Nifty also saw a three-month high on Thursday amid steady foreign fund inflows and a sharp rally in the US markets, which boosted investor sentiments and buying across sectors.

Asian stocks also declined after the tech sell-off, with Japan's stock benchmark tumbling more than 6 per cent after trading opened Friday, according to the Associated Press.

However, Tokyo's benchmark Nikkei 225 recovered some of those initial losses, trading 5.7 per cent lower at 57,576.63 by midday. South Korea's Kospi dropped 7.4 per cent to 4,985.99. Hong Kong's Hang Seng fell 0.7 per cent to 24,630.03.

This came after the S&P 500 on Wall Street fell 4.4 per cent Thursday in what turned out to be its worst day since US President Donald Trump's "Liberation Day" tariffs announcement in April 2025. Meanwhile, the Dow Jones Industrial Average sank 1,833 points, or 3.4 per cent, and the Nasdaq composite fell 5.5 per cent.

US stocks plunged on Thursday as investors dumped AI stocks, even as the midterms brought a bloc of artificial-intelligence skeptics into power, the Wall Street Journal reported.

This led to a stock-market wipeout over fears of more AI scrutiny, particularly on data center construction, according to news agency Reuters. Investor fears that the Democrats' victory could stall AI infrastructure expansion led to a decline of more than 500 points in the Nasdaq Composite.



BEJAN DARUWALLA AND CHIRAG DARUWALLA

WEEKLY HOROSCOPE - NOV 9, 2026 TO NOV 15, 2026

BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA

ARIES

Ganesha says your overall experience this week may be somewhat challenging. There will be tension and conflict around you, which may cause mental distress. This is a time for introspection, where you need to pay attention to your thoughts and feelings. You may also face difficulties in your relationships, which can impact your energy. It's important to communicate openly and honestly with loved ones. You'll need positive energy to avoid anxiety and nervousness. This is a time for you to recognize and work on your inner strength. Find inner stability and calm yourself through meditation or yoga. This week can be an opportunity for learning and growth, which will help you improve your relationships and overall situation. Be patient and prepare for good times ahead.

TAURUS

Ganesha says this week will be very good for everyone. This period will bring positive energy, boosting your confidence. You'll be able to express your thoughts clearly, which will bring a new spark to your personality. This week, try to strengthen your relationships with those around you. This is a great time for you to better understand and share your feelings. Spending time with friends and family will bring you joy and satisfaction. Your sensitivity and emotional depth will add a new dimension to your relationships this week. Communication with loved ones will prove to be life-saving. Move forward with positivity and see what small things can strengthen your relationships. This combination of health and happiness will help you make lifestyle changes. Listen to your heart and make this week inspiring for relationships.

GEMINI

Ganesha says this week is a bright time for you, with an overall positive impact. Your curiosity and communication skills will improve during this time, allowing you to establish deep and meaningful connections with those around you. This will not only help you understand others but will also increase your social activities. Your intuition and intelligence will allow you to make many new friends this week. This is a good time for you to share your thoughts and feelings with clarity. You may embark on a new and exciting journey with your partner, which will give your relationship a new dimension. Existing relationships will offer opportunities to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation. If you're facing a challenge, take it as an opportunity to strengthen your relationship. This week will be filled with positivity and happiness.

CANCER

Ganesha says this week will be a bit challenging. You'll be emotionally sensitive, which may cause you to worry over small things. This anxiety can also affect your relationships, so be careful. Use creativity when communicating with loved ones and seek their support during difficult times. During this time, your mind will be filled with excessive worries and apprehensions, which can impact your mental health. This is the right time to face your fears and phobias. It's important to understand that challenges also make you stronger. This time is crucial in your journey of personal growth. By understanding your emotions and accepting your fears, you can recognize your inner strength. This week, practice self-reliance and patience. Spending time with those close to you and sharing your feelings can bring you relief. Meditation and therapy can also be helpful.

LEO

Ganesha says Leo natives may face emotional turmoil. Your inner beliefs and concerns may trouble you. This week don't be discouraged by the negativity of circumstances; instead, see it as an opportunity. Recognize your inner strength and self-confidence. Tensions and misunderstandings may arise in relationships, so be careful in your interactions. Try to connect emotionally with loved ones; this will bring stability to your society. We must remember that every challenge teaches us to move forward. Even if some moments seem difficult, consider them part of your self-development. This week, try to bring out your hidden creativity; this will maintain peace of mind. Rely on meditation and positive thinking to reduce your worries. Overall, this week will be average for you, but you can work towards improving the situation with your attitude and efforts.

VIRGO

Ganesha says from a general perspective, this week will be very good for Virgo natives. The environment around you will be filled with positive energy, allowing you to easily deal with various situations. Relationships will be full of energy and enthusiasm. You'll enjoy spending time with loved ones and be able to understand their feelings. This week will inspire you to expand your social circle and make new connections. This is a good time to rekindle relationships that have drifted apart. You'll share deep thoughts and feelings during conversations with your partner or friends, strengthening your bonds. Overall, this week will be excellent for you in terms of love and relationships. You'll feel love and support around you, which will bring positive changes to your life. Simply use this time wisely and infuse new energy into your relationships.

LIBRA

Ganesha says this week is a time for Libras to experience fulfillment. Your relationships are now strengthening, and you'll be able to maintain harmony and balance with everyone. This time will allow you to communicate with those close to you and deepen your relationships. If you're looking to start a new relationship, this is the perfect time, as you're full of charm and charisma. Your understanding and communication skills will create positive energy around you, helping you strengthen your relationships. This week is great for spending time with friends and family, which will not only bring you happiness but also sweeten your relationships. This week, you will realize how important all relationships are. Your awareness and compassionate approach will open new doors to love and friendship. Simply keep your heart open and strengthen the bonds of affection.

SCORPIO

Ganesha says this week can be challenging for Scorpios, as uncertainty and anxiety are likely. Some tension may arise in your relationships, leaving you confused. It's important to communicate with those close to you. Speak openly to resolve any misunderstandings. Try to remain calm, as your inner emotions may flare up. This is a time to be honest with yourself and listen to your inner voice. If you want to strengthen your relationships, you will need to exercise patience and understanding. You may find it difficult to control your emotions, but accept that change is inevitable and improvement is possible. This week can be a good time for introspection for Scorpios. Meditation and positive thinking will give you the strength to move forward during this time. Maintain your positive energy and try to work together with others.

SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha says this week will be a very good one overall for Sagittarius. Your positive energy and enthusiasm will be of great benefit. People around you will feel your energy and be drawn to connect with you. This time is also favorable for friendship and collaboration. New friendships and old relationships will flourish. Your social life will be dynamic. Sharing fun moments and spending time with loved ones will be important this week. If you want to strengthen a special relationship, express your thoughts openly. Positive conversations and the exchange of ideas will deepen your relationships. This week is also excellent for personal growth, so take time for introspection and listen to your inner voice. Overall, this week is a time to reach new heights in love and relationships. Channel your energy in a positive direction, as you will experience many joys.

CAPRICORN

Ganesha says this week, your circumstances may be particularly challenging, requiring you to pay attention to your emotional aspects. This week is likely to be a little less positive than usual for Capricorns. Some tension may arise in your relationships, causing you to experience anxiety and restlessness. During this time, you are advised to be careful in your communication with loved ones. The words and feelings you express can have a profound impact. While trying to explain yourself, you may find yourself caught in some misunderstandings. On the positive side, facing these challenges may provide you with an opportunity to recognize your inner strength. View this week's events as an opportunity to strengthen yourself personally and in relationships. Try meditating and clarifying your thoughts; this will help you achieve greater clarity and peace.

AQUARIUS

Ganesha says this week is expected to be extremely positive and inspiring. This time will bring new energy and enthusiasm to your personal relationships and social life. Relationships with friends and family will become sweeter, making you feel even happier. Your freedom of thought and creativity will attract not only you but also those around you this week. This is a time when you can share your ideas and connect with others. This week, you will recognize opportunities that will help you advance your personality in new directions. This is a beneficial time for self-improvement and progress. Listening to and understanding your ideas will generate positive feedback from others, strengthening your confidence. Overall, this week will be excellent for your personal growth and relationships.

PISCES

Ganesha says this week, your emotions will be superficial, but you may also experience feelings of anxiety. The environment around you will be seeking harmony and stability, yet you may find it difficult to maintain your balance. In any situation, try to understand and share your feelings, as communication can be an important way for you to find solutions. This is a time to exercise some caution in relationships. To avoid any negative situations, try to maintain positive communication while maintaining confidence in yourself. Unknown worries may create turmoil in your mind, so try to fill yourself with positivity. Recognize your inner creativity, even if it feels like

CONTD ON PAGE 70

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

BIRTHDAY HOROSCOPE : NOVEMBER 9 TO NOVEMBER 15
BY ASTROLOGER CHIRAG DARUWALLA



NOVEMBER 9

Ganesha says today will be highly beneficial for you if you are willing to take investment and business risks. Speculation in property and stocks will bring in handsome results. Today will be highly significant for working and professional women, as they will prosper in their respective fields. A journey or pilgrimage will provide comfort and peace. Be extra careful of your jewelry and expensive items. Chances of overseas education for a few students who are looking for a better career.

NOVEMBER 10

Ganesha says a new contract or partnership will take shape, lifting your morale and confidence. Investment in stocks and real estate is recommended. Businessmen dealing in trading and export will benefit. If you are a student, you will find this period highly exciting, adventurous, and full of good opportunities. Religious feelings will arise making you go for a pilgrimage later in the today. There are chances of marriage for the lover.

NOVEMBER 11

Ganesha says you would raise your work by doing consistently good work. At times you show your introverted side and that side of yours needs to be modified so that your close ones won't misinterpret you. Go and express your feelings without any hesitation in love matters. You could associate or get connected with any social service organization. You would also make some strong decisions independently today. Chances to get a big break in the entertainment industry are very high.

NOVEMBER 12

Ganesha says your mind is extraordinarily sharp which can solve problems within no time. Your organized risk-taking abilities are good but high-paid ventures may turn out to be inconsistent for you. Clashing of egos with your blood relatives may result in strain and irritation for both parties. You are well versed with the pace of the competition as your communication skill which is the need of the hour is unbeatable. You try to sort out all the matters but somewhere your immaturity may bring criticism for you.

NOVEMBER 13

Ganesha says you are imaginative, practical, honest, brilliant and simple. You're a co-operative and helpful person and enjoy enormous respect in your friend's circle, but you need to check your tendency to behave jealous and stubborn at times. Today, you will get ample chances to change your job profile but a sense of satisfaction may not exist. You carry a down to earth and practical attitude. Your supporting nature and simplicity leave a lasting impression on the people you meet.

NOVEMBER 14

Ganesha says you are kind-hearted, generous, simple, accommodating, and love peace and harmony. You have a strong memory and an ability to impress others with your intelligence. New proposals and assignments would improve your income and prosperity. Although there would be a rise in expenses but increase in earnings would take care of your needs. Travel would be undertaken quite frequently and would be important in establishing new and important ties.

NOVEMBER 15

Ganesha says today plenty of important functions and religious ceremonies would be performed in the family. Social gathering and activities would be beneficial in establishing new and long-lasting ties. Property matters will materialize. Financially today might not bring results that you have been dreaming for long. Opportunities for a new job and assignments would be plenty but job satisfaction seems unlikely.

CONTD FROM PAGE 69

nervousness. It is important to understand the depth of your thoughts and express them appropriately. Remember, every challenge presents a new opportunity. Move forward with love and support to bring stability to your relationships.

Author Bio

Chirag Daruwalla is the best astrologer and one of the most famous names in the astrology world. He has more than 18 years of experience. Readers may seek his advice related to career, health, finance, business, money, love and marriage. He has complete knowledge, solutions, and guidance to all the problems related to life. Visit his website chiragdaruwalla.com. He is available for consultations on WhatsApp number +91 8141566266 or by email: info@chiragdaruwalla.com

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Sikh History This Week

NOVEMBER 6 TO NOVEMBER 12

6TH NOVEMBER



1573 - Groundbreaking of Sri Amritsar Sarowar: Sri Guru Ram Das Ji personally conducted the ground-breaking ceremony for the sacred pool (Sarowar) at Sri Amritsar.

1840 - Death of Prince Naunihal Singh: Prince Naunihal Singh (grandson of Maharaja Ranjit Singh) passed away from injuries sustained on November 5 when a fort entrance roof collapsed in Lahore under suspicious and deliberate circumstances.

1908 - Establishment of Khalsa Parcharak Vidyala: The first Sikh Missionary School, Khalsa Parcharak Vidyala, was established at Tarn Taran.

7TH NOVEMBER



1675 Guru Tegh Bahadhur was presented to Aurangzeb, after his arrest near Ropar on July 12. Aurangzeb did all in his power to coax Guru Tegh bahadhur to embrace Islam. He offered him wealth, women, power, and reign. The Guru did not accept any one of them. He asked the Emporor for the Royal justice. He opposed the Emporer's policy of forced conversion. He said that the Emperor' coercive plan to prosleyytization was against God's laws. The Emperor was not in a mood to accept defeat. When the dialogue broke down he sentenced the Guru and his companions to death by torture. In the next three days, all the companions of the Guru were brutally tortured to death in front of the Guru's eyes. Bhai Mati Das was sawed into two pieces from head to lions. Bhai Dayal Das was thrown into a cauldron of boiling water and Bhai Sati Das was hacked to pieces, limb by limb.

1921 The keys to Sri Harimandir Sahib's "ToshaKhana" (Panthic treasury) were seized by the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, to forestall SGPC's decision to acquire them. The clamping of seditious meetings Act as well as the arrest of 103 leading Akalais failed to cow them down. The committee declated that



the surrender of the keys to S Kharak Singh, the uncrowned King of the Sikhs, would alone give them satisfaction. An agitation resulted for their returned on Jan. 19, 1922. The keys were returned to Baba Kharak Singh, President of SGPC, during active diwan in front of the Akal Takhat, by District Authorities, Amritsar. Mahatma Gandhi hailed this event as the "first decisive battle for India's freedom won".

8TH NOVEMBER

1899 "Khalsa Samachar", a weekly punjabi newsletter, was started by Vir Singh.

9th November

1821 Maharaja Ranjit Singh invaded Mankera, territory annexed and Nawab Haji Ahmad Khan given some jagir elsewhere. All his territories of Bannu, Tonk, Liya and Kundian came under Sikh occupation.

1840 Sher Singh proclaimed the successor.

1840 Rani Chand Kaur, mother of Nau Nihal Singh, announced the pregnancy of Gilwani, wife of prince Nau Nihal Singh.

10TH NOVEMBER

1880 First ever Punjabi weekly, "Gurumukhi Akhbar," was started by Singh Sabha, to popularise teh Sikh ideals.

1955 Sri Bhim Saen, then Chief Minister, visited Sri Darbar Sahib and sought forgiveness of Sikh Sangats for the July 4, 1955 incident.

11TH NOVEMBER



1534 Bhai Mardana passed away at Kurram in Afghanistan. Bhai Mardana was born at Talwandhi to mother Lakho and father Badro in Sanmat 1516. After becoming a Sikh of Guru Nanak, herighteously earned the status of "Bhai". He accompanies Guru Nanak Dev ji on his world trip and served as a key participant inKirtan. He dies in 1591 in Karam Nagar on the banks of Karamriver in Afghanistan. Guru Nanak, personally conducted the lastrights for Mardana. As per his wishes no monument was erectedin his remembrance. Since Mardana was a "Rabab" player, heand all his descendents came to be known as Rababis. Mardana'swritings are included in Guru Granth Sahib. He is recalled in twoSaloks by Guru Nanak Dev Ji in Rag Bihagdha, see Paudhi 12.His role during Guru Nanak's travels is well illustrated by thepopular phrase "Mardana, Jagat Nu Taran Da Bahana" -Mardana, a reason to save this world.

1675 Patshahi ninth, Guru Teg Bahadhur Ji was beheaded in public at Chandni Chowk, Delhi by orders of the Mughal Emporer. He was brought into the open place of execution in Chandni Chowk, Delhi and beheaded around 11am. Guru Ji's dead body was cremated by Lakhi at Rakab Ganj around 8pm. While Guru's severed head was smuggled to Anandput Sahib by Bhai Jaita, a distance of 350 kilometeres that was covered in 5 days. Today is the actual date of Guru Sahib's martyrdom, although it is observed on a different date by Guru Khalsa Panth. Kashmiri Pandits, led by Kirpa Das of Mattan (Martand), reached Chak Nanki, Kahlur (old name of Anadpur Sahib). He appealed to Guru Tegh Bahadhur for his help in against the prosecution of Kashmiri Pandits by Aurangzeb's forces and resulting extinction of hindu dharma. After appointing Gobind Rai as the next Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadhur left for Delhi on July 11, 1675. After Guruji's martyrdom, Pandit Kirpa Das stayed back and became Kirpa Singh after taking amrit in 1699 and died fighting at Chamkaur along with the two elder sahibjadas of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

When Guru Tegh Bahadhur sacrificed himself to save the Kashmiri Pandits from extinction in 1675, Guru Gobind Singh put his stamp on this truth by proclaiming "The Lord (Guru Tegh Bahadhur) protected the sacred thread and the frontal mark of the Hindus: He performed a great deed in the age of Kalyug." However, it is strange that the Kashmiri Pandits did not build any memorial in honour of Guruji. On the other hand the present generation had started doubting the veracity of this event.

1675 Guru Gadhi was bestowed on Tenth Patshah, Guru Gobind Singh Ji. He bacme Guru at the age of 9 when his father was tortured to death by the ruling Mughals. From the age of 9 to 42 when he breathed his last, life had been occupied fighting the Moghuls against injustice and tyranny. Today is the actual date when Guru Sahib was bestowed Guruship, though Guru Khalsa Panth observes it on a different date.

1710 Fort of Rahon was conquered by Baba Gurbakhash Singh (Banda Bahadhur).

1757 Bada Deep Singh Ji accepted Shahadat in Amritsar. The Sikh's attack on returning Afgan forces from Ahmad Shah's 4th invasion infuriorated Ahmed Shah. He sent and expedition against the Sikhs that resulted in the destruction of Sri Harimandir Sahib. Subseqquently, the Sikhs collected at Amritsar in Oct. 1757 to celebrate Diwali. They were attacked repeatedly bu Jaham Khan, Governor of Punjab. It is during these battles Baba Deep Singh Ji accepted Shahdat reclaiming and preserving the sactity of Sri Harimandir Sahib.

12TH NOVEMBER

1675 A day after the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadhur, the bodies of Bhai Mati Das, Sati Das, and Dayal Das were handed over to the Sikhs who cremated the bodies by the site of Jammu. This is the same site where Guru Har Krishan's body was creamted earlier.

1708 Guru Gadhi was bestowed upon Sri Guru Granth Sahib. This is the actual date of this event, though it is observed on a different date by Guru Khalsa Panth.

The INDIAN PANORAMA
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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

Spiritual significance of worshipping Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha together

Diwali is traditionally associated with the return of Lord Rama, Goddess Sita and Lakshmana to Ayodhya after 14 years of exile and the victory of righteousness over evil. However, there is an interesting spiritual aspect of Diwali that often makes people curious: if the festival celebrates the homecoming of Lord Rama, why are Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha worshipped together instead of Lord Vishnu?

The answer lies in an interesting mythological story that explains the special bond between Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha and the significance of their worship during Diwali.

Goddess Lakshmi is revered as the deity of wealth, fortune, abundance and prosperity, while Lord Ganesha is worshipped as the remover of obstacles and the god of wisdom, intellect and new beginnings.

According to Hindu tradition, Diwali Lakshmi Puja is an occasion to invite prosperity, happiness and auspiciousness into one's home. However, wealth alone cannot bring lasting happiness. Wisdom is equally important to ensure that prosperity is used in the right way.

This is why Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha are worshipped together. Their divine association symbolizes the importance of balancing wealth with wisdom, material prosperity with spiritual understanding, and success with humility.

Diwali Lakshmi Puja traditionally involves the worship of five deities:

- Goddess Mahalakshmi: The goddess of wealth, prosperity and abundance.
- Lord Ganesha: The remover of obstacles and the deity of wisdom and auspicious beginnings.
- Goddess Mahasaraswati: The goddess of knowledge, learning and wisdom.
- Goddess Mahakali: The divine form associated with strength and the destruction of negativity.
- Lord Kubera: The celestial treasurer and guardian of wealth.

Together, these deities represent the blessings required for a prosperous, meaningful and harmonious life.



The Mythological Story Behind Lakshmi and Ganesha's Association

According to a popular traditional legend, once Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Vishnu were having a conversation in Vaikuntha. Goddess Lakshmi was praising her divine powers and explaining how her blessings could bring wealth, luxury, happiness and prosperity to the world.

Listening to her, Lord Vishnu gently reminded her that although she possessed all the divine qualities, she had not experienced the joy of motherhood. He explained that motherhood was considered one of the most beautiful experiences in a woman's life. Goddess Lakshmi felt saddened by these words and decided to visit her dear friend, Goddess Parvati, to share her feelings. After listening to her, Goddess Parvati asked how she could help. Goddess Lakshmi expressed her desire to experience motherhood and requested Parvati to give her one of her sons.

Goddess Parvati had two sons, Lord Kartikeya and Lord Ganesha. She initially hesitated, explaining that Kartikeya had his own needs and Ganesha was quite playful and mischievous. She wondered how Goddess Lakshmi, who was always moving between different places, would take care of a child.

Goddess Lakshmi lovingly assured her that she would shower the child with affection and provide him with every comfort. She promised that all the divine attendants would look after him and that he would always remain close to her heart.

Moved by her affection, Goddess Parvati agreed to give Lord Ganesha to Goddess Lakshmi as her adopted son.

Overjoyed, Goddess Lakshmi declared that she would bless Ganesha with all her wealth, accomplishments, luxuries and prosperity. She also promised that her blessings would never be complete without his worship.

She further declared that whoever worshipped her without worshipping Lord Ganesha would not receive her complete blessings. From that day onwards, according to this popular legend, Lord Ganesha became an inseparable part of Goddess Lakshmi's worship.

This is one of the traditional stories associated with the practice of worshipping Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha together during Diwali.

The Spiritual Message Behind Lakshmi-Ganesha Puja

The worship of Goddess Lakshmi and Lord Ganesha together carries a beautiful spiritual message.

Goddess Lakshmi represents wealth, abundance and material comfort, while Lord Ganesha represents wisdom, intelligence and the ability to overcome obstacles.

Their combined worship reminds us that wealth without wisdom can lead to arrogance, greed and unhappiness. Similarly, wisdom without the means to fulfil our responsibilities can make life challenging.

The true meaning of prosperity lies in maintaining a balance between the two.

Diwali teaches us that before inviting wealth into our homes, we must also invite wisdom into our minds and purity into our hearts. It reminds us to use our resources responsibly, help those in need and remain humble even when life blesses us with abundance.

Diwali Vrat Katha: The Story of the Seven Brothers and Their Youngest Sister-in-Law

An important part of Diwali celebrations in many households is listening to traditional Lakshmi Puja stories. One such popular folk tale is the story of seven brothers and their youngest sister-in-law, which conveys the importance of faith, determination and devotion.

Once upon a time, seven brothers lived together in a village. Their family was extremely poor and struggled to meet even its basic needs. One day, the youngest brother got married and brought his wife home.

As Diwali approached, the youngest daughter-in-law decided to change the family's circumstances. She gathered all the brothers and encouraged them to go out and work. She asked each of them to bring home whatever they could earn or find. The brothers agreed and went out in search of work.

The youngest daughter-in-law began cleaning the house. By evening, the brothers returned with different things. One brought cow dung, another brought a dead snake, while the others brought milk, vegetables, a broom, paddy grains and wheat.

The young woman accepted everything and used the available ingredients to prepare a meal for the family.

The following day, an announcement was made throughout the kingdom. The queen had lost her precious nine-lakh necklace while bathing in a river. Whoever found and returned the necklace would receive a generous reward from the king.

Meanwhile, an eagle carrying the necklace flew over the brothers' house. Seeing the dead snake on the roof, the eagle dropped the necklace, picked up the snake and flew away.

The brothers were delighted when they discovered the necklace. They wanted to return it to the queen, but the youngest sister-in-law insisted that she would personally take it to the palace.

When she reached the palace and returned the necklace, the king was extremely pleased. He offered her a reward and asked what she desired.

The clever woman requested something unusual. She asked the king to ensure that the entire city remained dark on Diwali night, with no lamps or lights except in her own home.

The king granted her wish.

On the night of Diwali, the entire city remained dark, while the young woman's house was beautifully illuminated. She had cleaned and decorated her home, leaving one room dark.

As Goddess Lakshmi arrived in the city, she searched for a place where a lamp was burning. Seeing the beautifully illuminated house, she approached its entrance and knocked on the door.

The young woman asked who was there. Goddess Lakshmi replied that she was Lakshmi herself and requested permission to enter, explaining that the entire city was dark.

The daughter-in-law initially refused to open the door. She said that Goddess Lakshmi was known to move from one place to another, and there was no guarantee that she would stay in their home. Goddess Lakshmi assured her that she would remain there forever and bless the household with prosperity.

Satisfied with this promise, the young woman welcomed the goddess with great devotion and offered her the finest place in the house.

She then entered the dark room and drove away Daridra, the personification of poverty and misfortune, symbolizing the removal of negativity and hardship from the household.

According to the message of this folk tale, Goddess Lakshmi blesses the home where there is cleanliness, devotion, determination and a sincere desire to overcome hardship.

Mahabaleshwar: Explore the scenic beauty of the Western Ghats

Nestled in the lush, forested hills of the Western Ghats in Maharashtra, Mahabaleshwar is a beautiful hill station known for its breathtaking landscapes, pleasant climate, cascading waterfalls and rich historical heritage. Located south of Mumbai, this charming destination offers a perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. From spectacular viewpoints like Arthur's Seat to the historic Pratapgad Fort, serene Venna Lake and picturesque Lingmala Waterfall, Mahabaleshwar has something for every traveler.

Whether you are planning a family holiday, a romantic getaway or an adventurous backpacking trip, this hill town promises unforgettable experiences surrounded by nature. Here are some of the most popular places to visit in Mahabaleshwar.







Top Places to Visit in Mahabaleshwar

1. Mapro Garden

Mapro Garden is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Mahabaleshwar. Situated in Gureghar along the Mahabaleshwar-Panchgani Road, approximately 11 km from the main town, it is a delightful destination for visitors of all ages.

The garden features a chocolate factory, a small nursery, a children's play area and a restaurant serving delicious treats such as sandwiches, fruit salads, strawberry shakes and ice creams. Visitors can also shop for Mapro's famous jams, preserves, marmalades, syrups, toppings and fruit squashes.

If you visit during March or April, you may also get the opportunity to experience the famous Mapro Strawberry Festival, where you can savour unique strawberry-based delicacies, including strawberry pizza, strawberry bhel, chocolate-covered strawberries and strawberry sandwiches.

2. Wilson Point (Sunrise Point)

Standing at approximately 4,710 feet above sea level, Wilson Point is the highest viewpoint in Mahabaleshwar and one of the best places to witness a spectacular sunrise.

Also known as Sunrise Point, it features three stone platforms that offer visitors an excellent opportunity to admire the surrounding valleys and rolling hills. The viewpoint is named after Sir Leslie Wilson, a former Governor of Bombay during British rule.

Its three viewing platforms provide different perspectives of the breathtaking landscape, making it a must-visit destination for nature lovers, photographers and early risers.

3. Mumbai Point (Sunset Point)

Mumbai Point, popularly known as Sunset Point, is one of the oldest and most visited tourist attractions in Mahabaleshwar. It gets its name from its location along the old road leading towards Mumbai.

The viewpoint offers mesmerizing sunset views as the sun slowly disappears behind the mountains, painting the sky in beautiful shades of orange, pink and red. Its peaceful surroundings and refreshing atmosphere make it an ideal place to spend quality time with family and friends.

Visitors can enjoy leisurely walks, capture stunning photographs or simply relax while taking in the beauty of the valley.

4. Arthur's Seat

Known as the Queen of Points, Arthur's Seat is among the most famous viewpoints in Mahabaleshwar. Situated at an elevation of approximately 1,470 metres and around 13 km from the main market, it is renowned for its dramatic landscapes and breathtaking valley views.

The viewpoint offers a spectacular contrast between the Konkan region on one side and the Deccan Plateau on the other. One of its interesting natural phenomena is the way lightweight objects thrown into the valley may appear to rise again due to the upward air currents.

Surrounded by magnificent mountains, deep valleys and lush greenery, Arthur's Seat is a paradise for photographers and nature enthusiasts. October to June is generally considered a favourable period to explore this scenic attraction, depending on weather and local conditions.

5. Mahabaleshwar Temple

Located approximately 6 km north of the main town, Mahabaleshwar Temple is an important religious and historical landmark dedicated to Lord Shiva.

Believed to have been built in the 16th century, the temple showcases traditional South Indian architectural influences. Its beautiful stone construction, peaceful surroundings and spiritual atmosphere attract devotees and tourists throughout the year.

The temple complex is divided into two main sections: the inner sanctum, where the deity is worshipped, and the central hall, which provides space for devotees to gather and offer prayers.

For visitors interested in spirituality, history and traditional architecture, Mahabaleshwar Temple is an essential stop during their trip.

Experience the Best of Mahabaleshwar

Beyond these attractions, Mahabaleshwar offers several other memorable experiences. You can enjoy boating at the picturesque Venna Lake, admire the cascading waters of Lingmala Waterfall, explore the historic Pratapgad Fort and visit Panch Ganga Temple, associated with the origin of five rivers.

With its magnificent viewpoints, strawberry farms, historical landmarks and peaceful natural surroundings, Mahabaleshwar is a destination that offers the perfect blend of adventure, relaxation and cultural exploration. Whether you are watching the sunrise over the mountains or enjoying a peaceful evening by the lake, every moment here is worth remembering.

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CONTD FROM PAGE 1

After Donald Trump's midterm poll rout...

carries significance beyond the borders of the country of seven million people. Mr. Pena has been one of Mr. Trump's closest allies in the region, having organized the first Conservative Political Action Conference last year in Asunción, where Argentinian President Javier Milei praised Paraguay's economy as a "model" to follow.

"If the Republicans had retained the Congress, probably we would have seen Washington coming to Pena's rescue. But the situation has changed dramatically in the U.S. and our region," says a Brazilian diplomat, speaking strictly on condition of anonymity.

Former Argentinian President Cristina Kirchner saw it coming as she predicted on Monday, November 2, 2026), Mr. Trump's defeat and decline of his acolytes in South America. "Paradoxically, the man who did everything he could to help right-wing leaders win elections in Latin America will lose the elections in his own country," Ms. Kirchner told The Washington Post on November 2.

The following day, Ms. Kirchner was in a meeting with Brazilian Congressman André Janones as they discussed how to mobilize her Peronist party along the lines of Mr. Lula's grassroots campaign he had led in Brazil and defeat Javier Milei in next year's election.

Just ten days after Mr. Lula's victory and two days after Mr. Trump's rout, the mood across South America is shifting. In his second term, the American President placed the region high on his foreign policy agenda through his "Donroe Doctrine", which aimed to expand U.S. influence in the region in partnership with right-wing leaders. But the midterms, analysts believe, have given a jolt to that strategy. "The results weaken Trump, who will have more pressing concerns like congressional investigations to deal with.

This, combined with Lula's victory, could even lead Trump to negotiate tariffs with Brazil," says Rafael I. Ioris, professor of Latin American studies at the University of Denver, Colorado. "On the other hand, a cornered Trump could become more erratic. It would therefore be advisable for the Brazilian Government to strengthen its ties with Democrats in Congress as a counterbalance to the executive branch," adds the academic.

The sudden shift comes after an aggressive U.S. policy towards South America in the past 18 months, particularly towards its leftist governments. Besides abducting Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro, Mr. Trump targeted Brazil and Colombia with tariffs and visa restrictions, and got the Bolivian Attorney General arrested under the Shield of the Americas project. In Brazil, however, there is optimism that the changed political reality could open a window for diplomacy with the Democratic majority in Congress which can apply brakes on Mr. Trump's interventionist style. "The Congress will tend to cut spending in the defiance sector.

In Latin America, we could see a change in the Shield of the Americas plan, potentially through fewer resources and less emphasis on this policy," says Camila Vidal, a professor of international Relations at the Federal University of Santa Catarina.

Unlike Brazil, where Mr. Lula is firmly in control, its southern neighbor Argentina, where Mr. Milei is aligned with Mr.Trump, faces uncertainty as he prepares to seek another term in 2027. "The election will depend on the country's economic and social conditions. But international environment also matters. The political climate that favored Milei's rise may be beginning to unravel. Lula's victory and Trump's defeat do not mean the end of the far-right but they indicate that its expansion is not inevitable and there is room for an alternative based on sovereignty, social justice and peace," said Leonardo Attuch, one of Brazil's most prominent commentators.

Colombia, too, could face severe headwinds with the Government of its newly-elected far-right President Abelardo de la Espriella, who received Mr. Trump's public backing during the Colombian elections, standing on a shaky ground. Former Colombian president Gustavo Petro, who had several public spats with Mr. Trump, draws a parallel between the crises in Paraguay and the policies pursued by other right-wing governments in South America. "The first far-right president falls in Latin America: Santiago Pena of Paraguay. He turned his private bank into a savings deposit for pensions and the budget and went bankrupt. He has bankrupted Paraguay. The same economic programme was ramped up in Argentina and is now being applied in Colombia," Mr. Petro commented social media on Thursday (November 5, 2026) amid reports of Mr. Pena fleeing to Argentina.

The changed political landscape in Washington could also put Flávio Bolsonaro in a rather tricky situation. The Brazilian far-right leader, who arrived in the U.S. under mysterious circumstances after leaving Brazil, first declared himself to be the "real president-elect of Brazil" before changing it to the "leader of Brazil". With Mr. Trump last week saying that he had no plans of meeting Mr. Flavio and some Democrats demanding his deportation, Mr. Flávio's seems to be standing on a slippery slope.

Mr. Lula, meanwhile, was quick to seize on the irony of his running away from Brazil. "Flávio is a jinx for Trump. He landed in the U.S. and Trump lost the election," the Brazilian President joked during a live conversation, watched by millions, with Congressman Janones on Thursday, November 5, 2026 night.

Reduced to a lame-duck president, Mr. Trump himself could now become a jinx for the far right across South America. (Source: The Hindu)

Harmeet Kaur Dhillon, Chandigarh-born...

WHY DID HARMEET KAUR DHILLON RESIGN?

Dhillon did not give a specific reason for her resignation, maintaining that the decision was voluntary.

Reflecting on her tenure, she said her team had worked to end what she described as illegal diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policies and had fought to protect women's and girls' sports.

"Serving my country as AAG for Civil Rights has been the honor of a lifetime. We ushered in the downfall of illegal DEI, we fought to protect women and girls' sports, and so much more. I want to thank President Trump for giving me this opportunity. I look forward to what's next," she wrote.

Dhillon was also known for her active presence on social media, where she frequently posted videos about the work of the Civil Rights Division. In media interviews, she acknowledged that social media posts had at times helped generate ideas for civil rights investigations.

WHO IS HARMEET KAUR DHILLON?

Born in Chandigarh into a Punjabi Sikh family, Dhillon's parents initially moved to London before eventually settling in the United States.

A lawyer by profession, she ran her own law firm in San Francisco for several years and was closely associated with Trump even before joining his administration. Her firm was part of the legal team for Trump's 2020 election campaign.

A prominent supporter of Trump, Dhillon regularly appeared on conservative podcasts and maintained an active presence on social media.

Speaking at a Moms for Liberty event in New York in May, she described her parents' decision to bring the family to the US as the "greatest gift" they had given her.

Dhillon said her father was an orthopedic surgeon and that her parents left India in the 1970s before eventually moving to the US, where there was a shortage of doctors and medical professionals were being encouraged to come to the country during the Vietnam War.

"Besides life, the greatest gift that Mom and Dad gave me was bringing me here to America and allowing me to be sworn in as a naturalized American citizen when I was 10 years old," she said. Dhillon rose to prominence as a civil rights attorney before becoming one of Trump's prominent legal and political allies. Her resignation marks the first departure of a senior Trump administration official following the Republican Party's midterm election setback. (With inputs from PTI)

Canada plans to welcome 0.6 million new...

Announced on November 5, the measures aim to facilitate the transition of up to 2,00,000 temporary residents already in Canada to permanent residence by the end of 2027, in addition to the targeted 4,22,000 permanent resident admissions in 2027.

The information shared on the official website of Government of Canada (Canada.ca) by the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) reads: "The levels plan stabilizes targets for new temporary resident arrivals at 3,70,000 per year. This includes 2,20,000 new workers and up to 1,50,000 new international students in 2027, 2028 and 2029."

Of the 2,00,000 spaces under the one-time transition programme, 1,00,000 will be earmarked for skilled workers through the Express Entry system and the Provincial Nominee Programme (PNP), in coordination with provincial and territorial governments.

Read full story at www.theindianpanorama.news

History This Week NOV 06 - NOV 12

NOVEMBER 6

November 6, 1962 - The U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning South Africa for its apartheid policies and recommended economic sanctions.



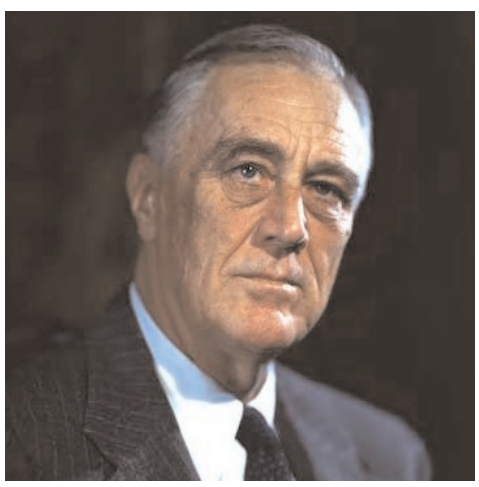
Birthday - American conductor John Philip Sousa (1854-1932) was born in Washington, D.C. Best known for his rousing marches including The Stars and Stripes Forever, Semper Fidelis, and El Capitan.

Birthday - Polish composer, pianist and patriot, Ignace Paderewski (1860-1941) was born in Kurylowka, Podolia, Poland.

Birthday - Inventor of the game of basketball, James Naismith (1861-1939) was born in Almonte, Ontario, Canada.

NOVEMBER 7

November 7, 1917 - Russian Bolsheviks overthrew the provisional government of Alexander Kerensky in Petrograd. The Council of People's Commissars was then established as the new government of Russia, with Nikolai Lenin as chairman, Leon Trotsky as foreign commissar and Josef Stalin as commissar of nationalities. This event was celebrated each year in the former USSR with parades, massive military displays and public appearances by top Soviet leaders.



November 7, 1944 - President Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to an unprecedented fourth term, defeating Thomas E. Dewey. Roosevelt died less than a year later on April 12, 1945.

November 7, 1962 - Richard Nixon told news reporters in Los Angeles "...just think how much you're going to be missing. You won't have Nixon to kick around any more, because, gentlemen, this is my last press conference." Nixon's statement came the day after he lost the election for California governor to incumbent Edmund G. Brown. In 1968, Nixon re-entered politics and won the presidency, defeating Hubert H. Humphrey. Re-elected in 1972, he resigned in 1974 during impeachment proceedings resulting from the Watergate scandal.

November 7, 1967 - Carl Stokes became the first African American mayor in the U.S., elected mayor of Cleveland, Ohio.

November 7, 1989 - The East German government resigned after pro-democracy protests.

November 7, 1989 - L. Douglas Wilder became the first African American governor in U.S. history, elected governor of Virginia.

November 7, 1990 - Mary Robinson became Ireland's first female president.

Birthday - Polish chemist Marie Curie (1867-1934) was born in Warsaw, Poland. In 1903, she and her husband received the Nobel Prize for physics for their discovery of the element Radium.

Birthday - Christian evangelist Billy Graham was born near Charlotte, North Carolina, November 7, 1918. After his conversion at a revival meeting at age 16, he embarked on a career of preaching and has become known worldwide.

NOVEMBER 8

November 8, 1923 - Hitler's Beer Hall Putsch took place in the Buergerbraukeller in Munich. Hitler, Goering and armed Nazis attempted, but ultimately failed, to forcibly seize power and overthrow democracy in Germany.

November 8, 1939 - An assassination attempt on Hitler failed at the Buergerbraukeller in Munich. A bomb exploded soon after Hitler had exited following a speech commemorating the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch. Seven others were killed.

November 8, 1942 - Operation Torch, the Allied landings in North Africa, began as 400,000 soldiers under the command of General Dwight D. Eisenhower landed at Morocco and Algeria.



Birthday - Astronomer and mathematician Edmund Halley (1656-1742) was born in London. He sighted the Great Comet of 1682 (now named Halley's Comet) and foretold its reappearance in 1758. Halley's Comet appears once each generation with the average time between appearances being 76 years. It is expected to be visible again in 2061.

Birthday - Dracula author Bram Stoker (1847-1912) was born in Dublin, Ireland.

Birthday - Gone with the Wind author Margaret Mitchell (1900-1949) was born in Atlanta, Georgia. Her romantic novel about the American Civil War sold over 10 million copies, was translated into 30 languages, and was made into one of the most popular movies of all time. She won a Pulitzer Prize in 1937 for the novel, her only book. She died after being struck by an automobile in Atlanta.

Birthday - Pioneering heart surgeon Christiaan Barnard (1922-2001) was born in Beaufort West, Cape of Good Hope Province, South Africa. He headed the surgical team that achieved the first-ever human heart transplant in 1967.

NOVEMBER 9

November 9-10, 1938 - Kristallnacht (the night of broken glass) occurred in Germany as Nazi mobs burned synagogues and vandalized Jewish shops and homes.

November 9, 1965 - At 5:16 p.m., the Great Blackout of the Northeast began as a tripped circuit breaker at a power plant on the Niagara River caused a chain reaction sending power surges knocking out interconnected power companies down the East Coast. The blackout affected over 30 million persons, one-sixth of the entire U.S. population. Electricity also failed in Ontario and Quebec.

November 9, 1989 - The Berlin Wall was opened up after standing for 28 years as a symbol of the Cold War. The 27.9 mile wall had been constructed in 1961.



Birthday - Architect Stanford White (1853-1906) was born in New York City. He designed New York's old Madison Square Garden, the Washington Arch, and the Players, Century and Metropolitan Clubs. White was shot to death on the roof of the Madison Square Garden by an acquaintance on June 25, 1906.

Birthday - Spiro Agnew (1918-1996) was born in Baltimore, Maryland. He served as Richard Nixon's vice-president from 1969-73. He resigned amid charges of income tax evasion on kickbacks received while he was governor of Maryland and after he became vice-president. As Nixon's vice-president, Agnew was known as an outspoken critic of the counter-culture and anti-war movements of the late 1960s and early 70s.

NOVEMBER 10

November 10, 1928 - Hirohito was crowned Emperor of Japan. He was Imperial Japan's Emperor during World War II. Following Japan's defeat, he was allowed to stay and remained Emperor until his death in 1989.

November 10, 1942 - Following the British victory at El Alamein in North Africa during World War II, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill stated, "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

Birthday - Reformation founder Martin Luther (1483-1546) was born in Eisleben, Saxony. In 1517, Luther tacked his 95 Theses on the door of Wittenberg's castle church asserting the Bible should be the sole authority of the church, and calling for reformation of the Roman Catholic Church.



Birthday - Actor Richard Burton (1925-1984) was born in Pontrhydyfen, South Wales (as Richard Jenkins). The son of a coal miner, he came to be regarded as one of the greatest acting talents of his day, although he never received an Oscar and was never knighted. He led a tempestuous personal life, highlighted by twice marrying actress Elizabeth Taylor. He died at age 58 of a cerebral hemorrhage. AllSaints Day

NOVEMBER 11

November 11, 1972 - The U.S. turned over its military base at Long Binh to the South Vietnamese, symbolizing the end of direct American military participation in the Vietnam War.

November 11, 1973 - Egypt and Israel signed a cease-fire agreement sponsored by the U.S.

November 11, 1987 - In Russia, Boris Yeltsin was removed as Moscow Communist Party chief for criticizing the slow pace of Soviet reform. NovemberHistory Book

November 11, 1992 - The Church of England voted to allow women to become priests.

Birthday - Abigail Adams (1744-1818) was born in Weymouth, Massachusetts. She was the wife of John Adams, the 2nd U.S. President.

NOVEMBER 12

November 12, 1948 - Japanese General Hideki Tojo and six others were sentenced to death by an Allied war crimes tribunal.

November 12, 1974 - The U.N. General Assembly suspended South Africa over its policy of apartheid.



November 12, 1982 - In Russia, Yuri Andropov was elected First Secretary of the Soviet Communist party following the death of Leonid Brezhnev.

The INDIAN PANORAMA
EVER TRUTHFUL
FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

India retains the Hero Asian Champions title with late 2nd-half recovery to beat Japan 4-1; Malaysia takes bronze



BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

NOVEMBER 5, 2026



Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Mann posing with the Indian team after it won the Hero Asian Champions Trophy in Mohali on November 5.

MOHALI (TIP): Trailing for the entire first half and 16 minutes into the second half, India staged a magnificent recovery to defeat Japan 4-1 in the gold medal match of the Hero Asian Champions Trophy Hockey Tournament at Olympian Balbir Singh Senior Hockey Stadium in Mohali on Thursday. With this win, India has completed its supremacy by winning all the continental titles this year.

Earlier, Malaysia defeated Korea 5-2 to win the bronze medal.

Japan, after taking the lead in the third minute to put the packed Olympian Balbir Singh Senior Hockey Stadium into silent mode, sustained the lead till the 46th minute before Shila Nand Lakra equalized and made the home team script yet another golden chapter of Indian hockey with a splendid 4-1 win.

Earlier, the Chief Minister, Bhagwant Mann, and the Governor of Punjab, Gulab Chand Kataria, went around various stands to acknowledge greetings from the spectators. Hardik Singh was presented a memento for playing his 200th international. Nilakant Sharma played his last international.

And those present to watch the final included the heroes of the 1975 World Cup team, Ajit Pal Singh and Aslam Dher Khan, and members of the 1980 Moscow Olympic champion team, Zafar Iqbal and the captain of the 1980 Olympic (women's) team, Rupa Saini, besides former Indian skipper Rajpal Singh and his shooter wife, Avneet, and India's former captain, Rani Rampal.

With Mandeep Singh joining Abhishek on the injured list, India started with Nila Kanta Sharma, playing his last international, and midfielder Hardik Singh playing his 200th international, while Amit Rohidas did not find a place in the starting XI.

Japan continued from where it left off against Malaysia in the first semifinal. With nothing to lose against the fancied home team and pre-tournament favorites India, it put everything into its game to give a message that it was not a mere pushover finalist. India had drowned Korea 8-1 in the second semi-final yesterday to give a strong message to the Japanese.

Japan, accepting the challenge, went on the offensive right from the start. Its intentions were fructified in the third minute when Kazumasa Matsumoto made full use of the lethargic Indian defense with a rasping D top drive that found Suraj Karkera on the wrong foot. A lead in the third minute for Japan sunned the nearly packed stadium.

Exhibiting tight man-to-man marking, the Japanese had countered every Indian move. While the home team tried to open the game by utilizing spaces, the Japanese were determined not to allow much freedom to the Indian offence line.

At one stage, it looked like the home team had run out of ideas against a determined opposition.

It was in the 13th minute that India had its first effective move when Shila Nand Lakra was brought down by Jutin Watanabe at the edge of the striking circle. The resultant review by the video referee supported a free hit, with India's count of seeking further VRs remaining intact.

Japan survived a concerted Indian attack when Harmanpreet's cross shot went unutilized in the 14th minute. Japan survived another Indian onslaught before the end of the first quarter.

Japan earned its first penalty corner in the 20th minute. Amit Rohidas, who came in, was the first runner and blocked the flick. Japan got its second after skipper Ralki Fujishima was challenged by Amit Rohidas. The award was upheld by the video referee. The second was deflected out.

India did miss a couple of sitters, especially the stingers moving across the goalmouth without getting touched or deflected.

A good move by Hardik went begging in the 30th minute.

Finally, India got its act together to force its first penalty corner in the 33rd minute. Harmanpreet's flick was calmly padded by Japan's goalkeeper Kisho Kuroda.

Skirmishes in the Japanese striking circle in the 37th minute proved unproductive, as even skipper Harmanpreet tried to slam the ball home from the middle of the circle.

India forced its second penalty corner in the 42nd minute. Trying an indirect, the ball moved around the Japanese circle before Shila Nand Lakra slammed it home to restore parity. The VR followed. The goal was upheld to make the score 1-1. Japan maintained the lead for 43 minutes.

It was Dilpreet who sent the crowd roaring with a volley into the net following a goalmouth melee in the 48th minute to put the home team in the lead for the first time.

Indians, with their tails up with a 2-1 lead, were now getting more into attacks, but their efforts were calmly brought down by the Japanese.

With eight minutes remaining, India earned another penalty corner, and this time Jugraj, who took the shot, flicked it into the net to make it 3-1.

Vivek Sagar Singh clinched the issue for the home team with a brilliant drive from the top of the circle following a rebound in the 54th minute.

Olympian Balbir Singh Senior Hockey Stadium gets its baptism with the Bangladesh-China match

BY
PRABHJOT SINGH

NOVEMBER 4, 2026

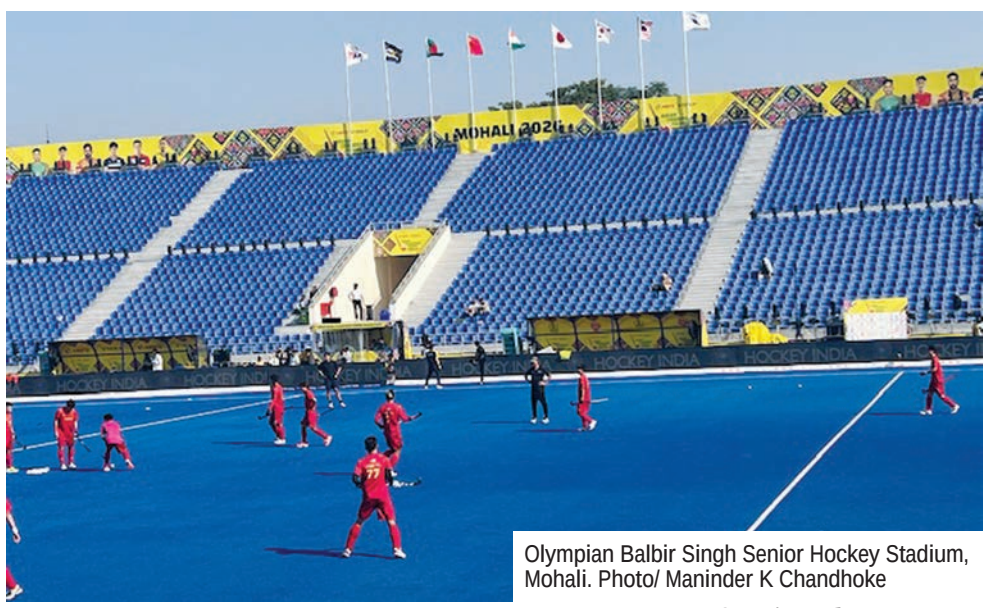
MOHALI (TIP): Mohali has become the latest Indian city to get on the international hockey map. Commissioned more than a decade ago during the state's SAD-BJP government, it never got the chance to host any international, let alone a tournament.

Facilities at this ultramodern sports complex, built across the road from the famous Inderjit Singh Bindra Punjab Cricket Association Stadium, will now be put to the test during the next two days of the Hero Asian Champions Trophy finals.

In fact, the PCA stadium brought this sleepy town on the outskirts of Chandigarh, a city planned by French architect Le Corbusier. The PCA Stadium was rated as one of the best not only in India and Asia but also in the world, for it has a long room, an exhibition hall, a clubhouse, a swimming pool, and indoor and outdoor training pitches, besides a plethora of other perks.

However, the PCA fell foul of the Punjab government that had leased its land for the construction of the stadium. Earlier, the Sector 16 Cricket Stadium in Chandigarh used to be the nerve center of all international and national cricketing activity. But once the PCA developed differences with the Chandigarh Administration, it decided to build its own stadium in Mohali.

The same story is true of the newly commissioned Olympian Balbir Singh Senior Hockey Stadium.



Olympian Balbir Singh Senior Hockey Stadium, Mohali. Photo/ Maninder K Chandhoke

Continued on Page 77

Cristiano Ronaldo retires from international duty after Portugal boss fallout

Cristiano Ronaldo announced on Thursday his retirement from international football after 23 years of representing Portugal at the highest level, following a fallout with coach Jorge Jesus.

Ronaldo, 41, has 146 goals in 234 games for Portugal, making him the leading men's international goal scorer and appearance maker.

"To the Portuguese people, the day has come to hand back the number seven shirt of the national team that belongs to us all. I never felt it was exclusively mine," Ronaldo said in a lengthy video posted on Instagram.

"But for 23 years I had the privilege and the responsibility of wearing it, defending it and taking it with me to stadiums all over the world. Today the time has come to hand it over to the future.

"It was not an easy decision, because there are decisions that are not made solely with the head; they are also made with the heart."

The announcement comes one day before Portugal coach Jorge Jesus names the squad for the upcoming Nations League games against Denmark and Wales.

Ronaldo's decision comes just after the Portugal captain served a 30-day suspension that was handed down by his country's football federation. The Al Nassr forward was punished for walking out of the national team in the previous international window. Ronaldo had taken the action after a fallout with new manager Jorge Jesus over playing time.

He played his last game for Portugal on Sept. 24, a 1-0 win over Wales in a Nations League game in Lisbon. Ronaldo was an unused sub for the first time in 18 years for Portugal in a 2-1 win at Norway on Oct. 4.

Ronaldo apologized to his teammates for walking out and expressed his desire to continue playing for the national team. He did not, however, apologize to Jorge Jesus, his former Al Nassr coach, whom he accused of breaking promises over his playing time.

On Thursday, Nov 5, Jesus said that he asked Ronaldo to stay but now is aware he must accept the decision.

"We already had the chance to talk about this before the first squad announcement. I asked him to stay on with me," the coach told Portugal's Channel 11. "He will always be in the hearts of the Portuguese people, and in the national team.

"He will always be a point of reference for our national team, for our people, and for our history."



Ronaldo has enjoyed many achievements with his national team. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner captained Portugal to Euro 2016 glory, and to the inaugural UEFA Nations League trophy three years later and again in 2025. He became the only player to score in six different FIFA World Cups this summer, though the title remained missing from his résumé after Portugal exited in the round of 16.

Ronaldo's other records include scoring the most goals in World Cup qualifying (41), most matches (30) and most goals (14) in European championships and becoming the only player to score in five different Euros.

"A journey that began in August 2003 and changed my life forever is coming to an end," he said. "When I look back and think of everything I've experienced with the national team, I don't just see matches, goals, records or trophies. I see people. I see immigrants who, for 90 minutes, felt Portugal was a little bit closer. "I see millions of Portuguese people whom I've never met in person, but who have been part of my life. Because, at the end of the day, football is so much more than just a game. Football is about the people. Throughout my entire career with the national team, I've strived to push my limits. I wanted to win, I wanted to be the best, I wanted to make history.

"I've always been hard on myself. I've always wanted more; I've always believed we could go further. And I gave everything I had for this shirt. There were perfect afternoons and evenings; there were victories I'll never forget. There were defeats that I still find hard to recall today. I also failed, I also suffered, and there were moments when I wasn't able to give the Portuguese people what they so desperately wanted. But I never gave up. And above all, I never stopped feeling proud to represent Portugal.

"Over the years, I've learnt some very simple things. Goals come and go, trophies end up in museums, and records are eventually broken. But there is one thing that time can never erase: the place we hold in people's hearts. If I ever made you happy, if one of my goals ever made you hug someone, forget your worries, and feel nothing but pride in our country, then it was all worth it. Because that's what being Portuguese is all about. We suffer together, we rise together."

Ronaldo thanked his teammates and coaches, stating: "No captain walks alone and you're all part of my story."

He added: "Portugal will always need young people who dream, players who never give up, new generations who believe it's possible to reach places no one has reached before. Because a country that continues to create new heroes is a country that never stops believing in itself."

From page 76

Chandigarh was the first to build a massive ultramodern hockey stadium with a synthetic surface in the late 90s. The Chandigarh Stadium had the fortune of staging a couple of editions of the Indira Gandhi Memorial Invitation Hockey Tournaments for women. It also played host to an international tournament for men when the Punjab police supremo KPS Gill was the president of the then Indian Hockey Federation.

With the turn of the century, the Punjab Government launched an expansive and elaborate scheme to modernize sports infrastructure in the State. Several towns and cities in the state were provided with synthetic hockey surfaces, both for five-a-side and full playfields, besides laying synthetic tracks at a couple of places, including Guru Nanak Stadium, Ludhiana, and a multipurpose sports complex at Gidderbaha.

Though India played host to many international sporting events, including the 2010 Commonwealth Games, 2010 World Cup Hockey and even Afro-Asian Games in Hyderabad, Punjab was deprived of holding any international meet.

On the other hand, Chandigarh continued to be the main alternative, as it played host not only to several Davis Cup matches, including the World Group semifinal against Australia in 1993, and the Asian Rowing Championships twice; Punjab sulked.

In the meantime, Punjab, tormented by decades of militancy, witnessed an unprecedented downfall in its sports potential. Its contribution to the national registry receded rapidly. Instead, neighboring Haryana overtook Punjab as the new sports powerhouse of the country.

Punjab's offers to stage some of the international competitions, including hockey, were thwarted by the national sports federations, as they started demanding huge capitation and hosting fees. Other States, especially Odisha, grabbed the opportunity and emerged as the new sporting center of the country. It built world-class sports infrastructure, including hockey stadia at Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, indoor sports complexes at Bhubaneswar, an indoor athletics stadium and sports science centers. Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and now Madhya Pradesh followed the Odisha example.

Punjab, waiting in the wings, got this golden opportunity that met the immediate approval of the political bosses of the state. With elections to the State Assembly due in early 2027, Punjab agreed to the terms and conditions of both Hockey India and the Asian Hockey Federation to host the Hero Asian Champions Trophy Hockey Tournament.

Encouraged by the public response to the event, the government has now offered to host the 2030 FIH World Cup for men. Hockey has won, and it is a win-win situation for the Punjab government as well.

(Prabhjot Singh is a senior Toronto-based, award-winning independentjournalist, who worked with The Tribune, Reuters, and several media groupsin a career spanning nearly five decades. He has written extensively aboutDiaspora, Politics, Business, Aviation, Health, Public and Private Sectors andSports. He can be reached at prabhjot416@gmail.com)

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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6, 2026
20TH YEAR

Eye Foundation America

GOUTAMI EYE INSTITUTE
SEE FOR YOURSELF

An Eye Institute in Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh combating avoidable blindness in children.

On behalf of all my colleagues of the Wilmer Eye Institute in Baltimore, MD. I send my best wishes and congratulations to our friends in Goutami on this extremely important occasion. This beautifully facility will match the wonderful world class work of your doctos, nurses, and staff in preserving and restoring the vision of so many patients. We in the United States are inspired by your dedication and admire your tireless efforts to serve so many who need your skills and compassion.
Best Wishes, Peter



Peter J McDonnell, MD Director Wilmer Eye Institute, Johns Hopkins



New Goutami Institute to be constructed 2024



In 2018 Prasanth, Sushanth and Nisanth were diagnosed and treated and Prematurity Retinopathy. An illness in premature babies which can cause blindness.

Luckily through GEMROP an initiative funded by EFA to screen premature babies throughout hospitals in India, the triplets were able to receive an expensive surgery free of charge. The boys are now the age of 4 with perfect vision.

3.5 + million served
325,000 + vision restoring surgeries
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