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President Donald Trump began his address by saying America is safer, stronger and wealthier. (Photo courtesy: The White House)

US election system 'vulnerable': Trump

In a 23-minute primetime address, the US President said his administration will work with state governments to strengthen election security.

Washington: President Trump argued that the US election system is dangerously exposed to hacking and manipulation, adding that it falls "catastrophically short" of the security Americans deserve.

In his address to the nation on Thursday, he backed the claim with long-disputed allegations about his 2020 loss to former President Joe Biden, arguing that without major changes, November's midterms are vulnerable to being "rigged and stolen."

The "disclosures reveal an election system so broken and so vulnerable that no one can possibly defend it. It is not defensible," Trump said in his primetime address to the nation, arguing that the electoral system is fundamentally flawed.

Trump described the current voting and mail-in system as "not defensible," claiming hundreds of millions of American voter files have ended up in foreign governments' hands and that vote-counting machines remain exposed to hacking and manipulation.

He claimed that a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) investi-

gation identified approximately 278,000 non-citizens registered on state voter rolls for federal elections.

Further, he said that a US intelligence assessment concluded adversaries including Russia, China, Iran, North Korea and non-state groups can compromise American election infrastructure.

The US leader alleged that China gained access to sensitive US election data, renewing his long-standing claims that the 2020 presidential election was compromised. "Over a period of years, starting during the 2020 election cycle, the People's Republic of China carried out what is believed to be the largest compromise of election data in history, resulting in China's illicit acquisition of 220 million US voter files."

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India, US actively engaged on trade deal: Sergio Gor

New Delhi: US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor has slammed a report for running 'fake news' around the India-US trade talks, saying both sides had very constructive meetings and reaffirmed their commitment to finalizing a trade deal.

The report had claimed that India allegedly rejected a quick trade agreement with the US in recent trade negotiations.

"Fake news alert! No one has rejected anything. Both sides had very constructive meetings and reaffirmed their commitment to finalizing a trade deal. We continue to stay actively engaged. Reuters - you can do better!" Gor posted on social media platform X.

Earlier, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal refuted the report as "completely false" and "baseless". In a post on X, Goyal said: "This news is completely false, baseless, and misleading."

"I had fantastic meetings with USTR Jamieson Greer when he visited Delhi in June. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to an agreement that is balanced, commercially meaningful, and delivers tangible benefits



Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and US Ambassador Sergio Gor dismissed a report claiming an impasse in India-US trade talks. (Photo courtesy: X@PiyushGoyal)

for businesses, farmers, workers, and consumers in both countries," the Commerce Minister said. PAGE 4 >>



The World Cup final will be played at New York-New Jersey Stadium with thousands cheering for the teams. (Photo courtesy: X@FIFAWorldCup)

World awaits Argentina-Spain clash with Trump in attendance

New York: The stage is set for the biggest clash when it comes to football (or soccer in the US). The FIFA World Cup 2026 final will take place on Sunday in East Rutherford, New Jersey, pitting Europe's top-ranked team, Spain, against South America's No 1, Argentina.

FIFA has already confirmed US President Donald Trump's attendance at the 2026 World Cup final. The US president is expect-

ed to present the trophy to the winning side.

Spain will look to add a second World Cup title to their collection, while Argentina want to collect a fourth trophy.

Spain and Argentina last played each other in an international friendly on March 27, 2018, at the Wanda Metropolitano stadium in Madrid. Spain won the match 6-1.

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Philanthropy award for the Poolas from FeTNA

Philanthropist duo Kanchana and Jagadeesan Poola were conferred the prestigious Lifetime Philanthropy Award by the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA) at its 39th annual convention over the July 4 weekend in Edison, NJ. The award recognized the Poolas' decades of selfless service, visionary leadership, and extraordinary generosity.

(See pages 12 & 13 for details)



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Over 100 House Democrats vote to end military aid to Israel

A vote in the House of Representatives has exposed a deepening divide within the Democratic Party over continued American support for Israel, with more than half of Democratic lawmakers backing an amendment to strip USD 3.3 billion in military aid from a broader national security appropriations bill.

Although the amendment was defeated by a 314-104 vote on July 15, the outcome marked one of the strongest indications yet of changing political sentiment following Israel's war in Gaza, which has resulted in the deaths of thousands of Palestinians.

The vote also underscored growing divisions within the Democratic Party as it heads toward the US midterm elections, which will determine control of Congress. More than 100 Democratic lawmakers supported the amendment to end the military aid, while nearly as many voted against it. Most Republicans, meanwhile, backed retaining the funding.



The House vote showed Gaza conflict is reshaping party politics ahead of the midterm elections. (Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)

House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said he opposed the amendment that sought to eliminate US military aid to Israel entirely, but stressed that "for the good of Israel and the Palestinian people, American policy in the

Middle East must change."

In a letter to fellow Democrats ahead of a private caucus meeting this week—where Israel was the central topic of discussion—Jeffries said he believed "there are more decisive ways to achieve the

Military cost of Iran war may exceed \$100 bn

United States intelligence officials estimate that the total military cost of the war in Iran could reportedly exceed \$100 billion for the Pentagon. This massive financial projection highlights the escalating economic strain of the conflict as prolonged combat operations, intensive logistics, and advanced munitions consumption drain defence resources far faster than initial assessments predicted.

With no immediate end to the hostilities in sight, defense

analysts warn that the final bill could disrupt broader government spending for the Donald Trump administration and force a significant reallocation of the federal budget.

Beyond active combat zones, the Pentagon is absorbing vast indirect costs to stabilise neighboring territories and protect strategic maritime trade routes. A significant portion of the projected budget is dedicated to keeping critical sea lanes open, particularly around the Strait of Hormuz.

urgent change necessary when it comes to the far-right Netanyahu government."

While more traditional Democrats have continued to support US backing for Israel, a growing number have distanced them-

selves from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's strategy since the Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. Democratic Whip Katherine Clark of Massachusetts said she would support withholding the funds.

US eases tariff threat for Russian oil buyers



The Russian sanctions bill was originally introduced by Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who passed away last week. (Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)

The United States has proposed changes to a Russia sanctions bill that could offer some relief to India and China, the two biggest buyers of Russian crude oil, news agency Reuters reported this week.

Republican and Democratic senators introduced an updated version of the legislation that lowers the maximum tariff on countries buying Russian oil and gas to 100%, down from the earlier proposal of a blanket 500% tariff.

The revised bill aims to pressure countries to reduce their dependence on Russian energy while imposing sanctions on Russian officials. The latest version also gives US President Donald Trump the power to waive the sanctions if he believes doing so is in the US national interest.

India is among the world's largest importers of Russian crude, along with China. Under the revised proposal, the maximum tariff would apply only to the top five

buyers of Russian oil and natural gas, rather than all importing countries as envisaged in the earlier draft.

The bill, originally introduced by the late Republican Senator Lindsey Graham and Democratic Senator Richard Blumenthal, has bipartisan backing. Senate aides said it currently has 26 co-sponsors and more support is expected as it moves through Congress. According to Reuters, the revised version is seen as having a clearer path to passage than the original proposal.

WH launches Gold Eagle to enhance cybersecurity

The White House has launched Gold Eagle, an artificial intelligence-powered clearinghouse which is designed to identify and patch cybersecurity vulnerabilities across critical US infrastructure at unprecedented speed and scale.

The initiative brings federal agencies, open-source software partners and private infrastructure companies into a coordinated system. It will receive, assess and prioritize cyber vulnerabilities before passing actionable information to government and industry defenders.

Gold Eagle was established under President Donald Trump's June 2 executive order, "Promoting Advanced Artificial Intelligence Innovation and Security." The White House described it as a new operational model for cyber defense.



Gold Eagle was established under President Donald Trump's June 2 executive order. (Photo courtesy: The White House)

The clearinghouse will employ frontier AI capabilities to process threat information. It will help government and industry identify risks, prioritize action and strengthen the resilience of systems supporting the US economy, national security and everyday life.

"Gold Eagle serves as the vanguard of America's cyber defense. We are leveraging frontier AI alongside top American innovators to safeguard our critical infrastructure and protect the homeland," Secretary of War Pete Hegseth said.

Kumar Shah, M.D.

Diplomate American Board of Internal Medicine, Endocrinology, Diabetes & Metabolism

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US election system 'vulnerable': Trump

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Reiterating his longstanding criticism of electronic voting systems, Trump argued that voting machines are vulnerable to cyber-attacks and again called for a return to paper ballots.

The President stressed that his administration will work with state governments and local election officials to strengthen election security, claiming the voting system has significant flaws in many parts of the country.

"We're in the process of informing governors, senators, and members of Congress of potential issues in their states," Trump said, adding, "If you look at voting today, it's in such bad shape in so many states, and we are committing to fix it."

A key part of Trump's election agenda is the proposed SAVE America Act, backed by Republican lawmakers. The legislation would require documentary proof of US citizenship to register to vote, mandate voter identification, and expand information sharing between states and the federal government to help verify voter rolls.

Since returning to the White House in January 2025, President Trump has pushed for stricter election laws, including mandatory photo identification for voters and proof of US citizenship during voter registration.

India, US actively engaged ontrade deal: Sergio Gor

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Goyal further stated: "Our teams remain fully engaged in achieving this objective". The Reuters report had claimed that India "is holding out for abetter deal".

Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal also said that negotiations for a mutually beneficial trade deal between India and the US are underway and progressing in the right direction.

Addressing a press conference here, the Commerce Secretary said: "We don't see any challenge in negotiations, and consultations

are progressing in the right direction."Late last month, Gor said that the proposed India-US trade agreement is in its "last one or two per cent" and negotiators are working to resolve the remaining issues, expressing confidence that the deal would soon be concluded after nearly 18 months of negotiations.

In his address at the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) Leadership Summit, Gor said officials from both countries had intensified engagement in recent weeks to bring the agreement across the finish line.

Ex-RBI governor, 2 other Indians on US Fed task forces

Washington: Former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Raghuram Rajan, Delhi-born economist Raj Chetty and Microsoft executive Asha Sharma have been appointed to key task forces set up by the US Federal Reserve to review the monetary policy.

The newly appointed Federal Reserve Chairman, Kevin Warsh, announced five task forces to examine critical areas of monetary policymaking, including communications, balance sheet policy, data, productivity and jobs, and inflation frameworks.

Raghuram Rajan has been named to the Balance Sheet Policy task force alongside Harvard economist Karen Dynan and for-

mer Federal Reserve governor Jeremy Stein. The panel will examine the costs, benefits and institutional implications of the Federal Reserve's current balance sheet regime. Harvard University economist Chetty will serve on the Data task force with Doug McMillon and economist Kevin Murphy from the University of Chicago. Asha Sharma has been appointed to the Productivity and Jobs task force alongside Marc Andreessen and Stanford economist Charles I Jones. The group will assess the economic impact of new general-purpose technologies, including artificial intelligence, to inform the Federal Reserve's policy judgments.

World awaits Argentina-Spain clash with Trump in attendance

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The World Cup final will be played at MetLife Stadium, home to two National Football League (NFL) teams: the New York Giants and the New York Jets. For the World Cup, the venue has temporarily been rebadged as New York-New Jersey Stadium.

This huge multipurpose stadium holds up to 82,500 spectators for football fixtures. The venue also hosted the 2025 FIFA Club World Cup final and both semifinals. For

the first time in the event's history, the World Cup final will have a Super Bowl-style halftime show. Entertainment stars such as Madonna, Justin Bieber, Shakira, BTS, Burna Boy, Gustavo Dudamel and the PS22 Chorus featuring Coldplay will perform. Separately, the final kickoff will also be preceded by a closing ceremony. Entertainers such as Tom Cruise, Robbie Williams and Nicole Scherzinger are expected to feature.

Mamdani's NYC Mural Project to celebrate FIFA final

Mayor Zohran Mamdani and the Groundswell Community Mural Project announced 12 community-designed murals in parks across all five boroughs to celebrate the 2026 FIFA World Cup and leave a lasting legacy in New York City's neighborhoods.

This initiative — launched in partnership with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development — will transform public spaces into vibrant works of art created by young people, artists and community members.

Together, the murals will celebrate the energy, creativity and

community spirit that define New York City while creating welcoming public spaces that will remain long after the tournament ends.

"These murals will belong to the neighborhoods that brought them to life—from Fordham Heights to Ocean Hill to Laurelton and communities across our city. Long after the final whistle of the World Cup, kids will walk past these walls and see something their families helped create," said Mamdani.

"That's how public art strengthens our sense of belonging and reflects the people who call their neighborhoods home. I'm grateful for this partnership and for the chance to leave something behind that will outlast the tournament itself," he said.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that pursuant to Section 511 of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998 and 24 CFR 903.17, a public hearing will be held by the Town Board of the Town of Brookhaven at Town Hall, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738 on **September 10, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.** for the purpose of hearing public comments on the formulation of the Town of Brookhaven's Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) Public Housing Agency Annual Plan for Fiscal Year 2027.

All interested persons shall be given the opportunity to be heard at this public hearing. Copies of the proposed FY2027 Annual Plan, required attachments and documents related to the plan shall be available for review by the public at the Town of Brookhaven, Department of Housing and Community Development, located at, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738 between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays and at www.brookhavenny.gov.

Written comments will be accepted by email to akarppi@brookhavenny.gov or by mail to the Department of Housing and Community Development, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, New York 11738 no later than **September 10, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.**



**ALISON KARPPI, COMMISSIONER
TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**AVISO PÚBLICO**

POR LA PRESENTE SE NOTIFICA que, conforme a la Sección 511 de la Ley de Calidad de Vivienda y Responsabilidad Laboral de 1998, así como al 24 CFR 903.17, la Junta Municipal del Municipio de Brookhaven llevará a cabo una audiencia pública el **10 de septiembre de 2026 a las 5:00 p.m.** en el Ayuntamiento, ubicado en One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738. El propósito de esta audiencia es recibir comentarios del público sobre la elaboración del Plan Anual de la Agencia de Vivienda Pública para el Programa de Vales de Elección de Vivienda (Sección 8) correspondiente al Año Fiscal 2027 del Municipio de Brookhaven.

Todas las personas interesadas podrán expresar su opinión durante la audiencia pública. Copias del Plan Anual propuesto para el Año Fiscal 2027, junto con los documentos requeridos y anexos relacionados, estarán disponibles para consulta pública en el Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunitario del Municipio de Brookhaven, ubicado en One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738, de lunes a viernes entre las 9:00 a.m. y las 4:30 p.m., así como en el sitio web www.brookhavenny.gov.

También se aceptarán comentarios por escrito, ya sea por correo electrónico a akarppi@brookhavenny.gov o por correo postal dirigido al Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Comunitario, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, Nueva York 11738. La fecha límite para recibir comentarios es el **10 de septiembre de 2026 a las 5:00 p.m.**



**ALISON KARPPI, COMISIONADA
MUNICIPIO DE BROOKHAVEN
DEPARTAMENTO DE VIVIENDA Y DESARROLLO COMUNITARIO**

**TSAB NTAWV CEEB TOOM RAU ZEJ TSOOM SAWV DAWS**

THOV CEEB TOOM QHIA RAU SAWV DAWS PAUB tias raws li Nqe 511 ntawm Tsab Cai Hais Txog Vaj Tse Nyob Kom Zoo Tsim Nyog thiab Lub Luag Hauj Lwm Ntawm Kev Ua Hauj Lwm xyoo 1998 thiab 24 CFR 903.17, kev txiav txim plaub ntug rau pej xeem yuav teeb tsa los ntawm Pawg Thawj Coj Hauv Nroog ntawm Nroog Brookhaven ntawm Lub Tuam Tsev Hauj Lwm Ntawm Nroog, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738 hauv **Lub Cuaj Hlis Ntuj Tim 10, 2026 thaum 5:00 teev tsaus ntuj.** los mloog lus tawm tswv yim los ntawm pej xeem txog kev txiav txim plaub ntug txog kev tsim Txoj Phiaj Xwm Ib Xyoos Puag Ncig Ntawm Lub Chaw Hauj Lwm Saib Xyuas Vaj Tse Nyob Rau Pej Xeem Nyob Hauv Daim Npav Kev Xaiv Vaj Tse Nyob (Nqe 8) Ntawm Nroog Brookhaven rau Lub Xyoo Npaj Nyiaj Txiag 2027.

Txhua tus neeg uas tsaus siab koom nrog yuav tau txais lub hwm tsam tuaj tawm tswv yim nyob ntawm kev txiav txim plaub ntug rau pej xeem no. Cov ntawv theej ntawm Txoj Phiaj Xwm Ib Xyoos Puag Ncig FY2027 uas tau hais los no, cov ntawv rhais nrog thiab cov ntaub ntawv uas yuav tsum tau muaj ntsig txog txoj phiaj xwm yuav muaj rau kev tshuaj xyuas los ntawm pej xeem ntawm Nroog Brookhaven, Lub Thawj Fab Hauj Lwm Saib Xyuas Vaj Tse Nyob thiab Kev Txhim Kho Zej Zog, nyob rau ntawm, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738 nyob ntawm cov sij hawm thaum 9:00 teev sawv ntxov thiab 4:30 teev tsaus ntuj. cov hnuab ua hauj lwm thiab nyob ntawm www.brookhavenny.gov.

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**ALISON KARPPI, TUS THAWJ TSOM KWM
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**THÔNG BÁO CÔNG KHAI**

THEO ĐÂY XIN THÔNG BÁO rằng, căn cứ Mục 511 của Đạo luật Chất lượng Nhà ở và Trách nhiệm Việc làm năm 1998 và Điều 24 CFR 903.17, Hội đồng Thị trấn Brookhaven sẽ tổ chức một buổi điều trần công khai tại Tòa Thị chính, địa chỉ One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738, vào **lúc 5:00 chiều ngày 10 tháng 9 năm 2026**, nhằm tiếp nhận ý kiến của công chúng về việc xây dựng Kế hoạch Hằng năm của Cơ quan Nhà ở Công cộng cho Chương trình Phiếu Lựa chọn Nhà ở (Mục 8) của Thị trấn Brookhaven cho Năm Tài chính 2027.

Mọi cá nhân quan tâm đều sẽ có cơ hội trình bày ý kiến tại buổi điều trần công khai này. Bản sao dự thảo Kế hoạch Hằng năm cho Năm Tài chính 2027, các tài liệu đính kèm bắt buộc và các tài liệu liên quan đến kế hoạch sẽ được cung cấp để công chúng xem xét tại Sở Nhà ở và Phát triển Cộng đồng Thị trấn Brookhaven, địa chỉ One Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738, trong khung giờ từ 9:00 sáng đến 4:30 chiều các ngày trong tuần, và trên trang web www.brookhavenny.gov.

Ý kiến bằng văn bản sẽ được tiếp nhận qua email tại akarppi@brookhavenny.gov hoặc qua đường bưu điện gửi đến Department of Housing and Community Development, One Independence Hill, Farmingville, New York 11738, chậm nhất vào **5:00 chiều ngày 10 tháng 9 năm 2026**.



**ALISON KARPPI, ỦY VIÊN
THỊ TRẤN BROOKHAVEN
SỞ NHÀ Ở VÀ PHÁT TRIỂN CỘNG ĐỒNG**

**お知らせ**

ここに通知する。1998 年良質住宅・勤務責任法 (Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998) 第 511 条及び連邦規則集第 24 編 903.17 項 (24 CFR 903.17) に基づき、ニューヨーク州ファーミングビル (Farmingville, NY) 郵便番号 11738、インディペンデンスヒル 1 番地 (One Independence Hill) の町庁舎 (Town Hall) にて、ブルックヘイブン町町議会 (Town Board of the Town of Brookhaven) は **2026 年 9 月 10 日午後 5 時** に公聴会を開催する。本公聴会は、2027 会計年度 (Fiscal Year 2027) におけるブルックヘイブン町住宅選択バウチャー (Housing Choice Voucher、通称セクション 8 (Section 8)) 公営住宅機関年間計画 (Public Housing Agency Annual Plan) の策定に関する住民からの意見を聴取することを目的とする。

本公聴会には、利害関係を有するすべての者が意見を述べる機会が付与される。2027 会計年度案年間計画書、必要な添付資料及び計画関連書類の写しは、平日午前 9 時から午後 4 時 30 分まで、ニューヨーク州ファーミングビル (Farmingville, New York) 郵便番号 11738、インディペンデンスヒル 1 番地 (One Independence Hill) のブルックヘイブン町住宅・地域振興課 (Department of Housing and Community Development, Town of Brookhaven) にて閲覧可能であるほか、ウェブサイト (www.brookhavenny.gov) でも閲覧できる。

書面による意見は、電子メールアドレス (akarppi@brookhavenny.gov) または郵送 (宛先: ニューヨーク州ファーミングビル (Farmingville, New York) 郵便番号 11738、インディペンデンスヒル 1 番地 住宅・地域振興課 (Department of Housing and Community Development)) にて受け付ける。受付締切は **2026 年 9 月 10 日午後 5 時** とする。



**ブルックヘイブン町
住宅・地域振興課長
アリソン・カルピ**

**公告**

现依据《1998 年优质住房与工作责任法》(Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act of 1998) 第 511 条及《联邦法规汇编第 24 编》(24 CFR) 第 903.17 条规定, 布鲁克海文镇 (Town of Brookhaven) 镇委员会定于 **2026 年 9 月 10 日下午 5 时**, 在纽约州法明维尔 (Farmingville) 独立山 1 号 (One Independence Hill) 镇政厅 (Town Hall, 邮编 11738) 召开公众听证会, 就布鲁克海文镇 (Town of Brookhaven) 2027 财年住房选择券 (Housing Choice Voucher, 第 8 条款 Section 8) 公房管理局 (Public Housing Agency) 年度规划草案征集公众意见。

所有利害相关人士均可在本次听证会上发表意见。

公众可前往布鲁克海文镇 (Town of Brookhaven) 住房与社区发展部 (Department of Housing and Community Development) 查阅 2027 财年年度规划草案、配套附件及相关文件, 办公地址: 纽约州法明维尔 (Farmingville) 独立山 1 号 (One Independence Hill), 邮编 11738; 查阅时段为工作日上午 9 时至下午 4 时 30 分, 相关文件也可登录官网 www.brookhavenny.gov 线上查阅。

书面意见可发送邮件至 akarppi@brookhavenny.gov, 或邮寄至住房与社区发展部 (Department of Housing and Community Development, 地址同上), 意见提交截止时间为 **2026 年 9 月 10 日下午 5 时**, 逾期不再受理。



Community partnership powers India Home's first senior center in Hicksville

AIA National, Guru Krupa Foundation, and The New York Community Trust support the initiative

Hicksville, NY: India Home celebrated the grand opening of its first Senior Center in Hicksville, Long Island, marking a significant milestone in expanding culturally sensitive services for the region's rapidly growing South Asian senior community.

The new center will provide seniors with opportunities for social engagement, health and wellness programs, educational workshops, cultural activities, recreation, and supportive services in a welcoming environment. The inauguration drew more than 200 attendees, including elected officials, community leaders, India Home and Association of Indians in America (AIA) members, donors, volunteers, and representatives of numerous community organizations.

Opening the ceremony, Mukund Mehta, President of the Board of

Directors of India Home, reaffirmed the organization's commitment to improving the quality of life of South Asian seniors through compassionate care and meaningful programming. He thanked AIA National, Guru Krupa Foundation, The New York Community Trust, donors, volunteers, and supporters whose generosity made the center possible.

Among the featured speakers was Gobind Munjal, Immediate Past National President and Member of the Board of Trustees of the Association of Indians in America (AIA). He described the opening of the Senior Center as the realization of a shared vision to provide Long Island seniors with friendship, dignity, purpose, and a strong sense of community.

While India Home successfully operates six senior centers in

Queens, along with affordable senior housing, home care services, and other programs, Long Island's expanding South Asian senior population had long lacked a culturally responsive center to meet its unique needs.

Recognizing this need, the AIA National Executive Committee unanimously approved a \$35,000 grant to help establish India Home's first Senior Center on Long Island.

Assemblyman Charles Lavine congratulated India Home on opening the new center and praised the organization for creating an inclusive, culturally responsive environment that will benefit seniors across Long Island.

Dr. Kalasapudi expressed gratitude to the organization's donors, volunteers, elected officials, community organizations, and princi-



AIA Past Presidents and NEC members presenting a \$35,000 check to India Home. L to R: Dr. Urmilesh Arya, Sushma Kotahwala, Uma Swaminathan, Jyoti Gupta, Gobind Bathija, Gobind Munjal, Dr. Narinder Kukar, Dr. Vasundhara Kalasapudi, Mukund Mehta, Dr. Usha Bansal, and Suman Munjal (Photo courtesy: Gobind Munjal)

pal supporters—especially AIA National, Guru Krupa Foundation, and The New York Community Trust—for helping make the center possible.

The Hicksville Senior Center will be open free of charge every

Tuesday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., with a complimentary lunch served each program day. The celebration concluded with cultural performances and a sumptuous community luncheon.

AAPI Global Foundation launched at Tampa Convention



Dr. Jagdish Gupta, Chairman of the AAPI Global Foundation, demonstrated his personal commitment to the cause through a generous \$100,000 donation toward cancer prevention initiatives. (Photo courtesy: AAPI)

Tampa, Florida: The American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) ushered in a new era of leadership, service, and global engagement with the formal launch of the AAPI Global Foundation during its 44th Annual Convention, held in Tampa, Florida, from July 2-5, 2026.

Opening the ceremony, AAPI leaders reflected on the organization's remarkable journey and the collective effort that has made AAPI one of the most influential ethnic medical associations in the United States.

Dr. Amit Chakrabarty, Immediate Past President of AAPI, emphasized

that the Foundation represents a shared aspiration rather than the accomplishment of any one individual. "Today is not about one individual. It is about all of us working together to ensure that AAPI remains strong, relevant, and prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the future."

Dr. Lokesh Edara, former Chair of the AAPI Board of Trustees, described the Foundation as far more than a traditional nonprofit initiative. "A new chapter has been launched, the AAPI Global Foundation. It is not just an organization—it is a think tank, it is a uni-

versity. You can do your own projects through AAPI Global Foundation, benefitting the cause and the people you want to serve."

Dr. Jagdish Gupta, Chairman of the AAPI Global Foundation, demonstrated his personal commitment to the cause through a generous \$100,000 donation toward cancer prevention initiatives. He formally articulated the mission of the Foundation. Dr. Gupta explained the unique role the Foundation will play within the broader AAPI ecosystem. "AAPI Global Foundation has been created with a complementary and unique purpose. We are a project-oriented foundation dedicated to identifying, developing, and advancing innovative initiatives that can

create meaningful and measurable impact throughout the globe."

He emphasized that the Foundation is designed to bridge the gap between ideas and implementation, allowing members to transform innovative concepts into sustainable programs that benefit communities around the world.

A major highlight of the launch was the presentation of several flagship projects that will serve as the Foundation's inaugural portfolio. Each project is led by accomplished physicians and community leaders committed to achieving measurable outcomes within defined timelines.

The projects introduced include:

Cancer Prevention Initiative to include Mobile Mammography,

Cervical Cancer Screening, and HPV Vaccination Drive in the Delhi Region — led by Dr. Jagdish Gupta

Empowering Children Through Education — led by Dr. Sunil Kaza

Mammography Screening Program in Rural Telangana — led by Dr. Satheesh Kathula

CPR and Emergency Medicine Training in Tamil Nadu — led by Dr. Arunachalam Einstei

Stem Cell Donation and Drug-Free India Campaign — led by Dr. Sashi Kuppala

HPV Vaccination and Limb Donation Advocacy — led by Dr. Meher Medavaram

GAIMS India: Global Association of International Medical Students — led by Abhishek Kashyap



PARAM strengthens community bonds with celebration of Rajasthani heritage: The Philadelphia Rajasthani Mandal (PARAM) hosted its Annual Summer Picnic at Charlestown Township Park on July 12, 2026. The event brought together Rajasthani families from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and neighboring states in a vibrant celebration of culture, heritage, and community. Chester County Commissioner Josh Maxwell attended as Chief Guest. (Photo courtesy: PARAM)



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Nirav Shah launches bid for U.S. Senate race from Maine

New York: Former Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention Director Nirav Shah on July 9 launched a bid for the US Senate seat from Maine, setting up a challenge to incumbent Republican Sen. Susan Collins in the 2026 election.

Shah announced his candidacy in a video message, saying he was running to "defeat Susan Collins" and arguing that Maine needed stronger representation in Washington.

His announcement came after Democratic Senate nominee Graham Platner announced he was ending his campaign following a sexual assault allegation, which he has denied.

Once Platner formally withdraws from the ballot, Maine Democrats can select a replacement nominee under state law.

Addressing Platner's supporters, Shah said, "To those who supported Graham Platner, my message is this: You have an important place in this campaign because it represents the values that we all care about—building a state and a country where everyone can get ahead, respecting our neighbors, and holding Donald Trump accountable."

Criticizing Collins' nearly three decades in the Senate, Shah said, "Susan Collins has been in Washington for nearly 30 years, and the longer she stays, the less that Maine families have to show for



Nirav Shah (Photo courtesy: shahformaine.com)

it. Maine deserves a fighter in this seat, and I will be that fighter."

Shah outlined a progressive platform that includes support for Medicare for All, higher taxes on billionaires and large corporations, immigration enforcement reforms, and opposition to President Trump's foreign policy.

"I will fight for Medicare for All because in the wealthy-

est country on earth, nobody should ever go bankrupt over a medical bill," Shah said. He also pledged to "make billionaires and the biggest corporations finally pay their fair share," "rein in ICE and end the targeting of our immigrant neighbors," and "end Trump's reckless foreign wars." He added that he would oppose Trump's "far-right judges" and Cabinet secretaries. In a post on X, Shah reiterated those priorities, saying the race was "not about one person or one seat" but about "everyday Mainers."

"I've shown up and fought for you before, and I am ready to do it again," he wrote.

A physician and public health expert, Shah rose to prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic through his daily briefings as director of the Maine CDC from 2019 to 2023.

He later served as principal deputy director of the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention before returning to Maine.

Kaustav Misra begins tenure as Dean of SUNY New Paltz School of Business

New York: Kaustav Misra joins the New Paltz community after serving more than three years as dean at SUNY Fredonia's School of Business, where he oversaw student and academic affairs, personnel administration, financial planning and accreditation activities, among other responsibilities, for a school of three undergraduate departments and one graduate degree program, while also directing Fredonia's Center for Innovation & Economic Development.

"I am honored to join SUNY New Paltz as the incoming Dean of the School of Business," Misra

said. "The University's historic campus, strategic Hudson Valley location, outstanding student body, and dedicated faculty create a strong foundation for continued excellence. I look forward to building on this momentum by advancing innovative programs, aligning with regional workforce development needs, strengthening partnerships, and further elevating student success and community impact."

Misra's career in higher education demonstrates a commitment to entrepreneurship and a facility for strategic, long-term planning. After earning his Ph.D. in applied economics from Mississippi State University, Misra served for nearly a decade at Saginaw Valley State University in Michigan, then nearly four years as associate dean of the School of Business at Central Connecticut State University, before his appointment as dean at SUNY Fredonia in 2023.

Misra's leadership at Fredonia led to the creation of signature initiatives like the Best in Business Awards, Women Entrepreneurship Day, the International Business Analytics Conference, the Analytics Career Fair, the School of Business



Kaustav Misra, Ph.D., will become the next Dean of the School of Business at SUNY New Paltz effective July 1, 2026, after a competitive national search. (Photo courtesy: SUNY New Paltz)

Discovery Day, a Shark Tank-style Business Pitch Competition for high school students, and a Literacy Day Workshop for middle and high school educators that engaged approximately 350 teachers and administrators.

He also expanded Fredonia's portfolio with several new academic programs, including the MBA in Accounting Online and the +2 Online Completion Program in Sports Management, while advancing new bachelor's degrees in Alternative Energy

Management, Healthcare Administration, and Data Analytics: Financial Economics. Over his years as an administrator, Misra has refined a data-informed approach to planning, assessment and educational innovation. He has led two strategic planning processes and contributed to three others; supported faculty colleagues in expanding multi-modal teaching (in-person, online and hybrid) to serve more students; developed and implemented effective faculty retention strategies for an ever-more-competitive higher education landscape; and supported three successful Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) reaccreditation processes.

In addition to his time at Mississippi State University, Misra earned master's degrees in economics and agricultural economics from the University of Kentucky, and master's degrees in marketing and business administration from Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. He earned his bachelor's degree from Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya I West Bengal, India, where he began his career in industry prior to moving into academia.

American Cricket Council plans inter-school, inter-college tournaments with scholarships

New Jersey: The American Cricket Council (ACC), headquartered in New Jersey with administrative offices at TV Asia (300 Fidelity Plaza, North Brunswick, NJ 08902), has announced a coordinated national initiative to develop cricket at the school and collegiate levels in the United States. The program includes the Cricket Hall of Fame (ChoF) Inter-School Championship, the Intercollegiate Super Cup, and a Super League tournament. Param Veers Sports Complex in Atlanta will serve as the principal competition venue and the year-round home of ACC events, as well as the USA Center for Excellence in cricket for players and a home for coaches training center.

Leadership and operational staffing are expected to be in place within months and will draw heavily on recent graduates of U.S. colleges and universities



(Logo courtesy: ACC)

who possess competitive cricket experience at national, regional, or representative levels.

The initiative is supported by seasoned leaders in the cricket community. Dr. H. R. Shah, CEO & Chairman of TV Asia, recipient of the Padma Shri award, joins Michael Chambers, Executive Director & Founder, Cricket Hall of Fame in supporting the program. Jayesh Patel, owner of Param Veers Sports Complex and Cricket Hall of Famer, and Jatin Patel, Director of the Cricket Hall of Fame and recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award, will provide program leadership.

Jatin Patel will also lead ACC coaching and school/college cricket education. Ashok P. Patel, Cricket Hall of Famer and founder president of USA Cricket Academy, has announced his support for cricket education in schools and for advancing coach training at higher levels. Cricket show USA will be one of the media partners and many other organizations are expected to join.

The ACC initiative will introduce three membership categories: student-athletes, coaches/academies, and umpires. Coaches will function as local liaisons, with structured opportunities for remuneration tied to program responsibilities. A group of educators will address academic support and scholarship administration, while major financial resources are expected to come from sponsorships and commercial partnerships.



Consul General Binaya S. Pradhan welcomed Sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, along with acclaimed virtuosos Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash at the Consulate; he deeply appreciated their outstanding contribution to Indian classical music and India's rich cultural heritage. (Photo courtesy: India in New York/Facebook)

BAPS celebrates America250 through unity, service and community

New York: As the United States commemorated the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha joined in the America250 celebration through events centered on faith, service, gratitude, civic pride, and unity across the nation.

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha was proud to partner with America250.org, the national, non-partisan initiative leading the commemoration of America's Semiquincentennial. Through this partnership, BAPS joined a nationwide effort to engage Americans in one of the most inclusive anniversary celebrations in the nation's history.

For South Asian Americans, America250 offered a meaningful opportunity to honor the freedoms, opportunities, and shared values that have enabled generations of families to preserve their heritage while supporting the American story. From early immigrants seeking new beginnings to the millions of South Asian Americans who today serve in medicine, education, business, public service, technology, the arts, and civic life, their journey expresses a broader American experience shaped via resilience, service, opportunity, and belonging.

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, a Hindu organization that has served communities in the United States

for more than 50 years, marked this national milestone through mandir-based celebrations, open houses, interfaith gatherings, service initiatives, and community events. Since beginning its activities in the United States in the early 1970s, BAPS has expanded alongside the nation, establishing mandirs, promoting civic engagement, and welcoming people of all backgrounds.

Across the country, BAPS Swaminarayan Mandirs commemorated America250 with civic gratitude and community enthusiasm. Mandirs were illuminated in red, white, and blue, families participated in patriotic activities, and community members gathered to reflect on the values that unite Americans across backgrounds and beliefs.

In Robbinsville, New Jersey, BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham hosted a flag-hoisting ceremony with veterans and community members, where devotees and families waved American flags in a demonstration of gratitude and unity. In Los Angeles, the BAPS mandir held a flag-raising ceremony with local veterans and opened its doors to the larger community to share culture, values, and service. In Houston, four local mayors from Sugar Land, Missouri City, Pearland, and Stafford joined the celebration as the mandir was illuminated in red, white, and blue, and the National Anthem was played.

Many celebrations highlighted religious freedom, pluralism, and service. Through interfaith discussions, community open houses, volunteer efforts, and family-centered activities, participants reflected on how America's founding ideals have allowed diverse communities to practice their faith, raise families, serve neighbors, and contribute substantially to society.

One of its most treasured artifacts is a special letter from His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj, offering prayers for America on its 250th anniversary. In the letter, he reminds us that the freedoms and opportunities of this nation have allowed our community to become part of the American story—and that with those blessings comes a shared responsibility to serve, strengthen, and uplift our country.

The events brought together community members, local leaders, veterans, faith representatives, non-profit partners, and residents to celebrate the shared values that still shape the nation. For many families, America250 was a moment of gratitude for the freedoms and opportunities that have enabled generations to pursue education, build careers, practice their faith, raise families, and serve their communities while maintaining their cultural heritage.

BAPS Charities also incorporated America250 themes into its annual Walk-Run events, bringing together



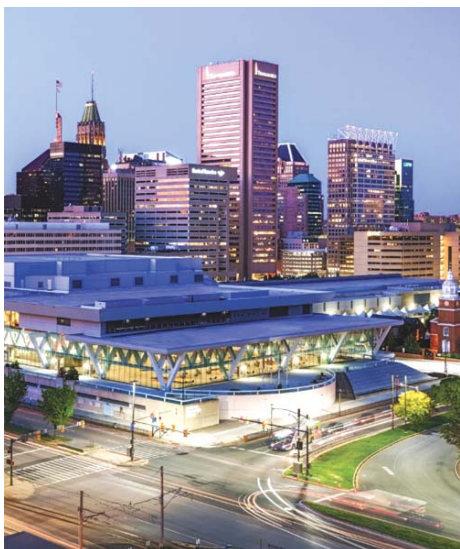
BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Los Angeles celebrates America250
(Photos courtesy of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha)



Thousands of community members wave American flags at BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in Robbinsville, New Jersey

tens of thousands of participants across North America in support of local charitable causes. These events have supported hundreds of

organizations working in health, education, humanitarian relief, environmental protection, and social well-being.



(Photo courtesy: ATA)

Baltimore, MD: Baltimore is preparing for an extraordinary celebration as the American Telugu Association (ATA) enters the final countdown to its 19th ATA Convention and Youth Conference, scheduled for July 31 through August 2, 2026, at the Baltimore Convention Center. With thousands of attendees expected from across the United States, Canada, India, and several other countries, the convention promises to be one of the largest and most comprehensive Telugu gatherings ever organized outside India. For months, hundreds of dedicated volunteers have been working around the clock to bring the event to life, coordinating logistics, hospitality, transportation, registration, technology, security, stage production, cultural events, exhibitions, guest relations, youth activities, business forums, and medical conferences. As the countdown enters its final days, Baltimore

ATA 19th Convention: Baltimore set to host one of the largest Telugu gatherings in the world

Thousands expected at the Baltimore Convention Center, July 31 to August 2, 2026, as the American Telugu Association marks 35 years of service

is ready to welcome the global Telugu community for three days of celebration, learning, networking, and inspiration.

This year's convention holds special significance as ATA celebrates 35 years of service to the Telugu community. Since its founding in 1991, the organization has grown into one of North America's most respected Telugu institutions, promoting Telugu language and culture while supporting education, healthcare, youth leadership, entrepreneurship, humanitarian initiatives, disaster relief, scholarships, professional networking, and community service. The Baltimore convention represents not only a celebration of ATA's remarkable journey but also a vision for the future of the global Telugu community.

Unlike a traditional cultural event, the ATA Convention has evolved into a destination where every generation finds a place to belong. Whether attendees are business executives, entrepreneurs, physicians, engineers, students, artists, homemakers, retirees, or young professionals, the convention offers opportunities to learn, connect, celebrate, and grow. From early morning until late in the evening, multiple halls throughout the Baltimore Convention Center will come alive with programs designed to educate, inspire, entertain, and bring people together.

One of the convention's biggest attractions will be its expansive Business and Entrepreneurship Forum, where established business leaders, investors, startup founders, and aspiring entrepreneurs will come together to explore new opportunities. Programs such as B2B Matchmaking, executive networking sessions, the Mergers and Acquisitions Forum, and the ATA ZEE5 Idea Baaz Startup Competition will provide participants with opportunities to build partnerships, exchange ideas, connect with investors, and showcase innovation.

Healthcare continues to be one of ATA's signature initiatives. The prestigious Continuing Medical Education (CME) Conference will bring together distinguished physicians, researchers, and healthcare professionals to discuss the latest advances in Artificial Intelligence in Medicine, Cardiology, Oncology, Diabetes, Pulmonology, Nephrology, Vascular Medicine, Allergy and Immunology, Healthy Aging, and other emerging areas of healthcare.

The convention will also feature engaging Political Forums, the elegant Weaves of Silk Fashion Show, the energetic Niraval Live Concert, the colorful ATA Beauty Pageant, the Youth Fashion Show, the spectacular Hanumath Charitham Kuchipudi dance pro-

duction, Astavadhanam, literary conferences, Sri Shiva Parvathula Kalyanam, the Youth Cruise, the ATA Matrimony Meet, and one of the convention's largest ever Vendor Exhibitions. With hundreds of programs taking place simultaneously across multiple venues, there is something meaningful for every member of the family.

ATA President Jayanth Challa said, "The ATA Convention is much more than a three day event. It is a celebration of our language, culture, heritage, achievements, and the remarkable journey of Telugu people around the world. Every volunteer and every committee has worked with passion and dedication to create an experience that will make our entire community proud. As ATA celebrates 35 years of service, we warmly invite everyone to join us in Baltimore for this historic milestone."

ATA Convener Sridhar Banala said, "Preparations have reached an exciting stage. Our teams have spent months planning every detail so that every attendee enjoys outstanding programs, exceptional hospitality, seamless logistics, and unforgettable memories. We look forward to welcoming thousands of families to Baltimore."

Registration details and the full program schedule are available at www.ataworld.org.

NASA astronaut Anil Menon reaches ISS for eight-month mission

New York: Indian origin NASA astronaut Anil Menon has successfully reached the International Space Station aboard the Soyuz MS-29 spacecraft, marking the beginning of an eight-month mission focused on scientific research. Menon lifted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan alongside Roscosmos cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina, and the crew docked with the station roughly three hours after launch, according to Space.com. The mission is Menon's first spaceflight and forms part of the continuing operational partnership between NASA and Roscosmos aboard the orbit-



Anil Menon travelled with Roscosmos cosmonauts Pyotr Dubrov and Anna Kikina from Kazakhstan aboard Soyuz MS-29 (Photo courtesy: X/astro_anil)

ing laboratory. Menon previously worked as an emergency physician, engineer, and flight surgeon before joining NASA's astronaut corps. He also served as SpaceX's first-ever flight surgeon before his selection by NASA. His medical background is expected to play a central role in the research assignments planned for his stay aboard the station.

Menon, Dubrov, and Kikina will join the Expedition 74 crew already stationed aboard the ISS, where they are expected to remain for approximately eight months, conducting research, performing maintenance, and supporting ongoing scientific investigations.

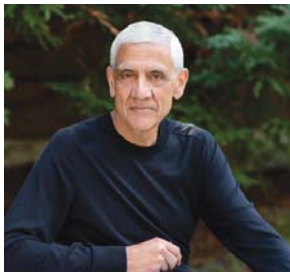
Vinod Khosla to buy NFL's Seattle Seahawks for record \$9.6 billion

New York: An Indian-American billionaire and venture capitalist, Vinod Khosla, is set to become the new owner of the National Football League's Seattle Seahawks franchise. Khosla's family finalized the deal last week, agreeing to pay a record \$9.6 billion for the team.

Seattle Seahawk, in a statement on July 12, announced that the Estate of Paul G Allen, which has owned the franchise since 1997, had reached a formal sale agreement with a group led by the Khosla family. "The Khosla family will become the team's controlling owner," the statement read.

The franchise didn't disclose the terms of the agreement, but ESPN reported, quoting sources, that Seattle Seahawk is being sold for \$9.612 billion, making it the most expensive NFL franchise sale ever.

"We are honored to be entrusted as the next stewards of the Seattle Seahawks. We look forward to building on the winning legacy Paul



Venture Capitalist Vinod Khosla (Photo courtesy: Vinod Khosla/LinkedIn)

Allen created and to earning the trust of the Seahawks organization and fans everywhere," Vinod Khosla said, on behalf of his family.

Seattle Seahawks, the defending Super Bowl champions, was bought by Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist Paul G Allen from Ken Behring for \$194 million in 1997. After his death in 2018, his sister, Jody, took over the franchise.

NBC Sports reported that Vinod Khosla's wife, Neeru, will be the controlling owner of Seattle Seahawks while their son, Neal, is "expected to have a significant leadership role in the ownership group."

Khosla is the founder and managing director of Khosla Ventures, a Silicon Valley-based venture capital firm. Forbes reported that he has a current net worth of \$13.7 billion and ranks 254 on Forbes' real-time list of world's richest people.

Boston Consulate warns Indians of embassy impersonation scam

New York: The Consulate General of India in Boston has issued a public advisory warning members of the Indian diaspora and other residents about a rise in fraudulent calls from scammers impersonating officials of Indian diplomatic missions and law enforcement agencies.

Sharing the advisory on X, the Consulate said: "Scam Alert! India in Boston has seen reports of fraudsters impersonating Indian Embassy/Consulate officials/spoofing official telephone numbers! Please see the advisory below."

The advisory cautioned that fraudsters are using fear and intimidation to deceive victims into sharing sensitive information or making payments.

According to the Consulate, scammers may falsely claim that a person's SIM card has been used for illegal activities in India, allege problems with passport, visa, or immigration documents, or accuse individuals of involvement in hawala or money laundering cases while threatening arrest or legal action.

The advisory further warned that fraudsters often "use fear tactics by demanding immediate action, insisting you remain isolated, or asking you to join video calls." Victims may also be asked to share personal, financial, or identity information, including copies of official identity documents, which can later be misused for fraud, identity theft, or blackmail.

The Consulate stressed that its officials never seek payments or sensitive personal information over the phone.

It stated: "The Consulate General of India, Boston Will Never: Demand payment or financial information over the phone. Threaten arrest, legal action, deportation, or other adverse conse-

quences. Ask you to join a video call or share identity documents for verification. Ask you to visit the Consulate to resolve an alleged legal matter in India."

The advisory also clarified that "All official communications from the Consulate are made through official email only."

Highlighting the modus operandi of fraudsters, the Consulate noted that genuine Indian law enforcement agencies do not conduct investigations through phone or video calls.

It emphasized: "Indian Law Enforcement Officials [CBI/ED/Police/Customs] Do NOT: Make a telephone/Video call for purported crimes in India. Conduct a digital arrest. Seek a money transfer via Digital or Crypto means."

The mission urged anyone receiving such calls not to panic or comply with the callers' demands. Instead, recipients were advised not to share any personal, financial, or identity information, not to join video calls, and not to make any payment. The Consulate advised the public to "Hang up immediately" if they receive a suspected fraudulent call and report the incident to local law enforcement as well as the Consulate at cons.boston@mea.gov.in.

The advisory comes amid increasing reports of sophisticated impersonation scams targeting members of the Indian community overseas, with fraudsters using spoofed official telephone numbers and fabricated legal threats to coerce victims into revealing confidential information or transferring money. The Consulate urged the public to remain vigilant and rely only on official channels for any communication concerning consular or legal matters.

(courtesy: IANS)

Management Guru and Goizueta Prof. Jagdish Sheth to retire after 35 years of service

New York: Charles H. Kellstadt Chaired Professor of Business Jagdish Sheth at Goizueta Business School will retire from August 31 and leave behind a decades-long legacy of global thought leadership, mentoring, scholarly inquiry, humanitarianism, kindness, and excellence.

Prof. Sheth has inspired generations of future leaders and change agents, collaborated with academic peers locally and internationally, and fostered intellectual growth into new realms of understanding.

"He represents wisdom, empathy, humor and ethics that made him the pride of Goizueta," says Benn Konsynski, George S. Craft Distinguished University Professor on Information Systems & Operations

Management. "As a scholar and colleague, he truly deserves the label G.O.A.T—Greatest of All Time."

Professor Sheth joined the faculty of Goizueta Business School in 1991, having held academic positions at University of Southern California, University of Illinois, Columbia University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Copenhagen School of Economics and Business, University of Pittsburgh, and Indian Institute of Management. As he has shared, "Emory University provided opportunities to grow the marketing area with new and innovative programs and recruit young faculty."

An intuitive and innovative thinker, in 1993 Professor Sheth

founded the Center for Relationship Marketing at Emory and served as its director until 2004. He added, "We focused on relationship marketing and became among the top ten marketing departments in the country."

A sought-after speaker, presenter, and curriculum developer, Professor Sheth's consulting expertise and research influence are globally recognized. In 2025 he was named to the Stanford University and Elsevier database of the World's Top 2 % Scientists.

As one of the foremost marketing research scholars in the world, Professor Sheth has authored or edited 80 books, as well as nearly 300 papers, book chapters, and articles.

As a family, the Sheths founded

the Madhuri and Jagdish Sheth Foundation, the Sheth Family Foundation, and the Sheth Education Foundation to empower people around the world.

With overall goals to foster education, wellness, and sustainability in the United States and India, individually and together the Sheths contribute to more than 60 non-profits and universities in metro Atlanta and the Indian community.

To grow local and global Indian culture, they provide philanthropic support for Indian cultural events and Indian non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In higher education, the Sheths have established endowed chairs and post-doctoral study in Jainism.

With emphasis on creating



Prof Jagdish Sheth (Photo courtesy: Jag Sheth/Facebook)

next generation scholars in marketing disciplines, the Sheth Fellowship provides financial support for Goizueta doctoral students.

Established in 2002 at Emory, The Sheth Distinguished Alumni recognizes an individual who has helped the world through outstanding contributions to humanity, science, art or human welfare that demonstrate the value of global and international engagement.

Hochul launches first statewide moratorium on new hyperscale data centers

New York: Governor Kathy Hochul signed an Executive Order to create the nation's first moratorium on new hyperscale data centers, establishing the strongest standards for data center development and creating a blueprint to support localities. The Governor is temporarily pausing State environmental permits for up to one year in order to build a nation-leading regulatory framework that protects ratepayers, the environment, the energy grid and communities across the state.

"New York has always been at the forefront of innovation and change but we've also always guaranteed that New Yorkers benefit. As data center development threatens to hike up utility bills, deplete our natural resources, and create uncertainty for New Yorkers, it's my responsibility to take action and lead," Governor Hochul said. "New York will lead the way in creating the strongest standards in the nation for data center development, ensuring that when companies succeed because of New York, New Yorkers succeed too."

New York State is experiencing unprecedented growth in demand for data center development driven by artificial intelligence and other computing operations. The increase in demand has led to proposals across the state for the construction and operation of data centers that could require massive amounts of energy and water to run and cool thousands of computer servers.

Earlier this year, the Governor directed the Department of Public Service (DPS) to begin the Energize NY proceeding, which will require data centers to either pay more for their energy or supply their own, allowing the state to keep energy more affordable for New Yorkers. As part of that proceeding, the Governor is now also directing DPS to develop a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) for data centers to ensure new data centers coming



Governor Kathy Hochul signing the executive order
(Photo courtesy: governor.ny.gov)

online are being held to consistent standards.

The Governor also directed Empire State Development (ESD) to issue a Community Investment Framework (CIF) within 60 days, which will provide clear guidance to local entities to help them negotiate community benefits as part of any large-scale data center deal, including local infrastructure improvements, child care investments, and direct financial support for their community.

Additionally, the Governor is directing DPS to consider creating a New York Grid Acceleration Fund to require data centers to invest in the state's aging grid infrastructure and energy needs so all New Yorkers benefit from responsible development.

Finally, Governor Hochul is pursuing legislation to repeal sales tax exemptions for massive data centers across the state.

Mamdani kicks off summer youth employment program

To provide 100,000+ young New Yorkers with jobs and paid internships

New York: Mayor Zohran Kwame Mamdani kicked off the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), as 100,000 young New Yorkers prepare to step into workplaces across the five boroughs. From community organizations and small businesses to hospitals, cultural institutions, and government agencies, SYEP offers work experience at thousands of workplaces across the city, allowing young New Yorkers to hone professional skills while earning a paycheck. "For so many young New Yorkers, a summer job is more than just a way to pass the time, it's a step towards their future. For years, SYEP has helped thousands of New Yorkers start their careers, hone their professional skills, and give back to the neighborhoods they call home – all while allowing them to earn money," said Mayor Mamdani. "Congratulations to the newest members of the SYEP cohort. We hope you not only learn new skills at work, but new things about yourself this summer."

"The road to professional and personal success is paved by programs like SYEP that provide young New Yorkers the experience they will need in the future," said Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Dr. Helen Arteaga. "SYEP

does not just develop skills in the workplace, it also provides education in key areas, like financial literacy, and to high-risk communities, so those young New Yorkers are afforded the opportunity to achieve long-term economic success and stability."

"Celebrating its 63rd year as the nation's largest youth employment program, SYEP continues to create career pathways and expand opportunities for young people to explore their interests, gain meaningful work experience, build professional skills and earn a paycheck. By connecting participants to employers, mentors and real-world experiences, SYEP helps prepare the next generation of New York City's workforce while investing in communities across the five boroughs," said NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Commissioner Sandra Escamilla-Davies. "Alongside Summer Rising, Saturday Night Lights, Summer Night Lights, and other free DYCD programs, SYEP provides young people with safe, engaging opportunities to build lasting relationships, develop skills, discover new possibilities and create experiences that will shape their futures long after the summer ends."

American Heart Association recognizes all NYC Health+Hospitals for quality care

New York, NY: NYC Health + Hospitals announced all 11 of its hospitals were again recognized by the American Heart Association for their commitment to quality care in heart failure, heart attack, stroke, diabetes, and resuscitation. Every 40 seconds, someone in the U.S. has a stroke or heart attack, and heart disease and stroke are the No. 1 and No. 40 causes of death in the United States, respectively. Studies show patients can recover better when providers consistently follow treatment guidelines.

"This recognition reflects the extraordinary dedication of our physicians, nurses, pharmacists, therapists, and care team who deliver timely, evidence-based treatments for heart attack and stroke. Our commitment to clinical excellence and equitable care continues to improve outcomes for the patients we are privileged to serve," said NYC Health + Hospitals Chief

Medical Officer for Clinical Affairs and Clinical Business Strategy Sewit Teckie, MD, MBA.

"This recognition from the American Heart Association reflects the unwavering commitment of our physicians, nurses, and care teams to delivering evidence-based, high-quality cardiovascular and stroke care to every patient," said NYC Health + Hospitals Chief Medical Officer for Clinical Services and Population Health Ted Long, MD, MHS, LHD.

"At NYC Health + Hospitals, we believe every New Yorker deserves access to exceptional heart and stroke care. The American Heart Association's recognition affirms the dedication of our teams to delivering timely, evidence-based treatment that improves outcomes and saves lives," said NYC Health + Hospitals Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer Hillary Jalon.

Attorney General James secures \$18M from 23andMe for failing to protect customers' genetic data

New York: New York Attorney General Letitia James and a bipartisan coalition of 42 other attorneys general secured \$18 million from genetic testing company 23andMe for failing to protect customers' private genetic data. In October 2023, 23andMe announced that it had discovered a data breach affecting 6.9 million consumers, including 305,245 in New York. The breach exposed a broad range of customer data, including genetic ancestry information. Some customers' data was even published for sale on the dark web. As part of the settlement, Attorney General James and the coalition have secured new data protection requirements to secure 23andMe customer data. 23andMe will also pay more than \$705,000 to New York.

"Companies have a duty to protect their customers' personal information from hackers, but



Attorney General Letitia James (Photo courtesy: AG James' Office)

23andMe put millions of its customers at risk with its flimsy security measures," said Attorney General James. "New Yorkers trusted 23andMe with their sensitive and personal genetic data, only to find that data stolen and put up for sale on the dark corners of the internet. As a result of our coalition's action, 23andMe will pay for violating the law and strict rules will be put in place to protect their customers."

The October 2023 data breach of 23andMe exposed sensitive genetic information belonging to millions of customers. Some of this data was then listed for sale on the dark web, exposing customers to further hacks and identity theft. 23andMe learned about the breach months after impacted personal information was publicly available. The company first denied a breach and then, once it confirmed the breach, blamed customers for how their accounts were set up or how passwords were used.



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NDA, Opposition gear up for Parliament Session



A Congress Parliamentary Party strategy meeting underway to discuss the party's plan of action for the Monsoon Session. (Photo courtesy: X@kcvenugopalmp)

New Delhi: The ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Opposition have stepped up preparations for the Monsoon Session of Parliament, with several key bills expected to be introduced or taken up for discussion.

The session, which begins on July 20, is expected to be stormy, witnessing intense debates on a range of issues, including national security, economy, inflation, unemployment, foreign policy, and cen-

tre-state relations.

Ahead of the session, a crucial meeting of top BJP leaders, including Home Minister Amit Shah and party president Nitin Nabin, was held at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's residence this week.

Soon after, Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale expressed confidence that the Women's Reservation Bill and the Delimitation Bill will be passed

during the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, citing the NDA's numerical strength in the House.

Senior Congress leaders finalized the party's strategy for the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament, announcing that they would oppose several Bills expected to be introduced by the government and raise issues ranging from the alleged misuse of Ram Mandir donations to India's ties with China, the United States and the West Asia conflict.

The Congress said it would strongly oppose the proposed delimitation legislation. It also announced its opposition to the proposed bill relating to the removal of the Prime Minister and Chief Ministers upon imprisonment, as well as amendments to the National Food Security Act.

The party also said it would raise what it described as the "E20 scam", alleging the involvement of some ministers and their sons, though it did not provide further details or evidence at the briefing.

13 Indians killed in Gulf since start of US-Iran war

Thirteen Indian nationals have been killed and three remain missing in the Gulf region since the US-Iran war erupted on February 28, according to PTI. The latest casualty came after missiles struck two Emirati oil tankers transiting the Strait of Hormuz, killing an Indian crew member aboard MT Al Bahyah.

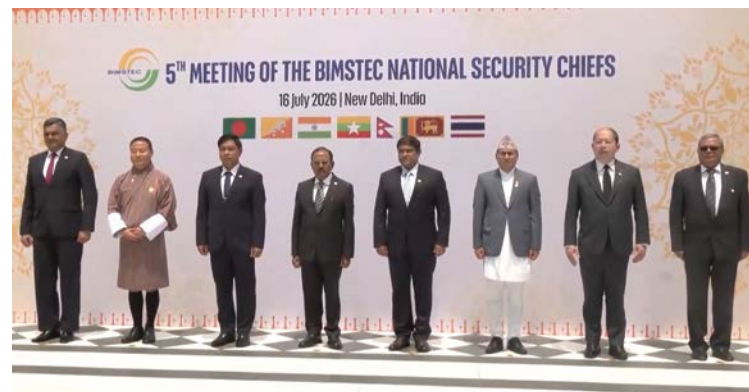
The attack came just two days after an Indian seafarer went missing when the Cyprus-flagged container ship GFS Galaxy was hit in an Iranian strike. Even as the conflict intensifies, seven Indian-flagged vessels carrying 148 Indian seafarers remain inside the Persian Gulf, where they are waiting for the security situation

to improve before attempting to leave the region.

The most recent fatality occurred after missiles struck MT Al Bahyah and MT Mombasa B while they were sailing through the southern shipping lane within Omani territorial waters. An Indian crew member aboard MT Al Bahyah was killed in the attack, according to government officials.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) claimed responsibility for targeting the tankers. The IRGC said the vessels had "ignored repeated warnings" before being "targeted and disabled". It also accused Washington of "inciting vessels to use an illegal route".

'Global uncertainties need decisive actions': NSA Doval



The fifth BIMSTEC meeting of National Security Chiefs was held this week in New Delhi. (Screengrab courtesy: DD India)

New Delhi: National security adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval has called for stronger regional cooperation among BIMSTEC member states to address emerging security challenges, saying the current global environment of conflicts, geopolitical uncertainty and technological disruptions demands collective action and "decisive actions" for the benefit of all member countries.

Speaking at the fifth BIMSTEC national security advisers' meeting, Doval said, "We are meeting today in the backdrop of a challenging global landscape. We are witnessing conflicts and geopolitical uncertainties. We are also facing multi-domain security threats,

amplified by rapid technological advancements. Disruptions in global supply chains have also resulted in economic hardship for all our countries."

"In this setting, there's an urgent need for us to collaborate, take decisive actions for our mutual benefit, and find solutions to mutual discussions and deliberations to the vexed problems that we are all facing," ANI news agency quoted Doval as saying.

He emphasized that BIMSTEC's long-standing priorities of regional security, connectivity, capacity building and economic security should continue to shape the organization's future efforts.

'Every citizen's life is precious': Delhi HC

New Delhi: Delhi High Court has directed the central government to ensure that Environmental activist and education reformer Sonam Wangchuk's health is medically examined every day by government doctors. The court stated that every citizen's life is precious and instructed authorities to provide necessary medical intervention if his condition deteriorates.

Wangchuk has been on an indefinite hunger strike at Jantar Mantar here for nearly 20 days, protesting examination irregularities and demanding reforms.

According to Hindustan Times, the bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Tejas Karia issued these directions after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta assured the court that Wangchuk's health would be monitored daily by government doctors and medical experts. The court emphasized that all possible medical efforts must be made to protect Wangchuk's life.



Activist and educationist Sonam Wangchuk's indefinite hunger strike entered its 19th day on Thursday. (Photo courtesy: X@abhijeet_dipke)

Medical updates indicate that Wangchuk has lost over 9 kg since the start of his fast, with his weight now at 57.15 kg. Doctors monitoring his condition report that his vital parameters remain stable, but caution that the coming days could be critical. Dr Satish Lamba, who is part of the medical team, stated that intravenous support would be the safer option over tube feeding

if intervention becomes unavoidable.

As coverage revealed, Wangchuk has publicly stated that he will not end his fast, arguing that doing so without a government response would undermine the seriousness of the protest. He has urged supporters to join a peaceful march to Parliament rather than asking him to break his fast.

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Thousands gather to celebrate Tamil heritage at 39th FeTNA Convention



FiTEN, one of the convention's signature events, brought together accomplished Tamil entrepreneurs, startup founders, VCs, corporate executives, investors, and innovators from around the world.

Edison, New Jersey: The 39th Annual Convention of the Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America (FeTNA) concluded with resounding success in Edison, New Jersey, welcoming thousands of attendees from across North America and around the world for one of the largest annual gatherings celebrating Tamil language, culture, entrepreneurship, cinema, education, and community leadership.

Hosted with the participation of more than 70 Tamil Sangams representing communities across the United States and Canada, the three-day convention from July 2-4 showcased the strength, unity, and growing global influence of the Tamil diaspora.

The convention featured an inspiring blend of cultural excellence, thought leadership, business innovation, youth engagement, literary forums, and entertainment, creating meaningful opportunities for collaboration across generations.

FiTEN inspires next generation of Tamil entrepreneurs

One of the convention's signature events, FiTEN – FeTNA International Tamil Entrepreneur Network, brought together accomplished Tamil entrepreneurs, startup founders, venture capitalists, corporate executives, investors, and innovators from around the world.

Through keynote presentations, leadership conversations, startup showcases, and networking sessions, FiTEN fostered meaningful dialogue on entrepreneurship, technology, investment, and economic collaboration while inspiring young professionals and aspiring entrepreneurs to transform ideas into impactful enterprises.

"FiTEN has become more than a business forum—it is a movement that connects successful Tamil entrepreneurs with the next generation of innovators," said Kathirvel Kumararaja, one of the advisors for FiTEN.

"By sharing our experiences, building meaningful partnerships, and mentoring future leaders, we are creating an ecosystem where Tamil entrepreneurship can thrive globally."

FiFE celebrates art of Tamil storytelling

The convention also hosted the highly anticipated FiFE – FeTNA International Film Festival, celebrating excellence in Tamil cinema by recognizing independent filmmakers, storytellers, and creative artists. The festival featured screenings, filmmaker interactions, and discussions that highlighted the diversity, creativity,

and global reach of Tamil cinema while encouraging emerging talent to contribute to the future of filmmaking.

Spectacular cultural performances showcase Tamil heritage

Audiences were treated to an extraordinary lineup of grand cultural programs featuring classical

music, Bharatanatyam, folk arts, theatrical productions, contemporary performances, and literary presentations by artists from North America and India. These performances reflected the richness of Tamil civilization while celebrating the creativity and artistic excellence of the global Tamil community.

Distinguished leaders at the celebration

The convention welcomed an impressive gathering of elected officials, policymakers, business leaders, community organizations, and renowned Tamil personalities from India and across the globe, reaffirming FeTNA's role as one of the premier organizations representing the Tamil diaspora in North America.

Their participation underscored the significant contributions of Tamils in public service, business, technology, healthcare, education, arts, and civic leadership.

Building community and the future

Throughout the weekend, attendees participated in youth leadership programs, educational forums, literary discussions, networking events, business sessions, and community initiatives designed to strengthen cultural identity while preparing future generations for leadership.

"For nearly four decades, FeTNA has united Tamils across North America through language, culture, education, and service," said Ezhilan Ramarajan, President of FeTNA. "The 39th Convention demonstrates that our organization continues to evolve—embracing innovation and entrepreneurship while preserving the timeless values and traditions that define our Tamil heritage. Together, we are building stronger communities and creating opportunities for future generations."

Among those inspired by the convention was incoming FeTNA Board of Director Kathirvel Kumararaja, who emphasized the importance of building upon the organization's remarkable legacy.

"The strength of FeTNA lies in its ability to unite our diverse talents under one shared vision. From celebrating our rich cultural heritage to fostering entrepreneurship through FiTEN, encouraging creativity through FiFE, and empowering our youth to become tomorrow's leaders, this convention reflects the limitless potential of the global Tamil community," said Kathirvel Kumararaja, Incoming Board Director, FeTNA.

As the 39th convention came to a close, participants departed with renewed friendships, stronger professional networks, fresh ideas, and a shared commitment to advancing Tamil heritage while embracing innovation and global collaboration.



Adityaram, Chairman and Managing Director of Adityaram Group, was awarded the prestigious Entrepreneur Excellence Award.



The lamp lighting ceremony was graced by the presence of Tamil Nadu's Minister for School Education, Rajmohan Arumugam. (Photos courtesy: Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America.)

Philanthropist duo Kanchana and Jagadeesan Poola conferred Lifetime Philanthropy Award by FeTNA

By **Parveen Chopra**

Edison, NJ: FeTNA (Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America) has honored Mrs. Kanchana Poola and Jagadeesan 'Jack' Poola with the prestigious Lifetime Philanthropy Award at its 39th Convention over the July 4 weekend in Edison, New Jersey.

The award cited the Poolas' "exemplary philanthropy, unwavering generosity over the years, and steadfast commitment to preserving and promoting Tamil culture".

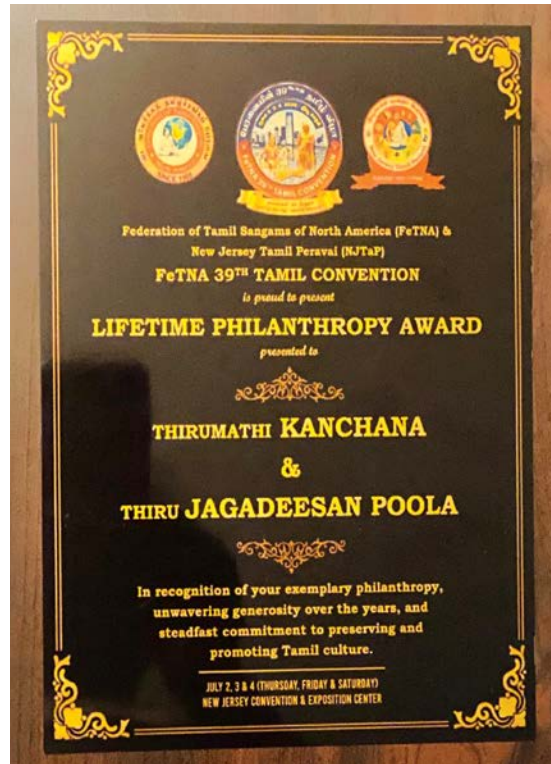
Though the philanthropist couple could not attend the ceremony in person, Mrs Poola said that this honor means a lot to her and her family. She added, "FeTNA is a cause close to our hearts, so we have been steadfast supporters since its beginning. However, this journey has never been mine alone. I wish to recognize the countless volunteers, leaders, and supporters whose dedication helped shape FeTNA into what it is today."

The Poolas' altruistic service and contributions, however, are not confined to Tamil heritage. They have made immense contributions to several causes and community organizations for decades in India and the USA, as chronicled by The South Asian Times in a special edition in July 2022 featuring Kanchana and Jagadeesan Poola as Couple of the Decade.

Calling them the 'hidden gems of the Indian community in New York', The South Asian Times highlighted how the Poolas' support for education, healthcare and religious institutions such as the Ganesh Temple in Flushing has impacted the lives of thousands of individuals and families. Their largest contributions have been to the Xavier School of Medicine, Aruba, for a new residential block and Harvard Tamil Chair. Jagadeesan Poola, who built a successful business in fabrics, has given generously to his alma maters, Madras Christian College in Chennai and PSG College of Technology in Coimbatore. Mrs Poola is on the board of the Iowa-based Life Health Charities Foundation, which helps physically challenged children and the underprivileged in India.

Long-time residents of Old Westbury on Long Island, the Poolas have supported various initiatives of the Rotary Club of Hicksville South, and donated to A Lotus In The Mud wellness and spirituality magazine. In 2016, Rotary International Dist. 7255 and in 2019, Indo American Press Club honored them with Lifetime Achievement Awards.

Kanchana and Jagadeesan Poola, called the community powerhouse of Long Island, have extended humanitarian assistance during times of great need. When COVID-19 struck, they contribut-



The FeTNA Lifetime Philanthropy Award recognized the Poolas' decades of selfless service, visionary leadership, and extraordinary generosity.



Kanchana and Jack Poola were featured as The South Asian Times - Couple of the Decade in a special edition in July 2022.



NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio presented the plaque honoring Kanchana and Jagadeesan Poola as The South Asian Times - Couple of the Decade in the presence of the 3 Poola children Amudha, Anusuya and Anand, as well as Ravi Bhooplapur, and Kamlesh and Nimmi Mehta. The felicitation was held during FeTNA's 35th convention in Edison, NJ in July 2022.



An entire residential block for students is named after the Poola couple at Xavier University School of Medicine, Aruba, acknowledging their 7-figure donation.



The Poolas' children (from left) Anand, Anusuya, and Amudha are always supportive of their noble social endeavors.



The Indo-American Press Club honored Kanchana Poola with the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2029 in Hicksville, NY. On the occasion, various Tamil organizations felicitated her and Jack Poola.

ed to relief efforts, including the provision of oxygen concentrators in India and the conversion of a school into a COVID-19 hospital in Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu. They also extended help in the wake of the 2001 Gujarat earthquake and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami. Here at home, they supported communities affected by the September 11 attacks.

Following the award early this month by FeTNA, the New York Tamil Sangam (NYTS) celebrated the contributions of Mrs. Kanchana Poola, whose unwavering commitment to the Tamil community has spanned over five decades. Since 1970 when NYTS was founded, the Poolas have remained its most devoted supporters. Under Mrs Poola's nine years as President from 1999 to 2007, the Sangam expanded its cultural, educational, and charitable initiatives while strengthening its role as a unifying force for the Tamil dias-

pora. The couple's generous contribution to NYTS for its Cultural and Educational Center in 2022 reflected their enduring belief that future generations deserve a permanent home where Tamil language, culture, and identity can flourish.

Kathirvel Kumararaja, Immediate Past President and board member of NYTS, as well as on the board of FeTNA, said: "Legacies are not built in a day—they are built through decades of quiet sacrifice, selfless giving, and unwavering commitment. Mrs. Kanchana

Poola's life is a shining example of what one family can accomplish when service becomes a way of life. Alongside Mr. Jagadeesan Poola, she has helped shape institutions that have preserved Tamil language, culture, education, and philanthropy across North America for generations."

With golden hearts and helping hands, the Poolas are paragons of humanitarian spirit, a model for others to follow.

(Photos courtesy: the Poolas)

'Dhurandhar' stumbles in Japan with just 900 viewers on Day 1

Ranveer Singh's 'Dhurandhar' premiered in Japanese theatres on July 10, but despite heavy promotion, the film failed to impress audiences. According to trade reports, it drew only 900 viewers on day one. It did

not secure a place in the country's top 25 films for its opening weekend.

On the first day of release, 'Dhurandhar' recorded 449 admissions by 2 pm across 57 locations. However, collections

did not improve in the second half of the day; total admissions rose to only 900 across 80 locations.

The film reportedly sold only about 900 tickets on its opening day, missing the benchmark needed to break into Japan's top 10 list of Indian film openers. The 10th spot is currently held by Salman Khan's 'Tiger 3' with 1,300 admissions. Notably, 'Pushpa 2' also previously failed to make the top 10.

'RRR' remains the biggest Indian opener in Japan, securing 8,230 admissions on day one, followed by 'Saaho', 'Kalki 2898 AD', 'Pathaan', 'Salaar', 'Jawan', 'Rangasthalam', 'Devara', 'Baahubali 2' and 'Tiger 3'.

'Dhurandhar' has enjoyed unprecedented success in India. The second film in the franchise, 'Dhurandhar: The Revenge', is the second highest-grossing Indian film of all time, only behind Aamir Khan's 'Dangal'. The film minted ₹1,813 crore in worldwide collections.

The first film of the franchise, 'Dhurandhar', which released in December 2025, was also a massive box office success, earning more than ₹1,307 crore in worldwide collections. Together, both films have collected over ₹3,100 crore at the worldwide box office.



Ranveer Singh-starrer 'Dhurandhar' has enjoyed unprecedented success in India. (Photo courtesy: Jio Studios)

'Ramayana' heads to China



Actor Ranbir Kapoor plays Lord Ram in 'Ramayana', which is set for a Diwali release. (Photo courtesy: X@RamayanTheEpic)

Nearly a decade after 'Dangal' turned China into one of Indian cinema's biggest overseas markets, the makers of 'Ramayana: Part 1' are reportedly eyeing a similar feat. A report suggests the team is planning an extensive promotional campaign in China, with actors Ranbir Kapoor, Yash and Sai Pallavi expected to spearhead the film's outreach in the country.

According to a Mid-Day report, director Nitesh Tiwari and producer Namit Malhotra are exploring opportunities to promote the film in China in collaboration with local distributors and exhibitors. The initiative is said to be part of a larger strategy to expand the film's global reach. If discussions translate into a concrete plan, the lead cast - Ranbir Kapoor, Yash and Sai Pallavi - is expected to

visit China for a four-day promotional tour. The campaign is reportedly being designed to generate awareness and excitement around the mythological epic before its release.

The report adds that the proposed schedule includes a press event and a special screening at the Pingyao International Film Festival on September 24. The team is also said to be considering promotions across multiple Chinese cities during the country's Golden Week holiday, beginning October 1.

Produced by Prime Focus Studios and DNEG, Ramayana: Part 1 is being mounted as one of the most ambitious Indian films ever made. With its large-scale production, visual effects and international rollout, the makers are aiming to position it as a global cinematic event.

Rachel Shelley joins Aamir to mark 25 years of 'Lagaan' at LIFF

Bollywood actor Aamir Khan celebrated 'Lagaan's Silver Jubilee at the London Indian Film Festival (LIFF), where he reunited with his co-star Rachel Shelley. Shelley, who played British woman Elizabeth Russell helping Aamir's Bhuvan in the film, later shared pictures from the event on social media. Their reunion left fans nostalgic about the film as it recently completed 25 years.

Shelley posted a series of photographs from the London Indian Film Festival this week on Instagram. In the pictures, she and Aamir are seen posing for the cameras on the red carpet and sharing a side hug. Aamir kept his look casual in a blue T-shirt and matching jeans, while Shelley wore a white dress.

Directed by Ashutosh Gowariker and produced by Aamir Khan, Lagaan was released in 2001. Set during British colonial rule, the sports drama follows a group of villagers who challenge British officers to a game of cricket to avoid paying oppressive taxes, or lagaan.

Shelley played Elizabeth Russell, the British woman who secretly teaches the villagers the rules of cricket and supports their fight against injustice. The film was both a critical and commercial success and remains one of Indian cinema's most celebrated titles,



Actor Aamir Khan with 'Lagaan' co-star Rachel Shelley at the London Indian Film Festival. (Photo courtesy: Instagram@reallyrachelshelley)

while also helping popularize the sports drama genre in the country.

Starring Aamir Khan, Gracy Singh and an ensemble cast, the film received acclaim for its storytelling, A R Rahman's music and its performances. It was also nominated for the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film.

Emmy nomination for Priyanka Chopra's 'Heads of State'

Priyanka Chopra's 'Heads of State' has been nominated for an Emmy Award. Co-starring John Cena and Idris Elba, the action-comedy film earned a nomination for Outstanding Television Movie at the 78th Primetime Emmy Awards.

'Heads Of State', directed by Ilya Naishuller, features a whirlwind of political chaos and buddy-comedy madness. The story follows US President Will Derringer (John Cena) and British Prime Minister Sam Clarke (Idris Elba), whose not-so-secret rivalry is forced to take a backseat when Air Force One is shot down over enemy territory.

With MI6 Agent Noel Bisset (Priyanka Chopra Jonas) tasked with their protection, the three must work together to stop a global conspiracy threatening the free world. Also featuring Paddy Considine, Stephen Root, Carla Gugino, Jack Quaid, and Sarah Niles, the film blends political satire with pulse-pounding action and laugh-out-loud moments.

Meanwhile, Priyanka is busy



(Poster courtesy: Prime Video)

with her Indian cinema comeback with SS Rajamouli's 'Varanasi'. This project marks her first collaboration with the acclaimed director and also stars Mahesh Babu and Prithviraj Sukumaran. The film will reportedly feature elements of time-travel and mythology. It was confirmed that Mahesh Babu will be seen as Lord Ram, and it is speculated that Prithviraj Sukumaran could appear as Kumbhkaran.

Nolan 'thrilled' to launch 'The Odyssey' in India



'The Odyssey' team at the special fan screening of the film in Mumbai, which was presented by Universal Pictures.

Filmmaker Christopher Nolan launched 'The Odyssey' in Mumbai on July 10, opening the film's India premiere alongside actors Tom Holland and Matt Damon. The three addressed the audience and thanked viewers for the warm reception.

In one of the videos, Holland's car was seen leaving the airport, though fans were unable to catch a glimpse of the Hollywood star. In another image, he was seen greeting and waving at the paparaz-

zi before making his way into the hotel.

Nolan said he had wanted to bring one of his films to India for many years. Holland praised the energy of Indian moviegoers, while Damon said the response meant a great deal because this was the first audience to watch the film after an earlier premiere for family and friends.

Speaking at the event, Nolan told the audience, "This is not the first time I've been in Mumbai, but

it is the first time I've had a chance to launch a film here. So you are amongst the first audiences in the world to see this film." He then added, "Just a quick, who was better, Matt or Tom? They are both fantastic."

Nolan also thanked the audience for turning up and said it was always a thrill to be in India. He said he had visited the country twice before and that every visit had been special. He also said he had long wanted to launch one of his films here and watch it with Indian audiences, whom he described as some of the most enthusiastic and knowledgeable cinematic audiences in the world.

Written and directed by Nolan, 'The Odyssey' is an adaptation of Homer's Greek epic. It follows Odysseus, played by Damon, as he

Nolan's film passes without cuts in India

Filmmaker Christopher Nolan's 'The Odyssey' reportedly received an 'A' certificate from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and passed the censors in India without a single cut. The film is scheduled to release in cinemas on July 17.

According to a Bollywood Hungama report, no dialogue or scene has been modified or tweaked, which means audiences in India are set to watch the same cut as the rest of the world, provided the studio has not undertaken any self-censorship in India.

With an 'A' certificate, the film will be restricted to viewers aged 18 and above. The makers received the censor certificate on July 9, and the film's listed runtime is 172.33 minutes, or 2 hours, 52 minutes and 33 seconds.

makes a dangerous journey back to Ithaca after the Trojan War. The ensemble cast includes Holland, Zendaya, Robert Pattinson, Charlize Theron, Lupita Nyong'o and Samantha Morton. The film is produced by Nolan and Emma Thomas under their banner Syncopy.



'Chai comes first': Filmmaker Christopher Nolan (center), actors Matt Damon and Tom Holland take a tea break before the Mumbai premiere of their film. (Photos courtesy: X@UniversalIND)

Matt Damon wants to work with Shekhar Kapur

Actor Matt Damon expressed his admiration for Indian filmmaker Shekhar Kapur and revealed that he would love to collaborate with him in the future. Ahead of the red-carpet premiere of 'The Odyssey' in Mumbai, the Hollywood star attended a press conference in the city on July 11. When asked if there was an Indian filmmaker he would like to work with, Damon didn't hesitate before naming Kapur.

While talking about the same, the 55-year-old actor said, "I remember when we were starting out, everyone wanted to collaborate with Shekhar Kapur. I was really disappointed that I couldn't do 'The Four Feathers'. I think I was already committed to a Bourne film at the time. He's always remained on my list of filmmakers I'd love to work with, and I'd really like another opportunity. It's like a little 20-year-old debt

I've been carrying around in my pocket."

As for Kapur, the celebrated filmmaker returned the admiration with a heartfelt response. Recalling his favorite scene from 'Good Will Hunting', Kapur praised the Oscar-winning actor's performance and reflected on why it has stayed with him over the years.

In an interview with NDTV, Kapur, 80, said, "I don't think there is a filmmaker in the world who wouldn't give their right arm to work with an actor who has as much emotional depth as Matt Damon. Who can ever forget his famous scene with Robin Williams, 'It's not your fault,' in 'Good Will Hunting'. I must have watched it over a 1000 times and been moved to tears each time."

Kapur was originally set to direct the 2002 historical war drama 'The Four Feathers', with Damon initially attached to star in the film. However, the actor had to step away due to scheduling commitments, and the role eventually went to Heath Ledger.



Filmmaker Shekhar Kapur praised Matt Damon as an actor with emotional depth. (Photo courtesy: PIB India)

'Jurassic Park' star Sam Neill dies at 78

New Zealand actor Sam Neill, best known for playing Dr Alan Grant in the 'Jurassic Park' franchise, died on July 13 at the age of 78. His family confirmed the news in a statement shared on his official Instagram account, saying he died peacefully in Sydney, Australia, surrounded by loved ones.

No cause of death was disclosed. Neill had revealed in 2023 that he was undergoing treatment for stage three angioimmunoblastic T-cell lymphoma, a rare form of blood cancer diagnosed in 2022. However, his family said he remained cancer-free at the time of his death.

Neill initially studied law in Christchurch before abandoning the course to pursue acting. After performing with Canterbury University productions, he joined Wellington's Downstage Theatre, where he began his professional career.

His breakthrough came with Roger Donaldson's 1977 film 'Sleeping Dogs', the first New Zealand film to receive a theatrical release in the United States. He fol-



Tributes poured in from the world over, calling actor Sam Neill a 'hero, legend, and sweetheart'. (Photo courtesy: X@UniPicsAtHome)

lowed it with acclaimed performances in 'My Brilliant Career', 'Omen III: The Final Conflict', Andrzej Lawski's cult classic 'Possession', 'Evil Angels' (A Cry in the Dark), 'The Hunt for Red October' and 'Ivanhoe'.

International stardom arrived in 1993 when he starred in Jane Campion's Oscar-winning 'The Piano' and Steven Spielberg's blockbuster 'Jurassic Park'. Across a career spanning more than five decades, Neill amassed over 150 screen credits.

Indo-Canadian Kamal Khera appointed Consul General in LA

Canada's former health minister Kamal Khera has been appointed new Consul General in Los Angeles, marking a significant diplomatic role for one of the country's most prominent leaders of Indian origin.

The appointment, announced by Minister of Foreign Affairs Anita Anand comes as Canada continues to strengthen its diplomatic and economic engagement with the United States, with Los Angeles serving as one of Canada's most important consular missions due to its extensive trade, investment, technology, entertainment, and cultural ties with the western United States.

Khera, who represented the Ontario riding of Brampton West in the House of Commons for nearly a decade, previously served in several senior roles in the federal government, including as Minister of Health and



Kamal Khera will replace Zaib Shaikh, who was given the diplomatic post by the previous government. (Photo courtesy: Kamal Khera/Facebook)

Minister of Diversity, Inclusion and Persons with Disabilities. A registered nurse by profession, she first entered Parliament in 2015 and quickly emerged as a prominent voice within the Liberal Party.

As Consul General, Khera will lead Canada's diplomatic mission in Los Angeles, promoting bilateral trade, investment, innovation, tourism, and educational partnerships while providing consular services to Canadians in Southern California, Arizona, and Nevada.

Canada's current Consul General in San Francisco is another Indo-Canadian, Rana Sarkar, who has been stationed there since 2017. Sarkar served as the president and chief executive officer of the Canada-India Business Council from 2009 to 2013.

British Indian actor in Nolan's 'The Odyssey'



Himesh Patel's parents hail from Gujarat and used to run a newsagent's shop in Cambridgeshire. (Photo courtesy: Instagram@himeshpatel)

Indian-origin actor Himesh Patel has emerged as one of the most talked-about names surrounding Christopher Nolan's 2026 epic, 'The Odyssey'. Born in Huntingdon to parents of Gujarati heritage who emigrated from East Africa, Patel began his career with the BBC's EastEnders in 2007, reportedly appearing in 566 episodes. His international breakthrough came with Danny Boyle's 'Yesterday' (2019), where he played the only person who remembers The Beatles.

In 'The Odyssey', Patel plays Eurylochus. The character appears as the second-in-command of Odysseus' ship during the return to Ithaca after the Trojan War. The

character challenges Odysseus's decisions while remaining central to the crew's survival. In Homer's epic poem, he is portrayed as an unpleasant, cowardly individual who often stirs up trouble. In ancient Greek literature, the warrior was from the island of Same near Ithaca. He was the husband of Odysseus's sister, Ctimene.

Before portraying the iconic Greek warrior, Patel's professional career began at a young age. At 16, he landed the role of Tamwar Masood in the BBC soap opera 'EastEnders' on the day of his GCSE exams. He spent nine years on the show (2007-2016), co-writing an episode of its spin-off EastEnders: E20, starring in the web-series

'Tamwar Tales', and winning an Inside Soap Award alongside co-actor Meryl Fernandes.

An Emmy nomination for HBO's 'Station Eleven' (2021) and appearances in 'Tenet' (2020) and 'Don't Look Up' (2021) cemented his standing in prestige cinema.

Patel was born on October 13, 1990, in Sawtry, Cambridgeshire. His parents are both Indian Gujarati Hindus, who ran a newsagent's shop in Cambridgeshire. His mother was born in Zambia, and his father was born in Kenya. The 35-year-old grew up speaking Gujarati and attended Prince William School in Oundle, Northamptonshire.

Indian banks urged to step up NRI outreach



Banks informed Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that they have put in place customised outreach strategies to engage with NRIs. (Photo courtesy: Nirmala Sitharaman/Facebook)

India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has asked banks to intensify outreach to non-resident Indians (NRIs), introduce innovative deposit products, and sustain the momentum of mobilization under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) swap initiatives.

According to an official press statement, these initiatives cover foreign currency non-resident (bank) [FCNR(B)] deposits, external commercial borrowings (ECBs), and overseas foreign currency borrowings (OFCBs).

FCNR(B) deposits are fixed-term deposits maintained by NRIs, persons of Indian origin, and overseas citizens of India in designated foreign currencies such as the US dollar, pound sterling, euro, Japanese yen, Canadian dollar and Australian dollar. The deposits remain denominated in the foreign currency, insulating depositors from exchange-rate fluctuations. Both the principal and interest are freely repatriable.

OFCBs refer to foreign currency borrowings raised by Indian banks

from overseas, while ECBs are foreign currency loans raised by eligible Indian companies and institutions from international lenders for permitted end-uses, including infrastructure and capacity expansion.

Bank chiefs said lenders are offering attractive returns on FCNR(B) deposits—including five-year tenures—thanks to the suspended interest rate ceiling on new deposits under the scheme. They added that interest has been strong among NRIs living in Singapore, Hong Kong, West Asia, the UK, the US, and other overseas jurisdictions.

Public sector banks informed the finance minister that they have put in place customised outreach strategies, including digital channels, to engage with the NRI diaspora and enhance deposit mobilization. They also noted that FCNR(B) deposit mobilization has shown a clear accelerating trend, supported by the attractive returns being offered by banks, according to the official press statement.

Indians empower communities in Sudan



On World Youth Skills Day on July 15, the Indian peacekeepers concluded nine "Skill Development Capsules" in Upper Nile, South Sudan, equipping community members with practical skills in health, vocational trades, digital awareness, and entrepreneurship. (Photo courtesy: X@unmissmedia)

Iran vows full control of Hormuz

Iran formally withdrew from its memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the United States, accusing Washington of violating and ultimately destroying last month's truce agreement, as tensions over the Strait of Hormuz pushed the two sides closer to renewed conflict.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry announced that Tehran no longer considers itself bound by parts of the agreement reached to halt hostilities, alleging that the US had repeatedly breached its commitments and effectively ended the deal by reimposing a naval blockade on Iranian ports.

The move came hours after the US military restored a blockade on Iranian ports, citing Tehran's attacks on vessels attempting to transit the Strait of Hormuz.

The blockade marked a major escalation in a conflict centred on one of the world's most important energy choke-points, through which nearly a fifth of global oil and natural gas supplies pass during peacetime.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem



US forces resumed the naval blockade against vessels transiting to and from Iranian ports and coastal areas. (Photo courtesy: X@CENTCOM)

Gharibabadi said Tehran would exercise "full sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz, no matter the costs". Gharibabadi said that although

Oman normally shares control of the strategic waterway, "for national security reasons Iran must control all of the Strait" during

Mojtaba Khamenei is 90% gone: Trump

US President Donald Trump has claimed that Iran's top military leadership had been wiped out and asserted that Mojtaba Khamenei, son of the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was "90% gone" amid the ongoing conflict. This came as the US military reimposed the naval blockade against Iran, with American forces restricting vessels travelling to and from Iranian ports and coastal areas.

Speaking in an interview with Fox News, Trump said recent US and Israeli strikes had devastated Iran's military capabilities. "They have no navy. They have no air force. It's all gone. Their anti-aircraft is gone. Their leaders have all been killed," Trump said.

wartime. The Iranian official also appeared to shut the door on diplomacy, declaring that Iran would "never request negotiations with the United States".

Zelenskyy signals wider reshuffle after PM steps down



Yulia Svyrydenko was named Ukraine's Prime Minister in July 2025. (Photo courtesy: X@Svyrydenko_Y)

Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko has stepped down as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced fresh changes to the country's government, saying Ukraine was "changing its political strategy".

In a statement on social media, Svyrydenko said she was "proud to have had the honor of leading the government during one of the most difficult periods in Ukraine's modern history". She also said she had discussed "next steps" with Zelenskyy, but gave no further details.

"I remain ready to serve the Ukrainian state and carry out every task aimed at strengthening Ukraine's position, defending our national interests and bringing just peace closer," she said.

Svyrydenko, Ukraine's former economy minister, was named prime minister in July 2025 at the age of 39 after playing a leading role in securing a mineral agreement between Ukraine and the US, which was seen as an important way of linking US interests to Ukraine's security.

Burnham close to becoming UK PM with backing of 349 MPs

UK Labour leader Andy Burnham has significantly strengthened his hold over the party after securing the backing of 349 Labour Members of Parliament, underscoring his dominant position ahead of the party's annual conference and the next general election.

The overwhelming support from Labour MPs is being viewed as a strong vote of confidence in Burnham's leadership, providing him with a clear mandate to advance his political agenda and shape the party's electoral strategy. The endorsement also signals growing unity within Labour following months of internal discussions over policy and direction.

Under Labour's rules, leadership candidates need 20% of the party's MPs - 81 out of a total of 403 - to nominate them. With 349 officially backing Burnham, no rival candidate can now be nominated, the BBC reported.

The Makerfield MP has pledged to focus on strengthening public services, boosting economic growth, tackling the cost-of-living crisis, and pursuing reforms aimed at improving healthcare, housing, and workers' rights. Party leaders say the broad parliamentary support reflects confidence in his vision and leadership.

He is expected to be formally declared Labour leader this week and is set to become Britain's next prime minister on July 20. Keir Starmer announced his resignation last month following Labour's disappointing performance in May's local elections, which intensified calls within the party for a change in leadership and direction.

UK declares IRGC as terrorist group

The UK has listed Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and another Iran-linked group as terror organizations over antisemitic attacks in Britain, as diplomatic tensions escalate with Tehran.

In response, the Iranian Foreign Ministry condemned the labelling, terming the move "irresponsible and unjustified."

The Iranian Ministry stated that the UK's decision to designate the group as a "threat to national security" contradicts international law. "We condemn London's decision to classify the Revolutionary Guard as a threat under the British National Security Act," the Ministry said.

Ukraine downs Russian ballistic missiles

Ukraine said its air defenses intercepted five Russian ballistic missiles in overnight attacks, although other missiles and drones got through and struck Kyiv. The July 14 attacks caused fires at two warehouses in the capital and damaged a school, according to Mayor Vitali Klitschko.

Russia said the strike targeted military manufacturing facilities in Kyiv that produce long-

range missiles and drones. The attacks came as Ukraine pushed to strengthen its air defense network before winter and continued its own long-range strikes on Russian targets, especially oil facilities.

Ukrainian air defenses likely used the US-made Patriot surface-to-air guided missile system, which is considered the most effective way to counter ballistic missiles.

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JAAC leader urges supporters to continue PoK stir

As the protests in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) against the Pakistani government intensified, Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) leader Sardar Aman Kashmiri reiterated the group's demand for an independent homeland during a public gathering.

Addressing supporters ahead of the group's proposed march to Muzaffarabad, Aman Kashmiri said the movement would continue "by all means" and asserted that the group's central demand was for "our own homeland".

"We want our own country. Everyone has the right to their own homeland, their own authority and their own government. Hand over our rights to us," he said.

The JAAC leader also claimed that members of the movement had been subjected to threats, including alleged bounties on



People protesting in Rawalakot, PoK, on issues of governance, administrative accountability, inflation and economic hardship. (Photo courtesy: X@JAAC_Official)

Non-bailable warrant for Hafiz Saeed

A Jammu court has issued a non-bailable warrant against Hafiz Saeed, the chief of Pakistan-based terrorist group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), paving the way for a trial in absentia.

The order comes after India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) filed a supplementary chargesheet on July 6 naming Saeed as an accused and alleg-

ing that he was the mastermind behind the April 22, 2025 terror attack, in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed.

The agency told the court that all legal avenues to extradite him from Pakistan had "virtually been exhausted" and that the judicial process should therefore continue without his physical presence.

their lives. "They try to scare us. They say a bounty has been placed on our heads and that they won't spare us. We have come here carrying our lives on our palms," he said. The claims could not be independently verified.

Aman Kashmiri also criticized mainstream political leaders in

Pakistan-administered Kashmir, accusing them of failing to represent the aspirations of the people. "Struggle was not written in your destiny; rather, bootlicking was written in your destiny," he said, alleging that local politicians had aligned themselves with Pakistan's military establishment.

Bangladesh welcomes Hasina's return plan

Bangladesh's government said this week that it "welcomes" deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina's reported plan to return home, saying she must face the legal process in a case in which she has been sentenced to death in absentia. The remarks came amid reports that Hasina could return to Bangladesh by the end of this year.

Prime Minister's adviser for information and strategy Zahed Ur Rahman said, "We welcome her announcement as we want to ensure justice," and added that the government was under no pressure over her planned return. He also said proceedings at the International Crimes Tribunal-Bangladesh would remain transparent and could be monitored by observ-



Former PM Sheikh Hasina has been living in India since she fled Dhaka after her government was toppled. (Photo courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)

ers and broadcast through video coverage.

Rahman said, "the people of the country want her death penalty to be upheld for the crimes she committed, and in that case her capital punishment will be executed as the people want to see that".

He added, "Let her bring the best lawyers in the world." At the same time, he said the court could also revise the verdict against Hasina or acquit her, adding, "That too could happen." There have been previous instances in which rulings of the ICT-BD, formed during the Awami League regime in 2010, were stayed or overturned.

Hasina, 78, has been living in India since she fled Dhaka after her government was toppled in a violent student-led street protest on August 5, 2024. Rahman said "procedural issues will not debar her return" and that Delhi could make arrangements after consulting Dhaka on the matter.

Gen Z protesters hit Nepal streets again

Nepal's Prime Minister Balen Shah finds himself at the centre of a storm led by Gen Z. Large-scale protests erupted across the country over the weekend, with opposition leaders and demonstrators demanding the former Kathmandu mayor and rapper-turned-PM step down.

The unrest was triggered after a ride-sharing driver set himself on fire last week following a confrontation with traffic police over parking in Kathmandu. According to reports in the Nepali media, the man, later identified as Ganesh Nepali, succumbed to his injuries before he could be transferred to AIIMS New Delhi for specialized treatment.

His death ignited widespread protests in the capital, with hundreds, mostly young people, taking to the streets to demand justice. In Parliament, opposition lawmakers launched a scathing attack on the government, with one urging Shah to "take off" his "dark glasses" and face the people, while others openly called for his resignation.



Nepal Prime Minister Balen Shah. (Photo courtesy: X@ShahBalen)

This is not the first time the Balen Shah-led government has faced public protests. Last month, remarks by the Nepalese prime minister in Parliament suggesting that "...Nepal too has encroached upon Indian territories in many places," sparked demonstrations by student organizations and drew criticism from opposition lawmakers, who accused the government of making irresponsible statements on a sensitive foreign policy issue.

3.7 million young Afghan lives at risk of malnutrition: UNICEF



A seven-month-old baby and her mother visit a healthcare provider in Afghanistan. (Photo courtesy: X@UNICEFafg)

Some 3.7 million children under five in Afghanistan are at heightened risk of malnutrition due to food insecurity, poor diets and inadequate access to basic services as the peak season for

life-threatening wasting looms.

The warning comes in a new report, Too Little, Too Late: The Diet Crisis Facing Young Children in Afghanistan, by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), which said that child food and nutrition insecurity is among the main drivers of undernutrition in the country.

Children suffering from the condition are too thin for their height, and their weak immune systems leave them vulnerable to developmental delays, disease and

death. Recent data shows it's worsened across 26 out of 34 provinces compared with 2025, indicating an early and deepening crisis.

"Young children in Afghanistan are being pushed closer to malnutrition before the peak season has even begun," said Dr Tajudeen Oyewale, UNICEF Representative in the country.

The new analysis shows that children in severely food-insecure households are up to six times more likely to suffer from wasting during peak malnutrition periods. In addition to poor child diets and rising food insecurity, worsening malnutrition is also linked to disease outbreaks, low immunization coverage, inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene services, and growing funding and supply gaps – all of which are weakening children's health and increasing their vulnerability to wasting.

US national held at Nepal border

An American national was detained at the India-Nepal border while allegedly attempting to cross into Nepal without valid travel documents. The man was detained by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) during a routine patrol in Uttar Pradesh's Manhwa area under Sunauli police station limits, near border pillar number 516, news agency PTI reported.

Upon questioning, it was

revealed that the American national, identified as 36-year-old Jordan Brown, had entered India in 2025 via sea route without any valid documents, an official said.

During questioning, Brown revealed that he had travelled to Thailand on a tourist visa, but allegedly lost his passport there. Brown then reached Sri Lanka via sea route and then came to India again via the sea route in November 2025.

UNSC non-permanent member: The seat India has to win before the one it wants

By Vipul Tamhane

When S Jaishankar, India's Minister of External Affairs, walked into the United Nations headquarters on July 13 to get things started for India's push toward a non-permanent seat on the Security Council, he was looking for something New Delhi has already chewed through eight times.

India sat at that horseshoe table in 1950, in 1967, in 1972, in 1977, in 1984, in 1991, in 2011, and most recently in 2021-22 when it also steered the Council presidency twice.

On paper, a ninth run for 2028-29 ought to feel like a formality, a well-judged rotation for the world's most populous nation, its largest democracy, one of its quickest-growing big economies, and among the most steady providers of peacekeeping troops for UN missions.

It is not a formality. And the reason it is not should concentrate minds in the South Block far more than the familiar grievance about 1945.

India is not running unopposed. Tajikistan is contesting the sole Asia-Pacific seat. India has roughly 22 times as many Muslim population than Tajikistan, yet it enters the race with the declared backing of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, fifty-seven member states of the United Nations, committed before India has knocked on a single door.

India, by contrast, has so far collected individual endorsements: Fiji, Sri Lanka, Austria, the United States. Endorsements are not votes. The election, when it comes in June next year during the 82nd session of the General Assembly, will be by secret ballot, and a secret ballot is where public warmth and private arithmetic part company.

If anyone in New Delhi believes stature will carry the day, the Assembly has just supplied a corrective. In June this year, Kyrgyzstan, a country that joined the UN only in 1992 and has never served on the Council, managed to defeat the Philippines for the 2027-28 Asia-Pacific term by 142 votes



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with UN Secretary General António Guterres.
(Photo courtesy: X@DrSJaishankar)

to 49, surprisingly enough.

That is not a narrow upset. It's more like a rout, and honestly it was pulled off by a state with none of the attributes India routinely lists in its own credentials. The lesson is pretty unambiguous: at the General Assembly, organized solidarity beats individual weight, and it beats it decisively. Blocs vote. Reputations abstain.

This is the uncomfortable ground on which India's campaign now stands, and it explains the sheer intensity of Jaishankar's travel: Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman in a single week, the Caribbean before that, New York after, Brussels next. This is not the itinerary of a minister collecting pleasantries, but of a campaign manager counting heads.

And it comes at an awkward moment: the India-Africa Forum Summit, scheduled for late May, was postponed on account of the Ebola outbreak. The reason is legitimate; the timing is costly. Africa holds roughly a quarter of the Assembly's votes, and momentum in African capitals is not something one recovers by pressing pause and resuming later.

Add to this a global environment that scrambles the usual alignments. The Ukraine war grinds on. Gaza remains unresolved. The US-Israel war on Iran has disrupted energy and

fertiliser flows into precisely the developing economies India claims to speak for. In a fractured Assembly, the "bridge" India offers is a harder product to sell, not because the pitch is wrong, but because states under acute economic stress vote on immediate interest, not on architecture.

None of which means India should temper its ambition. It means India should recognize what this election actually is: a test, conducted in public, of whether a decade of Global South leadership rhetoric converts into ballots. That is the real stake.

Because behind the two-year seat sits the larger prize India has pursued for decades, and the case for that prize is only as strong as the coalition India can demonstrably command.

The case itself has never been more difficult to argue against. The Council's five permanent members were fixed in 1945, when India was not yet independent, most of Africa was colonized, and the Global South did not exist as a political category.

Eight decades later, the composition is basically unchanged, while the world it governs is kind of unrecognizable now. India is home to about 1.48 billion people, close to 18 per cent of humanity, with a median age under thirty, and still a long runway of working-age expan-

sion ahead. There is no permanent representative from South Asia, none from Africa, none from Latin America.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi told the Indonesian Parliament last week, reform "can no longer be delayed." The right question isn't whether India deserves a seat, it is more like how a body that permanently excludes one-sixth of humanity keeps insisting it speaks for the world, even while its methods are still stuck in the past.

But the real answer is that the obstacles are structural rather than rhetorical. To amend the Charter you need a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly and then ratification by all five permanent members, which effectively hands every sitting power a veto over any dilution of the whole setup.

P5 support for India has often been generous in language, but quiet in procedure. Like, a low-cost diplomatic courtesy not a binding commitment. The Uniting for Consensus group, Italy and South Korea among them, would rather expand the elected category than create new permanent members.

Pakistan campaigns actively against the bid. And, as India's Permanent Representative Harish Parvathaneni put it last month, the status-quoists have learned to weaponize the principle that nothing is agreed

until everything is agreed, a formula that converts complexity into permanent delay.

That is why India's most effective move is not to press its own claim harder, but to make it inseparable from others. An Indian bid built on Indian numbers invites the reply that everyone has numbers. An Indian bid anchored in the Ezulwini Consensus, Africa's own unified demand for permanent representation, and advanced alongside the G4 changes the proposition entirely.

It converts a national request into a structural correction, and it strips the P5 of its most useful excuse: that reform stalls because the claimants cannot agree among themselves.

The same logic applies to the shorter contest. India will not out-argue a fifty-seven-state bloc; it will have to out-deliver it, state by state, in the currency that floating voters actually value, digital public infrastructure offered on open terms, climate-resilient investment through the International Solar Alliance and the CDRI, maritime security for partners in the Gulf whose commercial dependence on India is deeper than their institutional solidarity with Tajikistan.

A vote from Fiji weighs exactly what a vote from a great power weighs. That is the humbling and the opportunity.

India's campaign slogan is "Peace, Planet, Progress." Fine. But the operative word for the next twelve months is arithmetic. Win the seat India can win, and the argument for the seat it wants becomes far harder to refuse. Lose it, and every speech about representing the Global South will be measured against the day the Global South did not turn up.



(Vipul Tamhane is a counter-terrorism expert and governance consultant)

Marveling at the magnificence of Angkor Wat

By **Murli Menon**

Exploring the temple complex at Bayon, Cambodia, one is perplexed by the mysterious smile on the face of Lord Vishnu. The answers to the riddle of the construction of Angkor Wat have left scientists searching for answers. They are dumbstruck by the technology used by the Angkorian kings to haul thousands of stones weighing hundreds of tons and transport them over hundreds of kilometres across several cities stretching from Thailand to Vietnam.

How were these stones sculpted to depict scenes from the Mahabharata, Ramayana and thousands of birds, plants, animals, deities, devatas and apsaras? How have these ancient monuments survived to this day without much damage, though these monuments were left to the elements for a thousand years!

The silent faces of Bayon mock the achievements of modern science. There is no better proof of the power of ancient wisdom than a visit to the hundred Hindu temple complexes strewn across Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

In the wee hours of the morning, the streets are alive with a procession of tourists on their way to see the sandstone replica of "Mount Meru," bathed in molten gold. I hitch a lift on the moped of a local villager going to sell wooden carvings to the early birds. He drops me to the ticket window where I purchase a three-day unlimited pass for 60USD.

Bayon is just one of the 60 temples that exist in the 50 km radius around Siem Reap town. Some of the temples are located 50 km away from Siem Reap. There are



Some of the temples of Angkor, Cambodia, have been purposely left exactly as the explorers found them.

50 more such treasure troves to discover during my fifteen-day stay at Siem Reap.

The most exciting part of going to Angkor Wat is to experience the architectural beauty of the temples combined with the beauty of nature. Several temples are viewed best before sunrise or sunset. This allows one to enjoy the changing phases of the sun and also study the changing colors of the temples under various shades of light.

Some of the temples of Angkor have been purposely left exactly as the explorers found them. This is a good thing as one can see the giant silver cotton trees growing throughout the temple and giving it a wild look. This also ensures

one has to trek on foot through thick forests to enjoy the beauty of these temples, which were abandoned to the elements.

Even a cursory visit to all the major temple complexes of Angkor could take almost three to four days. One can spend a considerable amount of time at the major temples if one stays at Angkor for seven days.

The more one spends time at Bayon, the more one wishes to stay on. As one would not only like to photograph each of these enigmatic faces, but would also like to catch it in different moods during the three twilights of the day.

The most spectacular views are at mid-day and dusk. It is a pleasure

to watch the crimson rays of the sun reflected by the black stones as the sun sets. The other important feature of Bayon is that it is located in the middle of thick forests, and the sounds of the crickets reverberate throughout the day as the crickets get fooled by the semi-darkness that envelops these forests.

At many places, the sun's rays fail to penetrate the forest floor due to the thick forest cover! After a tough day exploring the temples on foot, it is soothing to laze on the hammocks between the trunks of two big trees, while listening to the shrill cries of the crickets. One can meditate to the binaural beats of the crickets under the giant trees which surround these giant temples.

Every step inside the ancient complex of Bayon is no short of a miraculous experience. The sound of the rainforest pervades the temple. The chirping of birds and shrill cries of macaques rent the air, and in the centre of the wilderness stands a black pagoda with giant sculpted faces!

The effect of the first morning light on Bayon is an incredibly touching moment. The most unbelievable part of one's visit to Bayon is that the faces look different at different times of the day and are a photographer's dream. Each face is worth a million pictures, and each picture speaks more than a million words. The language of stone defeats the language of man!

After watching the sunrise over Angkor Wat, it is time to move on to the giant faces of Bayon, which were abandoned centuries ago after the Siamese sacked Angkor.

A minimum amount of restoration has been carried out by archaeologists and most of the temple exists in harmony with the giant silver cotton trees and the evergreen forests that surround the numerous temple complexes that dot Angkor Wat.

The ideal time to visit Bayon is late afternoon when the sun plays on the enigmatic smiles on these faces. A giant Shiva lingam welcomes visitors into the narrow entrance to Bayon. One has to almost crawl through the series of tiny steps that lead to the terrace.

As soon as one climbs up the steps, one is astounded by the stupendous scene that emerges. There are several towers at Bayon, each sculpted with four faces looking in all four directions. Each face is eight feet in height and four feet in breadth and has been assembled by individually sculpting square blocks of stone.

A first glimpse of Angkor, nestled amidst evergreen forests, like a precious jewel, protected by nature, has a humbling effect. One's logical mind fails to comprehend how a temple built nearly 1000 years ago is so massive that modern science cannot even dream of building such a temple in the next one thousand years!



Face-towers depicting Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara at Bayon Temple in Angkor.
(Photos courtesy: Wikimedia Commons)



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Donald Trump to feature on new \$1 coin



The words 'In God We Trust' appear beside Trump's portrait. (Photo courtesy: X@SecScottBessent)

Washington: The US Mint will begin striking a new \$1 coin featuring President Donald Trump to commemorate 250 years of American independence, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said.

The coin carries a portrait of Trump on one side. The word "Liberty" appears above the portrait, while the dates 1776-2026 are engraved below it.

The words "In God We Trust" appear beside Trump's portrait. Two stars flank the image.

The reverse features an eagle with outstretched wings, holding an olive branch in one talon and arrows in the other. A shield bearing the number 250 appears at its centre.

The phrases "United States of America" and "One Dollar" are engraved around the edge. The Latin motto "E Pluribus Unum", meaning

"Out of many, one", appears above the eagle.

"As America commemorates 250 years of independence, the @usmint will begin striking this new \$1 gold coin to honour the enduring legacy of liberty and a lasting symbol of patriotism," Bessent said in a social media post.

"Featuring President Trump, it celebrates the strength of American values, and the promise of a nation dedicated to preserving freedom for all," he added.

The announcement did not provide a date for the coin's release or say how many would be struck. It also did not give details about its metal composition, circulation status or availability to collectors.

The US Mint, which produces the country's circulating coins as well as commemorative and collectible issues, is coming out with a number of coins to celebrate the 250th anniversary of America's independence.

The first non-round coin and medal in recent US history, these Liberty Bell-shaped coins and medals are available in the following product options: One Ounce Gold Coin, Half Ounce Gold Coin and Half Ounce Silver Medal.

Fed Reserve keeps rates unchanged, controls inflation

Washington: US Federal Reserve Chairman Kevin Warsh told Congress that the central bank would bring inflation under control, as policymakers held interest rates steady and signalled a sweeping review of monetary policy practices.

Making his first appearance before Congress as Fed chairman, Warsh said the Federal Open Market Committee had maintained the federal funds rate in a range of 3.5 per cent to 3.75 percent at its June meeting.

"The members of our committee have no tolerance for persistently elevated inflation," Warsh told the House Financial Services Committee. "And we share a resolute commitment to ensure price stability."

Warsh said the US economy continued to expand at a solid pace despite recent global developments. Household consumption had moderated, manufacturing output had risen steadily and the labour market remained resilient. The housing sector, however, continued to lag.

"We're committed to the 2 percent inflation goal," Warsh said. "This isn't a time for us to pass the buck, to blame others."

The Fed chairman acknowledged that overseas conflicts and other external events were beyond the central bank's control. But he insisted that monetary policy could deliver stable prices through interest



US Federal Reserve Chairman Kevin Warsh. (Photo courtesy: Federal Reserve)

rates and management of the Fed's balance sheet.

"We have the tools to deliver that," he said. "So it's a function of commitment, responsibility and tools. And we're three for three and we'll deliver."

Warsh identified business investment as the most striking feature of the economy. He said investment in equipment rose about 8 per cent in the first quarter, while spending on high-technology equipment grew nearly 25 per cent.

Mehul Shah wins World Federation of Diamond Bourses Presidential Bid

New York: Bharat Diamond Bourse (BDB) vice president Mehul Shah will take over as president of the World Federation of Diamond Bourses (WFDB) following a contested election, according to reports.

Shah will succeed Yoram Dvash, former head of the Israel Diamond Exchange (IDE), who is standing down after completing the maximum two three-year terms, reports said.

Other participants in the race were Ahmed Bin Sulayem, chairman of the Dubai Diamond Exchange (DDE), and Lin Qiang, president of the Shanghai Diamond Exchange (SDE).

The election took place during the World Diamond Congress in Singapore, accord-

ing to a BDB statement.

"As the delegates to the congress deliberate over the way forward in a challenging global market, I am confident that the discussions in Singapore will lead to meaningful outcomes," Shah said in a statement.

"The new leadership team at WFDB is committed to taking forward the vision of the Congress and building a stronger future for the industry," he added.

Meanwhile, according to the reports, the federation elected Luigi Cosma, president of the Borsa Diamanti d'Italia, as vice president and Molefi Letsiki, chairman of the Diamond Dealers Club of South Africa, as treasurer.

India-UK FTA comes into force



Piyush Goyal said the trade pact marks a defining milestone in India-UK relations. (Photo courtesy: X@PiyushGoyal)

New Delhi: Export consignments worth over \$140 million were dispatched on the first day of the landmark India-United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) coming into force this week.

Along with CETA, the Agreement on Social Security, also known as the Double Contribution Convention (DCC), formally entered into force,

marking a major milestone in the economic partnership between the two countries.

The Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said that more than \$140 million worth of goods were being exported to the United Kingdom on the first day of implementation under the India-UK CETA. He expressed confidence that sustained utilisation of the Agreement would strengthen

India-UK trade and encourage the pursuit of other trade initiatives currently under consideration.

During the day, over 50 export consignments valued at more than \$140 million were flagged off from more than 20 ports, airports, Inland Container Depots (ICDs), Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and factories across India. The consignments covered a wide range of products including electronics, pharmaceuticals and gems and jewelry, and were dispatched from locations including the seaports of Mundra, Nhava Sheva and Chennai, as well as air cargo complexes at Mumbai (Sahar), Kolkata, and Hyderabad, according to an official statement.

In a post on X, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that the entry into force of the India-UK CETA and the Agreement on Social Security marks a defining milestone in India-UK relations. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Agreements have come into force, providing zero-duty market access for nearly 99 per cent of India's exports and covering almost 100 per cent of trade value.



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Spain defeat France 2-0 to reach FIFA World Cup final



Goals from Mikel Oyarzabal and Pedro Porro earned Spain a deserved 2-0 win over France. (Photo courtesy: X@FIFACOM)

Arlington: Goals from Mikel Oyarzabal and Pedro Porro earned Spain a deserved 2-0 win over France at Dallas Stadium in their FIFA World Cup 2026 semi-final here.

This was France's fourth defeat in the semi-finals of the World Cup (1958, 1982, 1986, 2026) in eight appearances. Moreover, this was the third consecutive elimination against Spain in the semi-finals of a competition after Euro 2024 (2-1) and the Nations League 2025 (5-4).

France lost their first knockout match in the World Cup since the 2014 quarter-final against Germany (0-1). That makes 11 matches (10 wins, 1 draw).

France started as the slight favorites and, though Kylian Mbappe threatened on the break, Lamine Yamal gave Luis de la Fuente's side the game's first big chance. The winger, a day after his 19th birthday, got to the ball before Lucas Digne and was clipped inside the box. Oyarzabal struck the resulting penalty past spot-kick-saving specialist Mike Maignan.

The advantage was amplified when Porro played a palatial one-two with Dani Olmo, taking the return impeccably and burying the ball in the bottom corner.

France, with Desire Doue and Rayan Cherki on, pushed to get back into the game, but goalkeeper Unai Simon acted astutely as a sweeper-keeper and Marc Cucurella made an excellent challenge on Mbappe.

The final whistle sparked ecstasy for the Spaniards and agony for the French. Didier Deschamps' team will have a shot at bronze on Saturday, when Mbappe could boost his hopes for another Golden Boot.

Spain kept their sixth clean sheet in seven matches at this tournament. They have conceded just two goals in North America. The record for a triumphant team in a World Cup is two shared by France in 1998, Italy in 2006 and Spain themselves in 2010.

FIFA WC: Argentina's late fightback eliminates England in semis

Atlanta: Holders Argentina staged a stunning late fightback with goals from Enzo Fernandez and Lautaro Martinez to defeat England 2-1 and advance to the FIFA World Cup 2026 final.

Argentina have now won six out of six World Cup semi-finals with a remarkable comeback. Lionel Scaloni's title holders will face Spain in Sunday's final in New York-New Jersey.

The Three Lions, contesting their second semi-final in the last three World Cups, took the lead when Gordon tapped home Morgan Rogers' cross, but it was not enough to earn a first World Cup final berth since 1966. Argentina struck back, first through a Fernandez effort from outside the box before Martinez headed home the winner in the third minute of injury time to set up a chance to defend their title.

Argentina have become the sixth team to win the World Cup and return to the final in the following edition after Italy (1934, 1938), Brazil (1958, 1962), Argentina (1986, 1990), Brazil (1994, 1998) and France (2018, 2022). England, meanwhile, have now lost three World Cup semifinals (1990, 2018 and 2026) and still have only one final appearance to their name,



Argentina will face Spain in the FIFA World Cup final. (Photo courtesy: X@FIFACOM)

from 1966.

The match began in feisty fashion. It was cagey and intensely contested and not until the 33rd minute did either side produce an attempt on goal. That was when John Stones nodded wide from a Declan Rice free-kick at the far post. At the other end, Fernandez flashed a fierce shot over.

Both these teams had had to dig deep to get this far. Both had found moments of inspiration when it was most needed. Julian Alvarez sought to conjure one such moment soon after the restart, getting beyond Djed Spence following a long ball forward and

drawing a smart save from Jordan Pickford at his near post.

Instead, the breakthrough came at the other end when Morgan Rogers, one of three players brought back into England's starting XI, delivered a terrific low cross from the right. Gordon, arriving at the back post, got in front of Nahuel Molina to steer an excellent controlled finish into the corner of Emiliano Martinez's goal.

Another of the starters reinstated by Thomas Tuchel, Spence made a brilliant goal-saving tackle to deny Giuliano Simeone but the close calls continued as England sat increasingly deep and Argentina's pressure grew. Substitute Nico Gonzalez saw his header foiled by a fine Pickford save, while Alexis Mac Allister headed against the post. Eventually, the pressure told as, following a short-corner routine, Messi squared the ball to Fernandez and he unleashed a magnificent shot from outside the box that flew past Pickford to his right.

Then, in added time, Mac Allister's shot struck a post, but Messi recycled the danger, delivering a right-foot cross that substitute Martinez buried at the far post.

Test win at Lord's will always be special for Indian women team

New Delhi: India's off-spin bowling all-rounder Sneha Rana has revealed that the historic 270-run victory over England in the first-ever women's Test match at the iconic Lord's Cricket Ground was the culmination of deep manifestation and visualisation of 'creating history' long before the team even set foot on the hallowed turf.

It took 142 years for Lord's to host its first-ever Women's Test match, and the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side registered themselves as winners of the historic game at the iconic venue. The mammoth and very special victory also marked India's second-highest win by runs in women's Tests and the fourth biggest victory overall in the longer format, apart from maintaining their clean slate in red-ball games in England.

"If I tell you personally, since the time we came to know that the Lord would host the Test match, and it is the first time Test cricket would be played there, our manifestation started



India registered historic 270-run victory over England in the first-ever women's Test match at Lord's. (Photo courtesy: X@lonsaikia/@BCCIWomen)

from there. Like what to do and for visualisation, we used to

think of going there and would say that if we win, India's name

will come here and it will remain forever and become history.

"So all this was going on in the dressing room before the match, and finally, when that moment came, it was a very special feeling, and I just want all our players to keep writing their names on the honours board and create more history," Sneha told the media.

The belief that a famous victory at Lord's was further fuelled by head coach Amol Muzumdar, who urged the players to seize their opportunity of a lifetime. "Yes, absolutely.

When we were in the dressing room, Amol Sir was saying that history would be made because it was the first Test. After this, there will be Test matches or other women's matches. But this will always be special, and the name of India will always be there.

The historic Test saw young pacer Kranti Gaud claim a five-wicket haul and wicketkeeper-batter Yastika Bhatia score a spectacular century as both etched their names on the iconic honours board at Lord's.

India secures major win at Codex Commission

New Delhi: The 49th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in Geneva adopted seven Codex standards and guidelines developed under India's chairmanship and co-chairmanship, reinforcing the country's contribution to the development of science-based international food standards, an official statement said.

In another major achievement, the Commission approved India's proposal to undertake new work for the development of a Codex Standard for Cashew Kernels.

The Indian delegation, led by Rajit Punhani, Chief Executive Officer, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), participated actively in the Commission's deliberations along with technical experts from FSSAI and Spices Board.

The commission adopted standards for dried coriander seeds and fresh curry leaves both developed under India's chairmanship and five Codex texts developed under India's



The Commission approved India's proposal to undertake new work for the development of a Codex Standard for Cashew Kernels. (Photo courtesy: PIB)

co-chairmanship.

The Standard for Dried Coriander Seeds would facilitate trade in one of the world's most widely traded spices, while the Standard for Fresh Curry Leaves provides an international benchmark for this regionally important culinary herb.

Five Codex texts include the standards for vanilla and large cardamom which establish internationally harmonized quality requirements for these globally traded commodities.

Further, they include annexes to guidelines on the safe use and reuse of water in food production and processing, the statement from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said.

The new standard is expected to facilitate fair trade, reduce technical barriers to trade, strengthen market access for Indian exports by enhancing its competitiveness in the global cashew trade.

Dementia risk may also be reduced through diet



Dr. Monika Fekete.

(Photo courtesy: Balint Barta/ Semmelweis University)

New York: Natural plant compounds known as polyphenols, found in berries, tea, cocoa, coffee, and extra virgin olive oil, may positively influence biological processes linked to Alzheimer's disease and other disorders characterized by the gradual loss of nerve cells, according to a review by researchers at Semmelweis University.

The analysis, published in *Nutrients*, suggests that these bioactive compounds may contribute to healthy brain aging.

Researchers reviewed the findings of hundreds of previous laboratory, animal, population-based, and clinical studies. The studies reviewed suggest that polyphenols may support nerve cell function through their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties while helping counteract harmful processes associated with brain aging. Particular attention has been paid to the Mediterranean diet, which is rich in vegetables, fruits, legumes, whole grains, fish, and olive oil, as well as the MIND diet, which is based on Mediterranean dietary principles. The MIND diet was specifically developed to support brain health by emphasizing leafy

green vegetables and berries while limiting the consumption of red meat, butter, cheese, sweets, and fried and fast foods.

Among the compounds frequently examined in the reviewed studies were EGCG, one of the main antioxidants found in green tea; the pigments responsible for the color of berries; flavanols found in cocoa; and curcumin, the compound that gives turmeric its characteristic yellow color. These compounds are commonly found in plant-based diets, including the Mediterranean diet.

"Polyphenols are not miracle cures, but research suggests they may be promising tools for supporting healthy brain aging. The focus, however, should not be on dietary supplements but on a varied diet rich in plant-based foods," said Dr. Monika Fekete, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Preventive Medicine and Public Health of Semmelweis University and senior author of the study.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 55 million people worldwide are living with dementia, and that number is expected to rise in the coming decades.

Poor-quality sleep involves different parts of brain, depending on age

New York: A recent study including psychology researchers from Binghamton University, State University of New York investigates how poor sleep alters brain communication across the adult lifespan, specifically examining how these changes vary by age and biological sex.

The article appeared in a recent edition of the journal *Neurobiology of Aging*. The researchers analyzed brain scans from two large groups totaling more than 1,300 participants to see how brain networks connect at rest in people who report having poor sleep quality.

"We discovered that the poorly slept older brain looks like it is suffering from a general breakdown in its sleep-regulation systems," Associate Professor of Psychology, Ian McDonough, said.

College-age adults with poor sleep quality exhibited overconnected brain regions involved in movement, suggesting that their bodies aren't physically ready to sleep. In older adults, typically age 65 and above, these same regions were under-connected; instead, they showed hyperconnectivity in brain regions involved in cognition.

In particular, older women with poor sleep showed abnormal hyperconnectivity between the Default Mode Network (DMN), which is involved in internal thoughts and memory, and the Frontal Parietal Network (FPN), which is



One strong possibility is that people who have a lot of running thoughts right before bed are not in a calm state. (Photo courtesy: unsplash.com)

involved in sustained attention and working memory. This over-communication pattern was directly linked to poorer memory performance and mirrors brain wiring patterns seen in the preclinical, silent stages of Alzheimer's disease, McDonough said.

"One strong possibility is that people who have a lot of running thoughts right before bed are not in a calm state, but rather more of an agitated state," McDonough said.

Simple test could help track metabolic health in chronic disease

New York: Researchers writing in *Frontiers in Science* propose using simple tests to track metabolic health in non-communicable diseases, which cause three in four deaths worldwide.

The paper makes the case for using the glucose ketone index (GKI)—the ratio of glucose and ketones in blood taken from a finger prick.

The proposed test could indicate metabolic state, assess long-term nutritional adherence, and support the monitoring of strategies aimed at improving mitochondrial function, which is linked to many non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

The commonest chronic NCDs—including cancer, cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and neurodegeneration—are forecast to rise substantially worldwide by 2050 and overtake infectious diseases for health burden.

The authors argue that the GKI could help track whether diet, fasting, or exercise interventions shift the body toward nutritional ketosis—a metabolic



The proposed test could indicate metabolic state, assess long-term nutritional adherence. (Photo courtesy: X@Akram Huseyn/Unsplash)

state marked by lower glucose and higher ketone availability, which may be linked to lower NCD risk or improved management. However, the authors note that disease-specific target ranges must still be validated in future clinical studies.

Lead author Prof Thomas Seyfried, from Boston College, US, said: "Within the next few decades, NCDs could account for up to 75% of all disability-adjusted life-years, contributing to a substantial decline in life expectancy. These conditions are not the result of genetic fate but are largely shaped by lifestyle factors. This GKI-based metabolic roadmap outlines a proposed clinical pathway that could support the prevention and management of cancer and chronic disease." The authors say that ketogenic approaches should be considered as management strategies for chronic disease

under specific circumstances rather than cures, and that any approach should be taken under clinical supervision.

KALEIDOSCOPE: INDIAN AMERICAN YOUTH PERSPECTIVES & REFLECTIONS

The Fear of Being Seen Trying

By Aashna Shah

Everyone has a dream they have never told anyone about.

Maybe it is starting a business, auditioning for something intimidating, writing a story, creating art, joining a team, applying for a leadership position, or simply becoming a different version of themselves. The dream exists quietly, and so does the fear that comes with it.

What if people judge me?

What if I fail?

What if everyone sees me try and I am not good enough?

For many teenagers, the fear of failure is not the hardest part. It is the fear of being seen failing.

In a world where achievements are constantly displayed, trying without immediate success can feel embarrassing.

In a world where achievements are constantly displayed, trying without immediate success can feel embarrassing. Social media often shows the final product: the award, the acceptance letter, the finished project, the perfect performance. What people rarely see are the attempts before success, the mistakes, the rejected ideas, and the moments of uncertainty.

As a result, many teenagers learn to protect themselves by never beginning.



(Photo courtesy: pinterest)

It can feel safer to say, "I was never interested," than to admit, "I wanted to try, but I was afraid." Avoiding failure can become a way of avoiding judgment. But in protecting ourselves from disappointment, we can also prevent ourselves from discovering what we are capable of.

Aashna Shah is an Indian American sophomore at Syosset High School interested in business and storytelling. She hopes to use the Kaleidoscope as a pathway to uplift underserved communities.

MELVIN DURAI'S HUMOR COLUMN

Cooling off indoors to survive heat wave

I recently survived a heat wave that confirmed to me that the greatest man in history was the man who invented air conditioning. He was an American engineer named Willis Carrier, inventor of the first electrical air conditioning unit in 1902. The greatest woman in history was his wife, Edith, who said to him, "It's so freakin' hot. Do something about it, please!"

Actually, Edith did not use the word "freakin'." She used a different word that sounds similar. She used the word "friggin'." What does it mean? I don't friggin' know.

Anyway, thanks to Carrier and

his wife, Edith, millions of people have been able to stay cool during scorching weather, and so have innumerable creatures living in their houses, including dogs, cats, hamsters and rats. People with air conditioning have been able to survive extreme heat waves, and some have even been able to survive their electric bills.

Even if you do not have AC (or air con as it's known in the UK), there's a good chance that you enjoy AC at your job and other places you visit regularly, including stores and restaurants. Indeed, many people feel a sudden urge to go shopping during heat waves.

Malls are particularly busy, drawing more hot people than the Academy Awards.

Ramona: "Hi Joanna. Is that your husband, Bob, sitting on the bench? How did you manage to get him to go shopping with you?"

Joanna: "He was so hot at home. I told him he's either going to the mall or the hospital. Where's your husband?"

Ramona: "He's at Best Buy, pretending to buy a TV. Bob should join him."

Joanna: "Nah, Bob likes sitting on the bench. It reminds him of his days on the high school basketball team."

In many parts of the world, only a small fraction of people own AC units. That's what made the recent heat wave in Europe so catastrophic. Some of the casualties occurred in stores as people fought over AC units. Indeed, as The Telegraph reported, about 400 people spent a night queuing outside a Lidl

store in Paris to get their hands on AC units. Eight people, including a 12-year-old, were reportedly injured after a customer used pepper spray during a tussle for a unit. Police and firefighters were called to the scene. Many people were pleased when the cops said, "We're going to take you to the station to cool off." They knew there'd be AC at the station, as well as in the police cars.

Having air conditioning in cars is something many people take for granted — until it stops working. I know this from personal experience, having driven an old car. Whenever I pushed the AC button, the sun got hotter.

Running the AC in a car uses a little more fuel, but it beats arriving at work drenched in sweat.

Boss: "Did you swim to work?"

Employee: "No, the AC in my car is not working."

Boss: "Well, you're not working either. Go home and take a shower!"

Having air conditioning at home helped me survive a recent heat wave, but when it's not too hot, I prefer to open the windows and use fans. I try not to over-use air conditioning, mostly for health reasons. I don't want to suffer a heart attack when I open the electric bill.

Fans can be quite effective, especially when they're powerful enough to create a breeze in your home. Just be careful if you're wearing a toupee.

The electric fan, in case you're wondering, was invented in 1882 by an American engineer named Schuyler Wheeler. He had the brainstorm to place a two-bladed propeller on the shaft of an electric motor. He might be the second greatest man in history. Just don't stick your finger in his invention. As Ariana Grande would tell you, it's safe to keep a little distance between you and your fans.



(Photo courtesy: www.pexels.com)

Laughter is the Best Medicine



Times have changed! The people whom we once used to dismiss as being worth only two pennies, if you call them 'worth two pennies' today, they come out onto the streets to prove that we are the ones worth only two pennies!

Mahendra Shah is an architect by education, entrepreneur by profession, artist and humorist, cartoonist and writer by hobby. He has been recording the plight of the immigrant Indians for the past many year in his cartoons. Hailing from Gujarat, he lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



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JULY 18-24, 2026

♈ ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)
Family interactions can become more enjoyable if you organize engaging activities that bring everyone together. Recovering overdue payments may improve your monetary situation considerably. Matters of the heart may not progress exactly as you had hoped despite sincere efforts. Avoid allowing stress to dominate your thoughts, as it can affect both your physical and mental health. A short drive through scenic surroundings may provide a refreshing break from daily responsibilities. Think carefully before getting involved in any property matter linked to disagreements or legal complications. Spending quality time with close friends can uplift your mood and create memorable moments.
Lucky Number: 9 Lucky Colour: Peach

♉ TAURUS (Apr 21-May 20)
Several financial opportunities may come your way, but thorough assessment is essential before making a decision. Standing beside your partner during difficult circumstances will deepen trust and affection. Small adjustments to daily habits can significantly enhance your overall wellness. Depending entirely on others to finish important tasks could leave you dissatisfied with the outcome. An unplanned trip may suddenly become part of your schedule. Home improvement or renovation plans may begin taking shape. Avoid dwelling excessively on insignificant issues, as they can drain your energy unnecessarily. Someone close may seek your guidance regarding an important matter.
Lucky Number: 4 Lucky Colour: Blue

♊ GEMINI (May 21-Jun 21)
The presence of children can fill your surroundings with happiness and reduce feelings of isolation. Financial planning with future responsibilities in mind can strengthen long-term security. An unexpected romantic development may add excitement to your life. Your dedication to staying fit is likely to produce encouraging results. This is an excellent period to unwind and take a much-needed break from routine pressures. Real estate matters appear favourable, particularly for prospective buyers. Avoid taking impulsive actions in situations that require legal procedures. Better organization of your time can improve academic or learning outcomes.
Lucky Number: 17 Lucky Colour: Purple

♋ CANCER (Jun 22-Jul 22)
Giving more attention to family matters can help create a peaceful and supportive environment at home. Business gains may remain steady rather than spectacular, making wise choices essential. You may find yourself evaluating the future of a personal relationship. Guard against jealousy, as it can disturb both emotional balance and health. Travelling with someone whose company you don't enjoy could reduce the fun of the experience. Property owners may attract genuine buyers willing to offer a reasonable deal. Bold ideas and innovative thinking can bring positive developments. Students may benefit from adopting a disciplined routine.
Lucky Number: 3 Lucky Colour: Golden

♌ LEO (Jul 23-Aug 23)
Your involvement in family activities can inspire younger members and create a cheerful atmosphere. A comfortable financial position may allow you to reward or support those working with you. A sudden attraction toward someone may catch you by surprise. Focusing on physical wellness can boost your energy and confidence. Solo journeys may present avoidable challenges, so caution is advised. Relocating to a more comfortable residence may prove beneficial for some. Lingering personal concerns deserve immediate attention before they grow more complicated. Staying active and productive will help maintain enthusiasm and momentum.
Lucky Number: 5 Lucky Colour: Green

♍ VIRGO (Aug 24-Sept 23)
Being overly controlling could spark unnecessary disagreements within the household. Sensible spending habits will help preserve financial stability during the week. Thoughts of romance may keep you occupied, encouraging meaningful moments with your partner. Valuable health advice from an experienced person can prove beneficial. Those dreaming of overseas travel may find suitable opportunities emerging. Verify all property-related documents carefully to avoid future complications. Delaying important personal matters may only increase difficulties later. Optimism and decisive action will help you overcome challenges effectively.
Lucky Number: 18 Lucky Colour: Brown

♎ LIBRA (Sept 24-Oct 23)
Your professional skills and expertise may attract appreciation and improve career prospects. Flexibility at home will help maintain harmony among family members. Unexpected expenses may require careful financial planning. Social gatherings could introduce interesting romantic possibilities through your natural charm. Avoid becoming overly concerned about minor health issues. Remain patient and composed while driving, even when faced with provocation. Property matters may require extra vigilance due to the possibility of disagreements. Kindness and humility will leave a lasting impression on others. Students can make significant progress through online learning platforms.
Lucky Number: 6
Lucky Colour: Cream

♏ SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)
Mutual respect and open communication will strengthen family relationships. Your financial position remains secure enough to adapt comfortably to changing circumstances. A romantic proposal or expectation may not receive the response you anticipated. Do not allow temporary health concerns to slow your ambitions. A relaxing holiday with loved ones can help restore balance after a hectic period. Property decisions should be approached carefully and only after proper evaluation. Creative thinking and productive efforts may bring rewards beyond what you originally expected.
Lucky Number: 8
Lucky Colour: Saffron

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)
Family tensions can be resolved successfully through patience, maturity, and understanding. Before investing money, examine the long-term prospects of any venture carefully. Romance can become exciting and rewarding when nurtured with genuine effort. Those dealing with health concerns are likely to notice positive improvement. Travel plans may lead you to breath-taking destinations and memorable experiences. Securing funds for a business venture may prove easier than anticipated. Make room in your schedule for enjoyable social activities and personal interests.
Lucky Number: 9
Lucky Colour: Pink

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 21)
Strengthening family bonds will require open discussions and a willingness to understand one another's concerns. Financial assistance or a loan may help ease current pressures. Your intelligence and attractive personality may draw someone's attention. Consistency in fitness routines can deliver noticeable health benefits. Travel plans may not fully meet your expectations, so stay flexible. Family disagreements involving inherited assets should be handled tactfully. Careful judgment and thoughtful consideration will help prevent unnecessary misunderstandings.
Lucky Number: 22
Lucky Colour: White

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan 22-Feb 19)
Adjusting to changes within the household may take some time. Financial support from trusted individuals could help you pursue educational ambitions. Your partner is likely to be affectionate, caring, and highly encouraging. Healthy eating habits and regular exercise will contribute to better overall fitness. Reviewing weather conditions before travelling can save you from inconvenience. Attractive opportunities in the property market may allow you to secure a good deal. Timely support offered to friends will be greatly appreciated. Extra dedication to studies can improve performance in a crucial examination.
Lucky Number: 2
Lucky Colour: Maroon

♓ PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)
Advice from elders can provide valuable direction and practical solutions. Prompt financial decisions may help prevent avoidable losses. Affectionate gestures and appreciation from your partner can make this a memorable week for love. Looking after your health will help you overcome minor physical discomforts. Travel opportunities may introduce excitement, adventure, and fresh perspectives. Those considering real estate investments should evaluate commercial prospects carefully.
Self-reflection can help you recognize both your strengths and areas that need improvement, leading to meaningful personal growth.
Lucky Number: 7
Lucky Colour: Orange

July 18, 2026
Ruled by number 9 and Mars, you are energetic, fearless, and naturally driven by ambition and passion. Your confidence, courage, and strong leadership qualities help you overcome obstacles and inspire people around you. You enjoy taking initiative and often perform best in challenging situations. However, impatience or impulsive reactions may sometimes create misunderstandings, so staying calm and thoughtful will help you greatly this year. Professionally, exciting opportunities and partnerships are likely to improve your career and financial position. Business ventures, collaborations, and new projects may bring rewarding results and open fresh sources of income. Colleagues and close associates will support your ideas and help you move ahead confidently. On the personal front, family harmony will remain strong, and emotional support from loved ones will bring comfort and encouragement. Romance and relationships are likely to become deeper and more meaningful for many. A distant journey or spiritual experience later in the year may bring inspiration and emotional clarity. Health generally remains stable, but stress, overwork, or anger should be controlled to maintain balance. Regular exercise, healthy habits, and proper rest will help you stay energetic and focused. Important months for growth and success are March, July, and September. Stay positive, disciplined, and confident in your decisions, and this year can bring achievement, financial growth, emotional happiness, and meaningful personal progress.

July 19, 2026
Ruled by number 1 and the Sun, you are creative, charismatic, and naturally confident in your approach toward life. Your strong personality, leadership qualities, and positive attitude help you attract opportunities and gain admiration from others. You enjoy taking initiative and often inspire people with your determination and independent thinking. However, being overly sensitive or proud at times may create misunderstandings, so staying balanced and patient will help you greatly this year. Financially, the year looks promising, with gains likely through additional work, side ventures, or past investments. Professionally, new opportunities and useful connections may help you grow steadily and strengthen your reputation. Networking and building strong relationships will open important doors for future success. On the personal front, family life will remain supportive

ANNUAL PREDICTIONS FOR THOSE BORN IN THIS WEEK

and peaceful. Loved ones will encourage you during important decisions and help you stay emotionally strong. Romance and emotional bonding are likely to deepen, while some may hear wedding bells or make long-term commitments. Travel, especially long-distance journeys, may bring fresh inspiration and a new outlook toward life. Health generally remains stable, though maintaining a balanced routine, exercise, and proper rest will be important to avoid stress and exhaustion. Spiritual interests or self-reflection may also guide you toward emotional clarity and inner peace. Important months for progress and achievements are March, October, and December. Stay focused, optimistic, and practical, and this year can bring recognition, happiness, financial improvement, and meaningful personal growth.

July 20, 2026
Ruled by number 2 and the Moon, you are imaginative, emotional, and deeply connected to your feelings and relationships. Your gentle nature, honesty, and caring attitude make you supportive toward family and loved ones. You often trust your intuition and prefer harmony in life, though emotional ups and downs may sometimes affect your confidence. This year encourages you to stay balanced and practical while making important decisions. Financially, the year looks positive, with benefits likely through partnerships, investments, or pending matters finally moving in your favor. Professional growth may involve travel, foreign connections, or new collaborations that bring valuable opportunities. A mentor or influential person entering your life may inspire positive changes and help you see things from a fresh perspective. On the personal front, relationships will grow stronger through understanding, patience, and emotional honesty.

Family support will help you remain stable during difficult situations. Health requires attention toward stress, sleep, and emotional well-being, so maintaining proper rest and relaxation will be important. Spiritual interests may increase and bring peace of mind and emotional clarity. Travel during the year may prove beneficial and refreshing. Important months for success and major progress are February, May, October, and December. Stay positive, emotionally balanced, and confident in your abilities,

and this year can bring happiness, financial stability, meaningful relationships, and steady personal growth.

July 21, 2026
Ruled by number 3 and Jupiter, you are energetic, ambitious, and naturally gifted with leadership qualities. Your confidence, enthusiasm, and positive attitude help you perform well even in challenging situations. People admire your ability to inspire others and handle responsibilities with maturity. However, impatience or taking on too much at once may sometimes create pressure, so learning to stay organized and balanced will help you succeed more smoothly this year. Professionally, exciting opportunities, new contacts, and important alliances may bring career growth and recognition. Your ideas and leadership abilities will attract appreciation from seniors and influential people. Financial stability is likely through smart investments, careful planning, and steady efforts. Travel with loved ones or for professional reasons may bring happiness, memorable experiences, and useful opportunities.

On the personal front, relationships will deepen through trust, communication, and emotional understanding. Family support will motivate you during important phases of life, while romance may become stronger and more meaningful for many. Health generally remains stable, though stress and overwork should be avoided. Maintaining a disciplined routine, healthy habits, and proper rest will help you stay energetic and focused. Spiritual interests or self-improvement activities may also bring emotional peace and clarity. Important months for growth and achievements are February, September, and December. Stay confident, practical, and positive, and this year can bring success, stability, happiness, and meaningful progress in many areas of life.

July 22, 2026
Ruled by number 4 and Uranus, you are practical, enthusiastic, and deeply connected to your values and traditions. Your hardworking nature, discipline, and determination help you achieve success steadily in life. People appreciate your honesty, reliability, and ability to stay strong during difficult situations. However, stubbornness or overthinking may sometimes create delays or misunderstandings, so learning to stay

flexible and open-minded will help you move ahead smoothly this year. Professionally, the year brings opportunities for career advancement, recognition, and financial stability. Promotions, successful projects, or benefits from past investments are likely to improve your confidence and long-term security. Overseas travel or new ventures may also bring valuable experiences and useful connections. Financially, the year looks rewarding, though careful handling of money and avoiding unnecessary lending will be important. On the personal front, family and friends will provide strong emotional support and motivation during important phases of life. Relationships can become more stable and meaningful with patience and understanding. Health generally remains steady, but stress and exhaustion caused by overwork should not be ignored. A balanced routine, proper rest, and healthy habits will help maintain both physical and emotional well-being. Social interactions and networking may introduce you to influential people who support your future plans. Important months for progress and achievements are January, April, August, and November. Stay disciplined, patient, and positive, and this year can bring stability, happiness, financial growth, and personal fulfillment.

July 23, 2026
Ruled by number 5 and Mercury, you are intelligent, original, and naturally gifted in communication and business matters. Your sharp thinking, adaptability, and confidence help you handle challenges with ease. You enjoy exploring new ideas, meeting people, and creating opportunities for yourself through smart decisions. However, restlessness or stress may sometimes affect your focus, so staying organized and emotionally balanced will be important this year. Professionally, recognition for your talent, skills, and education is likely to bring positive career growth and rewarding opportunities. Travel, especially overseas journeys, may introduce you to influential contacts and expand your professional network. Financially, steady progress is indicated, particularly through property, investments, or new ventures, though patience will be needed before seeing full results. On the personal front, family relationships will become stronger with better commu-

nication and understanding. Exciting news from children or younger family members may bring happiness and pride. Romance and emotional bonding can deepen, creating warmth and emotional security. Health requires attention toward stress-related issues, irregular schedules, or overworking. A disciplined routine, proper rest, and healthy habits will help you stay energetic and focused. Spiritual interests or self-reflection may also guide you toward inner peace and clarity. Important months for success and major achievements are March, July, September, and November. Stay positive, practical, and focused, and this year can bring happiness, financial improvement, career success, and meaningful personal growth.

July 24, 2026
Ruled by number 6 and Venus, you are emotional, supportive, and admired for your caring and balanced personality. You naturally create comfort and harmony wherever you go, and people often depend on your advice and emotional strength. Your practical thinking and creative nature help you handle responsibilities wisely. However, becoming too emotionally attached or worrying excessively may sometimes affect your peace of mind, so maintaining balance will be important this year. Professionally, the year highlights growth through networking, new contacts, and fresh opportunities that can improve your career path. Long-term investments and careful planning are likely to bring financial rewards and greater stability. Socializing, travel, and meeting new people may inspire creative ideas and help expand your future possibilities. On the personal front, relationships will become stronger and more supportive. Your partner or loved ones will encourage you and stand beside you during important phases of life. Family harmony can improve through patience and open communication. Health generally remains stable, though minor issues such as fatigue or back-related discomfort may need attention. A healthy routine, balanced lifestyle, and proper rest will help maintain energy and emotional well-being. Spiritual growth or self-reflection may also bring inner peace and emotional clarity. Important months for progress and success are January, May, September, and December. Stay optimistic, emotionally balanced, and practical, and this year can bring happiness, stability, financial comfort, and meaningful growth in many areas of life.

Find Your Calm Center

Ups and downs in life are a part of human existence and cannot be avoided. The question is, are we going to lose our peace of mind and become unstable as we face these highs and lows on the roadway of life? Or, is there another way?

By **Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj**



(Photo courtesy: www.sos.org)

If we let ourselves become affected by everything that comes our way in life, we will feel as if we are on a perpetual roller coaster. We will move from the heights of ecstasy to the depths of despair and back to

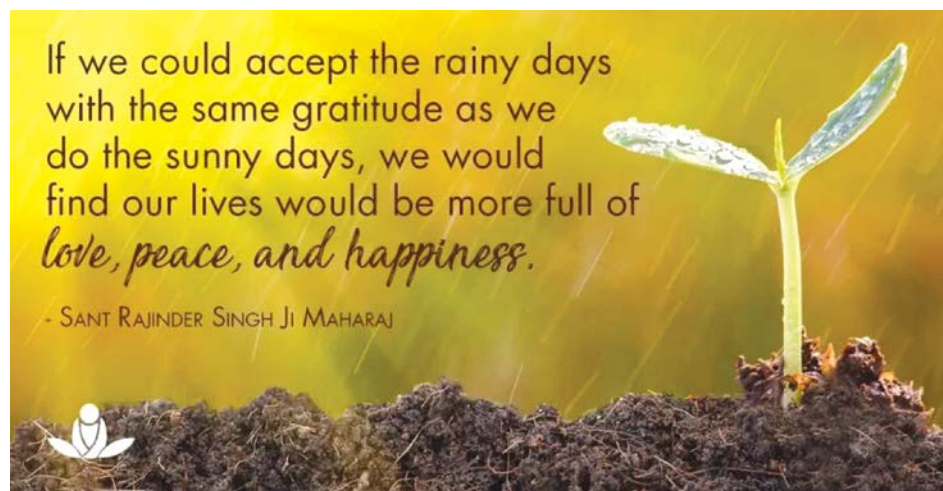
ecstasy again from one moment to the next.

These constant variations often lead to a sense of fear, anxiety, and panic because we never know what will happen next. Over time, this state of fear and anxiety becomes a part of our nature and we are not able to relax.

Since we do not seem to have much control over the ups and downs of life, how can we learn to live a life of peace and relaxation?

In life, we have to remember that all things are transient. This knowledge can help us maintain a sense of balance when we face the highs and lows of life. When we become too ecstatic and happy, we need to remember that things will not always be that way, and we should not be disappointed or depressed when the happy times pass. When we become too depressed or unhappy, these four words can serve as a reminder to us that the pain is only temporary, and happy days will come again.

We can stay at an even keel through the storms and sunny days of life by finding a calm center. We can reach this still point



(Graphic courtesy: www.sos.org)

through meditation and prayer. Within us are all the riches of divinity. We are not just the body and the mind, but the soul. The soul is filled with Light, love, and joy. Why? It is connected all the time with the source of divinity, the creative Power, which is also all Light, love, and joy.

The creative Power and the soul are made of the same essence. If we spend some time daily within the silence of our soul, we will be connected with a place of bliss. Then the outer circumstances of our life will not affect us.

We will not be troubled by the temporary phases of life. We can learn to find a still center, filled with peace and balance, which

will provide us with permanent happiness despite the outer variations of life.

Next time we face pain, remembering that all things will come to pass, will help us pass through the discomfort with more confidence and faith. It will remind us to find our still center of peace through meditation.

Next time we are in state of joy, remembering the transient nature of life will help us enjoy the moments and not grow depressed when they end. It will remind us that even if this joy ends and a hardship comes, other times of joy will one day return. It will remind us to find our still center of peace through meditation, for that provides lasting happiness.

Why having it all isn't enough

What happens when you finally get everything you once prayed for?

A successful career. Financial stability. A loving family. Respect from society. Comfort. Security. On the surface, this looks like the finish line. Yet for many people, something unexpected happens once these boxes are checked: the sense of fulfillment they imagined never quite arrives.

Mitch Albom, an American author, writes about this exact tension: after reaching the goals he once begged for, he slowly drifted away from spirituality. With success in hand, he began to question what place God or spiritual seeking still had in a life that seemed complete. If life was "figured out," what was left to seek?

This experience is not unique. Many of us, especially in achievement-driven cultures, grow up believing happiness lies one goal away. We chase degrees, promotions, homes, experiences, and recognition. And for a time, each achievement delivers a genuine thrill. The first luxury purchase feels extraordinary. The first first-class flight feels indulgent. The first big milestone feels validating.

But over time, the excitement fades. What once felt special becomes ordinary. The car that once brought pride becomes a burden. So we move to the next rung of the ladder. If material things no longer satisfy, we turn to experiences. When experiences fade, we turn to service and altruism. Helping others, giving time and resources, and making a difference in the world can be deeply meaningful. Yet even service has its limits. It depends on circumstances, capacity, health, and recognition. If appreciation disappears or the ability to serve is lost, fulfillment can waver.

At each stage, something becomes clear: we are still relying on external conditions to feel complete. To summarize the pro-

gression: "Material things are: 'Look what I have.' Experiences are: 'Look what I did.' Service is: 'Look who I helped.' Spirituality is: 'Look who I am.'"

The Hindu way of life offers a strikingly balanced framework for understanding this progression through the four pursuits of life: dharma (righteous living), artha (material stability), kama (fulfilling desires), and moksha (liberation). Wealth and desire are

not rejected. They are acknowledged as necessary stages. But they are not the destination.

Moksha points inward.

Bhagwan Swaminarayan explains this inner shift with remarkable clarity in the Vachanamrut. In Vachanamrut Gadhadra I-21, He teaches that lasting peace cannot come from external conditions alone, because external conditions are always



(Photo courtesy: BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha)

changing. True stability begins when a person understands, "I am the atma, distinct from the body." When identity is tied only to roles, possessions, or social standing, fulfillment remains fragile, rising with gain and falling with loss.

True fulfillment comes from understanding who we are beyond the body and mind. We are not merely our roles, achievements, or struggles. We are the atma, the conscious self. The happiness we experience through objects and experiences is only a reflection of the soul's inherent bliss.

And even that is not the final step.

In the Vachanamrut, Bhagwan Swaminarayan emphasizes that self-realization naturally leads to God-realization. In Vachanamrut Gadhadra I-27, He explains that the highest fulfillment comes when one becomes brahmarup, firmly established in spiritual understanding, and offers devotion to God with love and conviction. When actions, service, and life itself are oriented toward God, fulfillment is no longer dependent on circumstances. Peace becomes stable. Joy deepens with time instead of fading.

Everything else in life changes. Health fades. Wealth fluctuates. Recognition disappears. Even the memory of great experiences softens. But a relationship with God grows richer, steadier, and more nourishing as time passes.

This is why having it all is not enough. Not because success is wrong, but because success alone cannot answer the deeper question of who we are and why we are here. When spirituality becomes the center rather than a tool, life does not shrink. It becomes grounded, purposeful, and quietly joyful.

And that kind of fulfillment does not wear out.

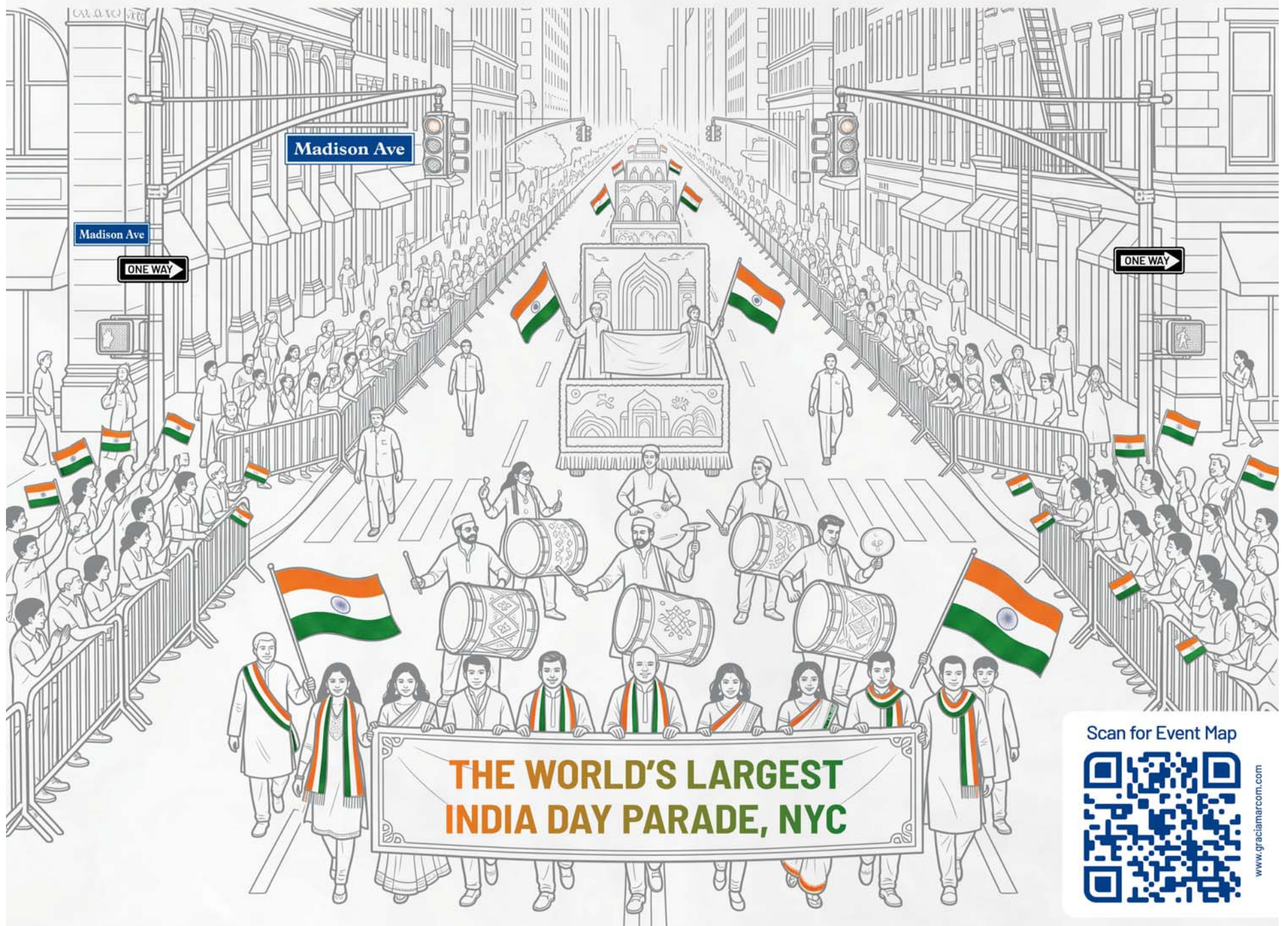
To hear this conversation unfold in its original form, listen to the podcast on YouTube at youtube.com/@bapsbetterliving.

- **BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha**



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E24th St. | 2:00 PM to 5:30 PM

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