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## Art of The Deal- Dealing with "Bad Actors"

*Why Trump is hitting China on trade - and what might happen next*



Story on Page 20-21

**Gurmeet Ram Rahim gets to leave prison for 21 days**



Page 23

**Who Is Anurag Bajpayee? The Indian-Origin CEO Arrested In Luxury Brothel Scandal In US**



Story on Page 3

**US Woman Travels To This Indian Village To Marry Her Instagram Friend**



Story on Page 22

**Crypto Meltdown**



Page 23

**Amit Gupta, Tech Mahindra's country head among those detained in a Corruption Case**



Story on Page 4

**Ice director wants to run deportations like 'Amazon Prime for human beings'**

Story on Page 22

**The rise of 'Frankenstein' laptops in New Delhi's repair markets**

Story on Page 22

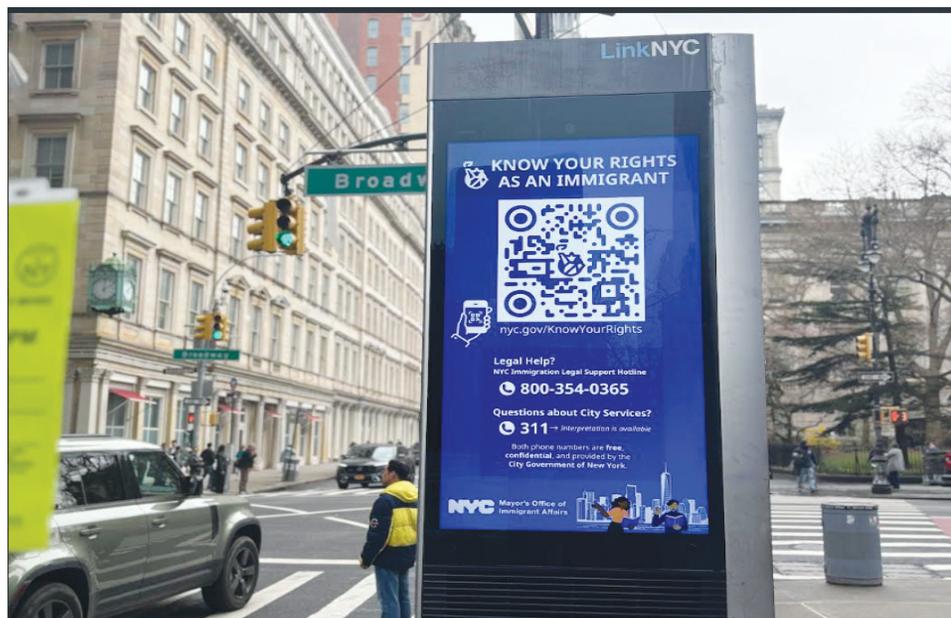
# Adams' ICE Office at Rikers Opens The Door For Trump Civil Rights Violations



New York, NY—Today, NYC Mayor Eric Adams' new Deputy Mayor Randy Mastro announced the opening of an ICE office on Rikers Island. This

follows Adams' coordination and public appearances with "border czar" Thomas Homan, and comes after Adams' corruption case was dropped.

## NYC MAYOR'S OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS INVESTS OVER 630K IN KNOW YOUR RIGHTS EFFORT FOR IMMIGRANTS NEW YORKERS



(By our staff reporter) NEW YORK, NY — NYC Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA) Commissioner Manuel Castro today announced an investment of \$630,000 in efforts to ensure immigrant New Yorkers know their rights with federal immigration enforcement. This includes a Know Your Rights for Immigrant New Yorkers campaign across LinkNYC's city wide network of more than 4,000 digital screens, among other investments in Know Your Rights materials and workshops. "This is one of the largest informational campaigns for immigrant New Yorkers in the country. With over 4,000 digital LinkNYC screens, we want to ensure all New Yorkers have accurate and timely information" said Manuel Castro, Commissioner of MOIA. "Our immigrant communities can continue to access our hospital system, school system, and public safety services without fear." "Our immigrant neighbors deserve equitable access to the same digital

connectivity and online resources as everyone else in our city," said Margaux Knee, Chief Administrative Officer of LinkNYC. "LinkNYC is proud to partner with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs to amplify multilingual information and programs that support the well-being of New York City's immigrant communities." The Know Your Rights advertisement will be displayed across over 4,000 LinkNYC digital screens and is expected to earn 25 million impressions per month. Immigrant New Yorkers will be able to scan the QR on the screen to easily access immigration legal resources and services in their own language. Immigrant New Yorkers may also call the MOIA Immigration Legal Support Hotline at 800-354-0365, to get legal immigration help. Immigrant New Yorkers can also access Immigrant Rights Workshops and printed materials at local community-based organizations and libraries. For more information, New Yorkers can visit: [www.nyc.gov/knowyourrights](http://www.nyc.gov/knowyourrights)

NYC Council Speaker Adrienne Adams, District 28: "This executive order is deeply concerning, particularly given Judge Ho's recent ruling on Mayor Adams' corruption case, the attempted quid pro quo, and the series of highly troubling recent events between the Trump administration and our city's Mayor. It is hard not to see this action as connected to the dismissal of the Mayor's case and his willingness to cooperate with Trump's extreme deportation agenda that is removing residents without justification or due process. The Mayor's decision to compromise the City's sovereignty, threaten chaos, and risk harm to our families ultimately resulted in the resignation of four Deputy Mayors. "As we have made abundantly clear, Local Law 58 of 2014 has clear guidelines that prohibit the use of office space on Rikers for the enforcement of civil immigration enforcement. The Council is closely reviewing the order, and is prepared to defend against violations of the law

to protect the safety of all New Yorkers." Murad Awawdeh, President and CEO, New York Immigration Coalition: "For centuries, immigrants have built the economy and culture of New York City – and for years, our sanctuary laws and policies have protected immigrant New Yorkers from ICE's predatory enforcement practices. While Trump is detaining and disappearing people across the country without due process, Mayor Adams and his administration is rolling out the welcome mat for violating New Yorkers' civil rights with impunity. Adams is making a runaround on the City's long standing sanctuary laws – public safety measures that make New York safer for everyone – and attacking the very ideals that make New York the greatest city in the world. Now is time for New York's elected officials to stand firm in protecting our immigrant families, as our Mayor has once again proved he is unwilling to. We will work with the NYC City Council with urgency to fight this."

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## BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham Celebrates Ram Navami

(By our staff reporter)- Robbinsville, NJ- BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in Robbinsville, New Jersey, celebrated the birth anniversary of Bhagwan Shri Ram and Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan. Drawing thousands of devotees and visitors from across the region, the two-day event was a heartfelt tribute to these revered spiritual figures.

The festivities were a vibrant display of devotional prayers, cultural performances, and community gatherings. Set amidst the majestic architecture and tranquil atmosphere of BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham, the celebrations unfolded with deep reverence and spiritual energy. Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan and Bhagwan Shri Ram manifested on Earth on the Hindu calendrical day of Chaitra Sud 9. This year, this day fell on April 6, 2025. Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan established the Swaminarayan Hindu tradition in 1801, and his life and work have not only inspired communities in India but have also affected change throughout the world. Bhagwan Shri Ram is celebrated for his exemplary virtues of righteousness, compassion, and courage, which continue to inspire millions of followers worldwide. On the first day of the celebrations, devotees gathered in the afternoon to participate in a special aarti ritual and worship. In the evening, a special cultural performance led by youths included spiritual discourses, musical performances, and devotional dances and vi-



gnettes, all highlighting the teachings and life of Bhagwan Shri Ram and Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan. During the assembly, a grand procession marched through the audience carrying a beautifully decorated sacred image of Bhagwan Shri Ramchandra and Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan. The joyous procession resonated throughout the assembly hall, filling the air with spirituality and devotion. Among the many special guests were New Jersey State Senator Michael L. Testa Jr. and the Consul General of India in New York, Mr. Binay Srikanta Pradhan. Senator Testa addressed the evening assembly and shared, "What a magnificent event! I will come back again, and again, and again." The second day of the celebrations at Akshardham included an abhishek ritual (pouring water over the sacred image of God) and hourly arti rituals throughout the day in the grand Nilkanth Plaza, outdoors. Devotees gathered in front of the 49-foot tall sacred image of Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan's teenage form, Shri Nilkanth Varni. A momentous evening assembly was held where Swamis delivered inspiring spiritual discourses on the significance of these divine birthdays, urging everyone to embrace the teachings of righteousness, compassion, and devotion in their everyday lives. The festivities concluded with a special ceremony at 10:10pm – the birth time of Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan.

## Who Is Anurag Bajpayee? The Indian-Origin CEO Arrested In Luxury Brothel Scandal In US

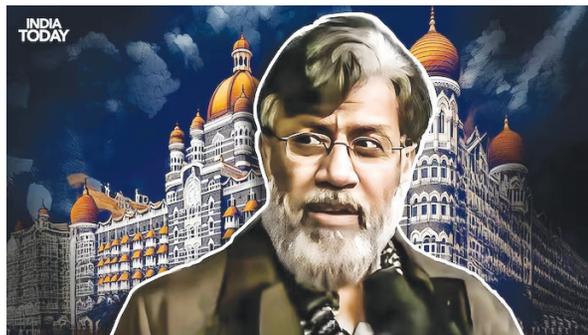
(By our staff reporter)-Anurag Bajpayee, the Indian-origin CEO of Gradiant, a clean water startup, has been detained in the United States over allegations of engaging with high-end brothels. According to the New York Post, Mr Bajpayee was listed among numerous individuals in Boston-area court documents, accused of paying substantial hourly rates for sex services earlier in 2025. Prosecutors claim that Mr Bajpayee belonged to an exclusive group of clients, consisting of doctors, lawyers, public officials, and government contractors. The probe uncovered that these men allegedly shelled out as much as \$600 hourly for meetings with mostly Asian women, who were purportedly ensnared in sex trafficking. Despite calls for his resignation from some employees, his company, Gradiant, stood by him, issuing a statement expressing confidence in the justice system and affirming its commitment to its mission. "We believe in the justice system and are confident that this will resolve favorably in due course. Unrelated to this, Gradiant will continue to pursue excellence in technological innovation and to strive towards our mission to ensure clean water for all society," the company wrote in a statement.



## 26/11 plotter Tahawwur Rana extradited from US, now on flight to India

(By our staff reporter)- Tahawwur Rana, accused of masterminding the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, has been extradited from the US and is expected to arrive in India tomorrow afternoon, accompanied by a special team of intelligence and investigative officials. A special plane, which took off from the

TV. According to sources, preparations at the Tihar jail have been completed for Tahawwur Rana's stay there. The 26/11 mastermind will undergo a trial in Delhi in a special NIA court. In line with recommendations from a US court, discreet high-security arrangements have been put in place at the



US at 7:10 pm on Wednesday India time, is carrying Rana and will also take a halt in between at an undisclosed location before reaching New Delhi. Once the plane carrying Rana touches down in New Delhi, the former Pakistan Army captain will officially be arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and will be lodged at the Tihar central prison, sources told India Today

prison. The extradition operation is being closely overseen by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, alongside senior officials from the NIA and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Rana, a Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman, is known to have been an active operative of the terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). He played a pivotal role in facilitating travel documents for David Coleman Headley (alias Dawood Gilani), a Pakistani-American who conducted reconnaissance of key targets in Mumbai. These locations were later attacked by LeT terrorists with logistical and strategic backing from Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency.

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# Amit Gupta, Tech Mahindra's country head among those detained in Corruption Case

Qatar and Kuwait authorities have detained Amit among 5 other Indian nationals in connection with a potential case of corruption



enforcement.

"Our Embassy in Doha is closely following the developments in regard to the case. We requested consular access to meet Amit Gupta to ascertain his well-being and the same was given the same on 28 March 2025. We are also in touch with his family members and lawyers," said Jaiswal.

He added: "We are aware that some Indians have been detained in Qatar for investigations in a case or cases that may be related. Their families have been allowed to meet them and they are able to call their families regularly. Our Embassy will continue to render all possible help to the individuals and their families."

Gupta was detained by authorities on 1 January,

2025. No charges have been filed yet in the case, however, authorities have been investigating potential cases of corruption and Gupta was detained given his position as the region head for the Indian firm, as reported earlier by ThePrint. Asked about ongoing investigations into potential charges of corruption, Tech Mahindra a few weeks ago told ThePrint, "We remain in close contact with the family, providing necessary support to them. We are also actively coordinating with authorities in both countries and adhering to the due process. Ensuring the wellbeing of our colleagues is our top priority." Gupta shifted to Doha in 2013, as a part of Tech Mahindra and is the region head for Qatar and Kuwait. Gupta's family had

originally denied charges that he was involved in potential data-theft. His mother Pushpa Gupta said that he was detained due to his position at the firm.

The family of Amit Gupta had reached out to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), and Anand Mahindra, the chairman of Mahindra Group, for assistance. Hemang Joshi, the Member of Parliament representing Vadodara had promised the Gupta family of his assistance. This is the second high-profile case of Indians being detained in Qatar following the arrest of eight naval personnel in August 2022. Last year the Amir of Qatar had pardoned the right naval personnel, who were convicted of spying on the West Asian country's submarine programme.

Around five Indians including Amit Gupta, who is Tech Mahindra's country head for Qatar and Kuwait, have been detained by authorities in Doha in connection with a potential case of corruption. The Indian Embassy in Doha received consular access for Gupta on 28 March, said Randhir Jaiswal, the spokesperson for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Wednesday. Speaking at a regular press briefing Jaiswal added that the Indian embassy officials have been in touch with the other Indians detained as part of the investigation by Qatari law

## Can Indian students in US get deported over small offences? Dozens receive mails



government is stealthily taking aim at the international student community.

Some of the top-ranked US universities, including Harvard, Stanford, the University of Michigan, UCLA, and Ohio State, have also reported their students' visas being revoked. **VISAS REVOKED IN LARGE NUMBERS**

Cancellations of visas in the US have picked up pace since March 25, after an order was made by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio for vigorous screening of students' web activities.

Rubio noted that over 300 visas have been cancelled so far and said that the crackdown would not relent. Universities assert that this is a drastic shift from past policies, and students fear for their freedom of speech and safety. According to a report by the Associated Press, most students received letters due to their activities in support of the Gaza crisis on the internet.

But an increasing number of schools are having visas taken away from students with no apparent link to demonstrations. In a few instances, old offences like speeding tickets have been mentioned.

(By our staff reporter) In mid-March, 37-year-old Indian-origin Columbia University PhD student Ranjani Srinivasan deported herself weeks ahead of hundreds of international students in the US who got emails saying that their visas were cancelled for participating in campus protests against anti-Israeli rhetoric. Now, international students are getting emails, usually without advance notice, informing them that lesser offences - drink-driving and traffic offences - are also grounds for visa cancellations. Most international students in the US are currently experiencing unexpected visa cancellations and SEVIS terminations. In the past, student visas were

generally withdrawn only on the basis of criminal convictions or arrest, but now that is not the rule. Today, the federal government seems to be relying on alternative sources of information -- like prior immigration history, social media postings, or purported engagement in student activism -- to rescind visas. Colleges such as Boston University are experiencing instances where the ICE has terminated students' SEVIS status without reason. Some students have received notifications referring to minor infractions such as previous driving offences, theft from shops, or driving while intoxicated.

According to reports and the purported red flags raised by college leaders, the federal

## US even cancelling visas of Indian students found not guilty by courts



(By our staff reporter)- An Indian student in the US had his identity stolen and misused by a friend. He reported the incident to the authorities and, after presenting video evidence and going through the legal process, was proven innocent in court. Despite being found not guilty, his student visa was cancelled. His Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) record was terminated, and he now might have to self-deport. His case is just one of many where Indian students in the US have had their visas revoked despite being innocent or over minor infractions that do not merit visa cancellation. This includes cases involving minor traffic violations, like speeding. In several of the cases, visas have been cancelled despite courts having found the Indian students not guilty.

Chand Paravathneni, a Texas-based immigration lawyer who is currently handling over 30 such cases, told India Today Digital that several Indian students in the US received an email informing them about the revocation of their visas in the past few weeks. The identities of these students, who might have to self-deport to India, were not revealed. Visa revocation leading to self-deportation is a new phenomenon in the US. This must be seen in the context of the hardline immigration stance of US President Donald Trump, under whose policies the scrutiny of international students intensified. "These students have spent lakhs of rupees, taken educational loans, and now, they're not even allowed to complete their degrees. This is really concerning," Paravathneni told India Today Digital.

# Canada raises minimum wages, Indians, in particular, will benefit

Indians studying and living in Canada will see some relief amid high living expenses as the Canadian government raised the Federal Minimum Wage Rate for those working in the private sector. Starting April 1, Canada has raised the minimum wage from 17.30 Canadian dollars to \$17.75 per hour for those working in the federally regulated private sector. "The federal minimum wage brings stability and certainty to Canadian workers and businesses alike and helps reduce income inequality across the board. Today's increase brings us one step closer to building a more fair economy," said Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, Steven MacKinnon in a statement. This increase in the minimum wage rate has been revised individually state-wise, and the higher rate will be

applicable. Employers have been instructed to update their payroll systems and ensure that all employees, including interns, are paid at the upgraded rate. The federal minimum wage rate is adjusted on April 1 each year based on Canada's annual average Consumer Price Index relative to the previous calendar year. This raise in the minimum wage rate will be welcome as some living in Canada faced a crisis after foodbanks returned international students due to an excessive demand placed on

them. The rising inflation in Canada was a key criticism of the Justin Trudeau government and will be an important issue in the Canadian elections in 2025. This hike of 2.4% in the minimum wage will also help Indians. SOME RELIEF FOR INDIANS IN CANADA GIG ECONOMY Indians, who make up 3.7% of the Canadian population, have a lot to benefit from this raise. Indian workers in Canada constitute 22% of the Canadian temporary workforce or gig economy in 2024. According to a report, the majority of the gig workers in Canada are immigrants and from 2005 to 2020, the share has grown from 5.05% to 10.0% of all Canadian workers. Additionally, over 1.35 million people in Canada stated that they are of Indian descent.



# US Will Now Scrutinise Social Media Before Granting Immigration Benefits



The Trump administration has introduced a new policy requiring immigration officials to screen social media accounts for antisemitic content, which could lead to the denial of immigration benefits. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem "has made it clear that anyone who thinks they can come to America and hide behind the First Amendment to advocate for anti-Semitic violence and terrorism — think again," she added. "You are not welcome here." The policy applies to immigrants seeking lawful permanent residence, foreign students, and those "affiliated with educational

institutions linked to antisemitic activity". Officials will assess social media content indicating endorsement, promotion, or support of antisemitic terrorism, organisations, or activities, and positive findings may negatively impact immigration applications. According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the policy will consider social media content that indicates an immigrant is "endorsing, espousing, promoting, or supporting antisemitic terrorism, antisemitic terrorist organisations, or other antisemitic activity" as a negative factor in their application.

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# How a house is holding up the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway

*The Delhi-Dehradun Expressway is almost ready, but a legal dispute around a two-storey house is delaying the grand opening.*

The Delhi-Dehradun Expressway is nearly ready. Construction is almost complete on both sides, the route connects to the Eastern Peripheral Expressway, and the promise of cutting travel time from six hours to just two-and-a-half is within reach. But right in the middle of all this stands a lone house - a modest, two-storey structure in Ghaziabad's Mandola village - holding up the grand opening.

According to a news report, the house belonged to Veersen Saroha's family, who have lived on the 1,600-square-metre plot since the 1990s. The dispute began in 1998, when Veersen challenged the Uttar Pradesh Housing Board's acquisition of his land for the Mandola Housing Scheme in the Allahabad High Court.

The housing project never took off due to public protests and procedural delays. Eventually, the land acquired from other residents was handed over to the National Highways Authority of India (NHA) for



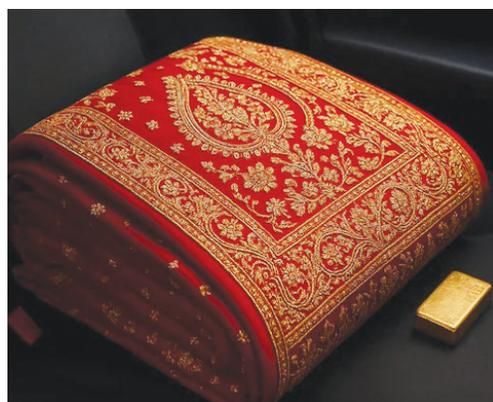
the expressway project. But Veersen's family never gave in. According to a report published by the Times of India, the NHA is building the expressway in two sections - 14.7 km from Akshardham to Loni on the UP border, and 16 km from Loni to Khekra at the Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE). But operations on this key project remain on hold because of

the legal battle that has reached the Supreme Court. "Work has been held up because of litigation, as the owner of the house and his family have filed a case in the Supreme Court," an NHA official told the Times of India. The NHA says it can finish the project by June, but only if the legal hurdle is cleared. Veersen's grandson, Lakshyaveer, took the fight to

the Supreme Court in 2024, arguing that the land transfer to the NHA was unlawful. The case has now been transferred to the Lucknow bench of the High Court, with the next hearing scheduled for April 16. The court has also directed a speedy resolution, given the delay is holding up a major infrastructure project.

*Gold biscuit to wedding saree, bizarre things Indians left behind in Uber cabs*

(News Agency)-After endless shopping sprees and online scouting, you finally zero in on your perfect wedding saree - only to forget it in a cab? Sounds like a nightmare, right? Now, imagine leaving behind a gold biscuit in



a cab. Sweating, already? This isn't fiction - Uber users actually forgot these items in 2024, according to the company's annual Lost & Found Index. Sure, it's common to forget everyday essentials like bags, wallets, keys, spectacles, and earphones. But some people took forgetfulness to the next level - leaving behind a wheelchair, 25 kg of ghee, a hawan kund and yes, that

wedding saree and gold biscuit too. Forgetting such items in a street-hailed vehicle - with no way to get them back - can be a real shocker. But Uber (like most travel apps) offers an in-app option to help users track down their lost belongings.

Mumbai emerged as the most 'forgetful' city, followed by Delhi. Fast city rush to blame? Perhaps. Here are the top 5 most 'forgetful' cities, as per a percentage of overall trips.

Mumbai  
 Delhi NCR  
 Pune  
 Bangalore  
 Kolkata

People from these cities can perhaps take a lesson or two from Hyderabad.

Among major cities, riders from Hyderabad were the least likely to forget their items. By the way, next time you're hopping into a cab on a Saturday, stay extra alert - Uber's latest report reveals it's the most forgetful day of the week. Saturdays and evenings emerged as the peak periods for forgetfulness. Oh, festival days are no less. The highest number of items left in Ubers occurred on festive days:

*No restriction on any artist: BookMyShow responds to Kunal Kamra's open letter*



(News Agency)-Days after comedian Kunal Kamra sought clarification from BookMyShow on whether he had been delisted from their portal, the online ticketing platform finally broke its silence, stating that "it doesn't restrict any artist", citing its neutral stance. Responding to Kamra's open letter on X, BookMyShow said it is a "platform to facilitate the sale of tickets and operates the business with neutrality and in compliance with the applicable laws of India. Facts on our role have been misrepresented in the public domain. Our role is to provide a platform for ticket sales of live shows and it is the decision of the organiser or the venue to list or delist their

shows." As reports of BookMyShow delisting Kamra after his "gaddar" jibe at Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde went viral, he took to X and wrote an open letter, demanding that the platform either delist him or provide him with data on his audience. "With that in mind, I request one of the following: Do not delist me, or Provide me with the data (contact information) I've generated through your platform from my audience. Thank you for your understanding," he said. BookMyShow delisted Kamra and removed him from their portal, a day after Shinde Sena youth leader, Rahoool Kanal, asked it not to provide a platform for Kamra.

# Drunk Indian National Urinates On Co-Flyer In Delhi-Bangkok Air India Flight: Sources

*The passenger on board flight AI 2336 was drunk and urinated on the managing director of a company, sources said*

(News Agency)-An Indian national urinated on a fellow passenger in a Delhi-Bangkok Air India flight today, sources said. While Air India in a statement confirmed an incident of unruly passenger behaviour, it did not mention the nature of the incident.

Tushar Masand, 24, who was on board flight AI 2336 was drunk and urinated on the managing director of a company, sources said.

The Tata Group-owned airline has banned Mr Masand from flying with Air India for 30 days as an interim move. Other airlines may ban him from flying based on what an independent committee finds, sources said.

Mr Masand, who was at seat 2D, had downed two glasses of single malt before he got up and urinated on the businessman, who is a Japanese national, sources said, adding the passenger seated next to the businessman also complained he was affected.

The matter has been reported to the



authorities, and Air India offered to help the "aggrieved passenger" in Bangkok, sources said, adding action may be taken against the unruly passenger.

The "aggrieved passenger" declined Air India's offer to provide help in taking up the matter with the authorities after landing in Bangkok, the airline said in the statement.

Taking note of the incident, Civil

Aviation Minister Ram Mohan Naidu Kinjarapu told news agency ANI officials will speak to the airline.

"Whenever these kinds of incidents happen, the ministry takes note of them. They will speak to the airline, and if there is any wrongdoing, then we will take necessary action," Mr Kinjarapu said.

Air India in the statement said the crew

followed all laid down procedures.

"... In addition to warning the unruly passenger, our crew offered to assist an aggrieved passenger to take up a grievance with authorities in Bangkok, which was declined at the time. The standing independent committee will be convened to assess the incident and determine the action, if any, to be taken against the unruly passenger. Air India continues to follow the SOPs as laid out by DGCA in such matters," the airline said, referring to standard operating procedure and the aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation. Multiple incidents of passengers urinating on co-flyers allegedly after consuming liquor have been reported in the last two years. An Indian student at a US university, Arya Vohra, was banned by American Airlines after he allegedly urinated on a co-passenger in March 2023. In November 2024, a drunk man allegedly urinated on an elderly woman in the business class of an Air India flight.

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# Punjab cops bust international drug cartel in Amritsar, 4kg heroin recovered, arrests 8



(News Agency)- In a major blow to an international narco network, the Police Commissionerate of Amritsar busted two drug cartels and arrested 8 key operatives and recovered 4.040 kg Heroin, officials said on Wednesday. According to the statement released by the Police, an official from

an enforcement agency was "misusing" his position to facilitate a narco network. "One official from an enforcement agency who was misusing his position to facilitate the network in connivance with co-accused Ravi has been arrested. The duo was sourcing consignments from across the border, with Ravi linked

to foreign-based smugglers," read the police statement. After the arrest of the two, further investigations led to the arrest of 6 more people who were involved in the alleged operation of drug smuggling and hawala financing. "One of them was operating a cross-border hawala network to channel drug

money," the statement read.

Multiple FIRs under the NDPS Act registered at PS Chheharta & PS Ranjit Avenue. Initial probe indicates wider involvement—efforts on to trace and dismantle the entire network. Earlier on April 8, officials arrested 71 alleged drug smugglers, recovering 1.8 kg heroin, 4.9 kg opium, 13362 intoxicant capsules/tablets and Rs 9000 drug money from their possession.

The operation was conducted simultaneously in all 28 police districts of the state on the directions of the Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav.

An official statement read, "Notably, CM Bhagwant Singh Mann has asked the Commissioners of Police, Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendent of Police to make Punjab a drug-free state. The Punjab government has also constituted a 5-member Cabinet Sub-Committee led by Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema to monitor the war against drugs."

## UP woman elopes with daughter's fiance days before wedding



(News Agency)A woman eloped with her daughter's fiance just days before the wedding in Uttar Pradesh's Aligarh. The runaway duo also reportedly took cash and jewellery worth several lakhs meant for the wedding.

The bride-to-be's father, Jitendra Kumar, has filed a complaint with the local police after discovering that his wife and the groom had gone missing, along with Rs 3.5 lakh in cash and gold and silver jewellery worth around Rs 5 lakh.

"My daughter's wedding was scheduled for April 16. The cards had been distributed and all preparations were in full swing," Jitendra said. "But the boy she was supposed to marry rarely spoke

to her. Instead, he would spend nearly 20–22 hours a day talking to my wife. I live in Bengaluru for work and only recently returned to the village. When I saw this closeness, I grew suspicious." He added, "The groom told me, 'You've troubled her for 20 years. Now let her live. Forget her!'"

The bride, Shivani, expressed her disbelief and anger. "My mother has run away with the jewellery and money. She did everything exactly as that man told her to. He manipulated her completely. I just want our things back. Whether they live or die, it doesn't matter to us anymore."

Police have registered a missing persons report and begun a search for the woman.

## Police bust 'mujra party' at Hyderabad farmhouse, seize drugs, liquor



(News Agency)-Cyberabad Special Operations Team (SOT) raided a late-night 'mujra party' at a farmhouse in Hyderabad's outskirts on Monday. The bust, at a property in Moinabad, led to the detention of 21 people, seven women and 14 men, on charges of participating in an illegal gathering involving drugs, alcohol and obscene performances.

Officials seized 70 g of marijuana and multiple liquor bottles during the raid. A case has been registered at the Moinabad Police Station. Authorities say they are now trying to trace the main organisers and others who facilitated the event. Further investigation is underway.

In October last year, over 100 people, including 42 women, were arrested by the Hyderabad Police after a raid on a pub following information about illegal activities, specifically concerning inappropriate dance performances.

Based on a tip-off, a police team raided TOS pub in the city's posh Banjara Hills area and arrested 140 people for allegedly being involved in obscene dance performances, the Hyderabad Police said in a statement. The arrested people included the pub's manager, cashier and DJ operator. The pub had allegedly employed women from various states to perform obscene dances to attract male patrons and increase profits.

# Welcome World, Minus China

## Trump's tariff pause rightly resets the global trade conversation to: What to do about China?

Yay: President Donald Trump took "yes" for an answer Wednesday, pausing for three months most of his reciprocal tariffs to allow for one-on-one negotiations with the dozens of nations that had come calling since he dropped the bomb last week.

Not paused, but instead redoubled, is the hit on imports from China — a move that's beyond justified. Not just because Beijing came back at Trump with its own tariff hikes. Nor only because it has abused its privileges ever since President Bill Clinton welcomed it into the world trading system three decades ago. But because its central planners are now aiming at global hegemony in manufacturing — a naked threat to every other country's national security. China's state banks have pumped \$2 trillion in loans into the country's "private" industries these last four years, financing not only a ton of new factories but massive automation at existing ones — and so a 30%-plus growth in exports over 2023 and 2024. The country's factory output is now larger than that of five major industrial powers (the United States, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Britain) combined. Again, thanks to massive state intervention that has nothing to do with free markets or fair competition. And that makes no sense

except as an effort to put everyone else at Beijing's mercy. Now is absolutely the time to blow up this relationship, before Chinese trade becomes something our economy can't function without. As it is, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessant is right to say Washington now retains the upper hand in any one-on-one trade war, since China exports roughly five times more (by value) to us than vice-versa.

Note, too, that much of the rest of the world has been responding to China's games with higher tariffs — and now may well need to do more if Beijing tries to divert products from the US market to theirs. Meanwhile, the one-on-one talks can firm up US trading relations with our allies, rather than pushing them into Beijing's clutches. And, no, we don't pretend "this was Trump's plan all along": He doesn't think that way — he often makes moves by instinct, sees the reactions and adjusts accordingly. Now his team has three months to settle with our allies and other trading partners while his pro-growth policies on energy and deregulation kick in and Congress locks in the 2017 tax cuts and the rest of his program.

The road to the Golden Age is solidly on track.

## Rana's extradition

### Chance for India to corner Pak over 26/11

Mumbai terror attack accused Tahawwur Rana's imminent extradition from the US is a defining moment in India's war against cross-border terrorism. It comes nearly two months after US President Donald Trump, during a joint press conference with PM Narendra Modi at the White House, announced his administration's nod to sending the "very evil" Rana "to face justice in India". The onus will now be on India's probe agencies to make him specify the role of Pakistani state actors in the attacks that claimed 166 lives in November 2008 — arguably the most audacious act of terrorism on Indian soil.

Rana's interrogation is of vital importance as he had links not only with the internationally banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) but also with Pakistan's spy agency ISI. The chargesheet against Ajmal Kasab, the lone surviving 26/11 terrorist (he was executed in 2012), clearly mentioned that the Mumbai strikes were plotted in Pakistan by the LeT. Kasab and his partners remained in contact with their handlers and co-conspirators through satellite phones while they went on the

rampage in India's financial capital. Former Pakistani Ambassador to the US Husain Haqqani had left no room for doubt about the deep state's role when he claimed in his 2016 book that shortly after the carnage, then ISI chief Gen Shuja Pasha admitted that the planners of the 26/11 attacks were "our people" but it wasn't "our operation". It is apparent that the plotters had the backing and blessing of the Pakistan Army, but will Rana say it in so many words and also name the big fish?

The chickens have come home to roost in Pakistan, which is itself being scorched by terrorism. However, despite repeated warnings by New Delhi and Washington about not letting its territory be used to plot cross-border terror attacks, Pakistan is persisting with its misadventures — in line with its policy to bleed India with a "thousand cuts". India's efforts to shame Pakistan globally over state-sponsored terrorism will get a huge fillip if the investigators can build an airtight case against Rana and make him come up with startling revelations.

## Trump's given Iran a way out from impending war—they can do it the easy way or the hard way

"To jaw-jaw is always better than to war-war," Winston Churchill reportedly said. We will soon know if Iran agrees. The talks scheduled for Saturday between Iran and the United States are shaping up as a crucial test of the mad mullahs' intentions. If they are hell-bent on building nuclear weapons, war is inevitable. It would be war with Israel and probably with America, too. For Iran, that means taking on the Little Satan and the Great Satan simultaneously. That's what the crazy mullahs always said they wanted. If it hasn't occurred to them yet, soon they will realize what a colossal mistake they have made.

"If they don't make a deal, there will be bombing," President Trump said recently. "It will be bombing the likes of which they have never seen before." Nothing subtle about that!

A deal or destruction

The president, who revealed the planned weekend talks while meeting Monday in the Oval Office with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, said, "I think everybody agrees that doing a deal would be preferable to doing the obvious."

"The obvious is not something that I want to be involved with, or frankly that Israel wants to be involved with if they can avoid it," he said. "So we'll see if we can avoid it ... It's getting to be very dangerous territory."

The talks, to be held in Oman, will be direct negotiations, the president said, but Iran later said the talks would be "indirect," meaning with a mediator.

Either way, Trump's bottom line is the absolute right one: Iran must dismantle its nuclear program and not just pretend to abide by restrictions and inspections aimed at preventing it from building a nuclear weapon.

Those were the major terms of the 2015

deal that President Barack Obama and Europe crafted, and Trump wisely canceled it during his first White House tenure because it lacked solid verification procedures and penalties.

Because Iran was cheating on nearly every aspect of the deal and playing hide and seek with inspectors, there was no way to know with confidence what it was really doing. Almost as bad, Iran was using billions of dollars Obama had unfrozen to fund its nuclear program and its terror proxies. Talk about a lose-lose. Naturally, President Joe Biden foolishly aimed to reverse Trump's reversal by trying to coax Iran back into another soft deal and even withdrew or stopped enforcing oil and banking sanctions to sweeten the offer. He also paid a reported \$6 billion for the return of five American hostages.

In return he got bupkis, demonstrating his fecklessness on the global stage. Thanks largely to his chaotic and deadly withdrawal from Afghanistan, our adversaries, Iran included, didn't fear him.

Military options

Israel, of course, suffered the horrible Hamas invasion on Biden's watch, yet Biden was tougher on Israel than he was on Iran, even though it funded and trained Hamas. Thankfully, Trump's election ended the downward cycle and amounts to an earthquake in the Mideast.

American leadership is back. And it has a chip on its shoulder.

Federal prosecutors charged last year that Iran hatched a plot and hired an assassin to kill Trump.

As a result, in February, the president told reporters, "I've left instructions if they do it, they get obliterated. There won't be anything left."

He said that as he signed an executive order directing the government to impose "maximum pressure" on Iran, including in the enforcement of sanctions.

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# India Has A Rare Opportunity In Trump Tariffs



By Arun K. Singh

On April 2, US President Donald Trump threw a gauntlet to the world and the post-1945 US-constructed global order with across-the-board and significant country-specific tariffs. The tariff rates were higher than what was anticipated even by Trump's key business supporters in the US. Markets reacted negatively worldwide, falling 10% in America. The US Federal Reserve is now expected to hold back on any interest rate cuts, anticipating an inflationary impact. Analytical comments are comparing the disruption to, potentially, the Great Depression of the 1930s. While there is global anger and anxiety, most countries have so far refrained from retaliatory

action, though they have asserted their right to do so. China, however, is among the few that have already declared matching reciprocal tariffs of 34% on imports from the US. Only, it exports far more than it imports. Beijing's aim is more to impose political pain on Trump by cutting back supplies from his supporters, particularly in the US agriculture belt.

A Divided World

Voices in the European Union are divided, with the European Commission articulating the need for retaliation, though many leading countries, including Germany and France, are currently undergoing their own political instability and transition. They have thus preferred a cautious approach

and negotiations to bring down the rates rather than getting into competitive escalation. Canada and Mexico, already targets of specific tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, were spared the April 2 across-the-board 10% tariffs. No doubt, these were on account of enforcement difficulties that would arise given the deep supply chain integration under the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) finalised in Trump's first term.

The Prime Minister of Singapore, meanwhile, in an address to his country, declared the current global order dead and warned of the need to prepare for adjustments. He said smaller countries would be left with little bargaining power if, in the next phase, trade agreements are negotiated bilaterally rather than through multilaterally agreed rules and norms.

Growing Republican Control

There are many lessons that other countries will need to draw as the US veers away from globalisation of trade and production, precipitated by imbalances flowing from China's misuse of WTO (World Trade Organization) provisions, which has concentrated as much as

32% of global manufacturing in the country through subsidies and forced technology transfers. We should expect continued policy unpredictability from the US as the impact of its measures is assessed for domestic political and economic gain. There are divisions among parties and businesses about the right approach, and deep polarisation in US society. Already, protests against government policies have begun.

Nonetheless, Trump's core base remains with him, due to which Republicans have not yet come out in any effective or large-scale opposition. Also, with Republicans in control of both houses of the US Congress, the system of checks and balances envisaged in the US Constitution is not entirely in place at present. Courts and their decisions are being politically challenged through non-cooperation or threats of impeachment. Persons with radical right-wing views are seen as having outsized influence on personnel and policy decisions, with one such figure, Laura Loomer, seen as being responsible for the recent firing of several National Security Council officials, as well

as of Timothy Hugh, the Director-General of the US National Security Agency.

The February Meeting

India, no doubt, has to weigh its own response carefully. The US is its largest trading partner at \$200 billion, with a \$45 billion surplus being in India's favor. In the past, several countries, including China, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and many in Europe, grew due to substantial access to the US market. The same opportunity will not be available for some time now, given the current political climate in the US around trade and distribution of production. It would be important to work out a bilateral, multi-sectoral free trade agreement to get around the new US tariffs and gain market access beyond competitors. The 54% overall tariffs on China and 46% on Vietnam suggest possibilities for competitive advantage, against the 26% tariffs Indian products face. Following the Indian Prime Minister's meeting with Trump in Washington DC on February 13, both countries announced an agreement to work towards a trade agreement and complete its first tranche by the fall of this year.

## Forget Biden-era alliances—Trump wants Indo-Pacific partners to pay up or fall in line



By Monish Tourangbam

In August 2024, Joe Biden's top foreign and national security team wrote a joint op-ed for The Washington Post lauding his Indo-Pacific diplomacy, which the authors argued had made America's future more secure. According to Antony Blinken, Jake Sullivan, and Lloyd Austin, one of the core achievements of Biden's diplomacy in the region was upgrading the "hub and spoke" model to an "integrated,

interconnected network of partnerships" through minilaterals and trilaterals, including the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) and the Australia, UK and US (AUKUS) grouping.

Seen in this context, what does the US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth's recently concluded trip to Hawaii, Guam, the Philippines, and Japan in the Indo-Pacific region stand for? Did it succeed in its primary aim of reassuring America's allies in

the face of China's aggression? Re-establishing deterrence' in Indo-Pacific Region

Hegseth's Indo-Pacific trip assumed critical importance at a time when trust in America's foreign policy, trade policy and national security apparatus is weakening, and amid intense questioning of President Donald Trump's national security team by the US Congress over an inadvertent Signal chat group leak that detailed real-time war plans for missile targets on Houthi rebels. The trip also came close on the heels of Director of National Intelligence (DNI) Tulsi Gabbard's tour of the region, which included visits to Japan, Thailand, and India.

Taken together with the foreign ministers' meeting of the Quad countries shortly after Trump's inauguration, these developments reflect the Trump

administration's strategic prioritisation of the Indo-Pacific region. In fact, while addressing the Ukraine Defense Contact Group in Brussels on 12 February, Hegseth contended, "Stark strategic realities prevent the United States of America from being primarily focused on the security of Europe." "We also face a peer competitor in the Communist Chinese with the capability and intent to threaten our homeland and core national interests in the Indo-Pacific. The U.S. is prioritizing deterring war with China in the Pacific, recognizing the reality of scarcity, and making the resourcing tradeoffs to ensure deterrence does not fail," Hegseth said.

Therefore, in viewing China as the only country with both the intent and capability to challenge America's primacy in the international system, there is broad continuity from the Biden

administration to the current Trump administration. However, Hegseth's call for "re-establishing" deterrence to counter Chinese aggression—made while in the Philippines—suggests a degree of disdain for the Biden administration's approach, which intended to stitch together a network of alliances and partnerships through the operationalisation of "integrated deterrence".

Hegseth emphasised the Trump administration's intent to "deploy additional advanced military capabilities for joint training, enhance interoperability for 'high-end operations,' and prioritize defense industrial cooperation" with the Philippines specifically. Moreover, the US has committed \$500 million "in foreign military financing and other security assistance to support the Philippines military modernization."

# Infighting, 'Leaked' Chats: Is Mamata Banerjee Losing Control Of Trinamool?

By Jayanta Bhattacharya

The government Mamata Banerjee heads and the party she leads are both facing waves of crises that, say critics, may affect the popular mandate when West Bengal assembly elections are held next year. As chief minister, Mamata faces allegations of being responsible for the loss of almost 26,000 school jobs following a Supreme Court order in a recruitment scam. And, as chairperson of the Trinamool Congress (TMC), she has to deal with a major rift within, where top leaders are allegedly involved in a scandalous public spat.

## Flashbacks From The Past

In both cases, it is being said that the response has been too little, too late. This and other such incidents have raised the question, has Mamata consciously decided to handle the situation with velvet gloves, or is her iron fist within really losing its grip? The West Bengal Chief Minister, known for her grit and resilience, rode to power in the state in 2011 on the back of a slew of allegations against a three-decade-old Left Front government. Unfortunately and ironically, the opposition today has charged her on similar grounds: corruption, political



abuse, and administrative ineptitude. The Saradha Ponzi scheme and the Narada sting, as well as scams related to cattle and coal smuggling and teachers' recruitment, have roiled the TMC over the last few years. In June 2019, Mamata, perhaps for the first time, had publicly chided party workers over "cut money"; her comment was largely seen as an acknowledgement of the rot within. In fact, she even went on to direct her party members at all levels to return the "commission" extorted from beneficiaries of welfare schemes; a few leaders did as instructed, though not all followed her

diktat.

## The 'Leaked' Chats

Since then, a couple of other awkward incidents have shaken the party. Just recently, TMC members of Parliament were caught squabbling on camera inside the Election Commission of India office. This was followed by an outburst on their WhatsApp chat group, which was again leaked. The party chairperson, being informed by a woman MP about the spat, had reportedly asked the leaders concerned not to comment on the issue publicly. Even so, certain leaders went ahead and poured their hearts out to the media.

Incidentally, one of these MPs had faced internal opposition when he was named as a candidate in the last Lok Sabha election. So had a couple of other leaders. At the time, however, Mamata had prevailed and all of them went ahead to contest - and win - the polls. But tensions seem to have persisted, with the rift largely being seen as an "old vs. young" battle within the TMC, and, more importantly, one arising from a difference in opinion between the aunt and her heir-apparent and Diamond Harbour MP, Abhishek Banerjee. Even when Mamata was leaving on March 22 for the UK for a business meeting and a lecture in Oxford, posters came up across Kolkata's streets, hailing the leadership of the nephew. This was not the first time. There have been reports about the emergence of warring "camps" aligned to the two. Abhishek's "followers" have mentioned in private that Mamata's political and administrative ways are "antiquated" and the party needs to "modernise". On the other hand, Mamata loyalists say that this "modernisation" is in fact "corporatisation" of the TMC. How far the two leaders patronise such "followers" and their opinions is a matter of speculation. But the slip is showing.

## Piyush Goyal's Deep Tech 'FOMO' Is Not Unique

By Dinesh Narayanan

"Are we going to be happy being delivery boys and girls?" Commerce minister Piyush Goyal taunted the Indian startup industry at the 2025 edition of Startup Mahakumbh in New Delhi last week. At the annual jamboree organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade for industry upstarts, Goyal said, What are Indian startups of today - we are focused on food delivery apps, turning unemployed youth into cheap labour so the rich can get their meals without moving out of their house."

Like typical Indian middle-class parents comparing the marksheet of the neighbour's child with that of their own, Goyal did the inevitable side-by-side comparison with Chinese startups. Highlighting the stark contrast between the two countries, he argued that while Chinese companies developed electric mobility and mobility tech, Indian startups were focused on food delivery and gig work. That won't do, he said. "You are the sculptors of new India. You have to make Viksit Bharat 2047 happen." Goyal's lament predictably got a backlash from the startup industry,

with some pointing out that the minister got his numbers wrong, and others asking him to also compare the regulatory and policy framework of the two countries for good measure. While Goyal is not entirely wrong about the slow pace of innovation in the Indian industry, where is he really coming from? Why the deeptech 'FOMO'? It is true that the dramatic arrival of commercially viable artificial intelligence has suddenly revealed the disturbing possibility of a world divided into AI haves and have-nots. There is, however, a deeper worry, unstated in the speech, at work. It is the foreboding of an impending war and the feeling of unpreparedness. The surge of nationalism in many countries, coupled with the retreat of democracy across the world, accentuates it. Goyal is not alone. The fear is global, and nationalist leaders want private entrepreneurs to feel and share it. But each has a different approach. While China wants the private sector to be under the party's thumb, Europe wants to handle the private sector with kid gloves. The US industry, meanwhile, is seeking the unleash-the-crazy-billionaire approach.

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## Both Bangladesh And India Must Face Some Hard Facts Now

By Sreeradha Datta

The short bilateral meeting - a first one too - between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bangladeshi Interim Cabinet Chief Mohammed Yunus, held on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit, grabbed more eyeballs than the proceedings of the summit itself. This meeting was not just about two leaders of the region using an opportunity to discuss outstanding issues, but rather a cooling-off moment for the two neighbours whose relationship status would read 'complicated'. Evidently, much water has flown between the two states in the past eight months, since Sheikh Hasina fled Dhaka and sought refuge in India on August 5 last year. Certainly, a few other official bilateral meetings have taken place over the past few months, but given that India had earlier refused Yunus's requests for a chat with PM Modi, this latest one in Bangkok begs a few questions.

Was the meeting a reconciliation of sorts? Or was it about keeping up with the pretence of having normal ties? Or, did some larger calculations necessitate the photo-op opportunity? The change in Indian mood is curious, especially in the background of another controversy Yunus created with his statement. Last week, Yunus said during an event in China that

because India's Northeast was "landlocked", Bangladesh was the primary gateway for the region's maritime access and that it could be "an extension of the Chinese economy". Not only was this factually incorrect, but the Bangladeshi invitation to China to build an airbase in Lalmonirhat district close to India's Siliguri corridor is a rather contentious gesture, to say the least. The suggestion is sure to have raised eyebrows in the US, too, as it effectively draws Bangladesh into the Indo-Pacific strategic space. In any case, in the post-Hasina phase, India's limited engagement and the US's shifting priorities have indeed spawned the risk of deeper Chinese engagement in Bangladesh.

Was India Late To Act?

Since Yunus took over as interim head on August 8 last year, India has found it difficult to cope with the changed political landscape in Bangladesh. The shock of losing its best partner in the neighbourhood brought forth several severe implications, as the subsequent few months revealed. While India ultimately acknowledged that it had understood Hasina was losing popular mandate in her fight with the students, it couldn't influence any change of track in Dhaka.

For the past few years, especially after

the controlled January 2024 general election, there had been signals galore about Hasina losing touch with the ground realities as she increasingly tightened her administrative grip. But India still hoped that she would be able to hang in through the last tethers. Ultimately, however, a Dhaka sans Hasina left a gaping hole in the wall for India. It also failed to build any linkages with the new dispensation. The rule of the mob on the streets of Dhaka and visible domestic instability provided easy material to many Indian sections, too, to build their negative narrative.

Yunus's inability to govern his country, given the law-and-order breakdown, and, more importantly, the large-scale violence unleashed on the country's Hindu minorities, provided a linear view to India to judge the new dispensation. Add to that the tirade against the Awami League in Bangladesh alongside a growing presence of religious elements nationwide, and raging war cries about an 'Islamist takeover' of Bangladesh populated the Indian discourse. Any attempt to support a fledgling interim cabinet that was trying to stabilise a rather difficult and volatile situation ceased to be an option. On the contrary, Bangladesh continued to be seen through an emotive lens of 'it-can-only-be-downhill-from-now'.

Hostile cries were equally shrill on both sides, especially from the media and political circles.

The Anti-India Hysteria

Several irritants over the years have continued to stress the India-Bangladesh relationship, despite its firm foundations. This includes a water-sharing agreement over the Teesta river, border action against civilians from both sides, and, most importantly, a growing perception in Bangladesh that most bilateral agreements between the two nations favoured India more. That perception was rooted in Hasina's style of politics, where policies were decided without any public debate and discussion, given the absence of a real opposition from the parliament. All this added to the anti-India hysteria in Bangladesh and invariably led to youth groups suggesting a review of some of these decisions, widening the trust deficit further. The Hasina government had grown increasingly disconnected from the country's youth, and Hasina herself had failed to tackle the criticism coming her way (though even at present, the Bangladesh polity seems to be showing slivers of similar intolerant behaviour). Dhaka's strong diplomatic overtures to Pakistan and China also added to misgivings.

# India, The Custodian Of Buddha Dhamma In The Modern Era



**Written By :Baishali Sarkar**

Narendra Modi's tenure as Prime Minister has leveraged India's rich Buddhist heritage to achieve cultural diplomacy and foster global connectivity. Buddhist diplomacy isn't just about cultural connections — it also has tangible boons. His approach embodies a harmonious blend of national pride and spiritual heritage, positioning India as a Dhamma bridge (Dhammasetu), not just for Buddhist nations across Asia but for the entire global community.

PM Modi recently undertook visits to two countries associated with Buddha Dhamma — Thailand (April 3, 2025) and Sri Lanka (April 4 – 6, 2025). On April 3, 2025, PM Modi visited the iconic Wat Phra Chetuphon W i m o n m a n g k a l a r a m Ratchaworamahawihan also known as Wat Pho Temple in Thailand, and gifted a brass statue of the Sarnath-style Buddha in Dhyana Mudra to the King of Thailand, symbolising India's spiritual heritage and craftsmanship. He also announced the upcoming exposition of the Holy Relics of Lord Buddha discovered in Aravali, Gujarat, in 1960 in Thailand. During the meeting, PM Modi received a copy of the 108 volumes of Tipitaka, the revered Buddhist scriptures in Pali language, from the Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra — a token of the everlasting Buddhist traditions shared by the two countries.

During his visit to Sri Lanka, PM Modi visited (April 06, 2025) Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi Temple at the historic city of Anuradhapura. He also met with Most Ven. Pallegama Hemarathana Nayake Thera, Chief incumbent of the great eight Buddhist shrines of Anuradhapura. In a cordial discussion, he shared details about the Devni Mori relics from Gujarat. He conveyed that these relics would be sent to Sri Lanka in the near future. Significantly, Ven. Pallegama Nayake Thera visited India recently and was accompanied by the

Deputy Secretary General of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) Dr Porage. The visit was coordinated by IBC.

Ever since his initial days as Prime Minister, Modi has been highlighting India's Buddhist heritage in different countries. PM Modi's inaugural visit to Bhutan on June 15-16, 2014, marked a significant step in strengthening India's relationship with the Buddhist kingdom. This was followed by his visit to Nepal, the birthplace of the Buddha on August 3-4, 2014. In August 30 – September 3, 2014, expanding beyond South Asia, PM Modi's first official visit to Toji and Kinkakuji temples, Japan highlighted the cultural resonance of Buddha Dhamma in strengthening bilateral relations.

In 2015, PM Modi emphasised Buddha Dhamma's role in India's global peace initiatives. On May 4, 2015, during the International Buddha Poonima Diwas, he highlighted the government's focus on Buddhist activism as part of its foreign policy. He stated, "Without Buddha, this century cannot be Asia's century." His visit to China on May 14-16, 2015 included stops at Daxingshan Temple and the Big Wild Goose Pagoda in Ci'en Temple, Xi'an — once known as Chang'an during the Sui and Tang Dynasties (581-907) as a hub for Buddhist thought and practice.

PM Modi's address on Buddha Jayanti, celebrated on April 30, 2018, at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi, reflected India's allegiance to Lord Buddha's teachings and their global relevance. Highlighting the transformative power of the Buddha's Eight-fold path (Arya??a?gamarga), PM Modi called for unity among followers to spread love and compassion worldwide. PM Modi also acknowledged the Archaeological Survey of India's efforts in restoring Buddhist sites in countries like Afghanistan, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam and

expressed pride in the government's initiatives to enhance Buddhist tourism infrastructure, connecting Southeast Asia with India's significant Buddhist sites.

On September 6-7, 2019, PM Modi and Mongolian President Khaltmaagiin Battulga jointly unveiled a statue of Lord Buddha and his disciples at the Gandan

Tegchenling Monastery in Ulaanbaatar. The statue was installed during the SAMVAD dialogue, fostering discussions among Buddhist leaders and scholars on contemporary issues. Gandan Tegchenling Monastery, a renowned center of Mongolian Buddhism and a repository of significant Buddhist heritage, hosted the 11th General Assembly of the Asian Buddhist Conference for Peace (ABCP). Later, on September 27, 2019, at the 74th United Nations General Assembly, PM Modi emphasised India's legacy of peace, stating, "India gave the world 'Buddh,' not 'Yuddh'," and called for a united approach to multilateralism and combating terrorism. Talking of the contemporary times, the PM said, "In this new era, we will have to give new direction to multilateralism and to the United Nations" and that "a fragmented world is in the interest of no one".

On May 7, 2020, PM Modi extended warm wishes for Buddha Poonima and Vesak celebrations, acknowledging the challenges of physical gatherings due to the pandemic. He said, "Today the world fights extraordinary challenges. To these challenges, lasting solutions can come from the ideals of Lord Buddha. They were relevant in the past. They are relevant in the present. And, they will remain relevant in the future".

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# Can You Really Trust Trump's 'Magic Potion'?

By Ajay Kumar

Anthony Scaramucci, a Wall Street stalwart, knows Donald Trump up close and personal. What stands out most to him is Trump's "cruel" nature. Yet, as he repeats ad nauseam in his podcasts, Trump has incredibly sharp political instincts. According to Scaramucci, Trump always follows his gut - something instilled in him by his mentor, the ultra-aggressive New York lawyer Roy Cohn. And Scaramucci should know - he briefly served as White House Director of Communications under Trump.

Still, as the world grapples with the fallout from Trump's April 2 announcement of sweeping reciprocal tariffs, one has to wonder: are Trump's instincts right this time? Trump has dominated American politics for the better part of a decade, but these new tariffs fly in the face of economic, business, and political logic. It's hard to see how they serve his political future.

Consider the context of Trump's self-declared "Liberation Day". Here's what veteran Republican strategist Karl Rove wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* on April 3: "The problem for Republicans is that Mr. Trump was elected to stop inflation. A March 28 CBS News poll found that 64% of Americans already think Mr. Trump isn't focused enough on 'lowering prices', while 55% say he's focused too much on raising tariffs."

Rove added, "Most Americans believe Mr. Trump's economic policies are either making them 'financially worse off' (42%) or 'about the same' (35%). Fifty two



percent feel his policies are making food and groceries prices go up, only 22% say go down. Fifty-one percent think his policies are making the stock market fall, compared with 23% saying his policies are making it rise. Only 33% believe his 'policies are making the US job market' create jobs, while 48% say they are making it 'lose jobs'...Americans are skittish about tariffs: 56% oppose them, with 72% believing they'll raise prices in the short run compared to 5% who think they'll reduce prices. Over the long term, only 29% say they'll lower prices. They'll certainly remember Mr. Trump saying he 'couldn't care less' if US automakers raised prices because they had to pay more for imported parts." Estimates suggest that under Trump's tariff regime, new car prices could rise anywhere from \$2,500 to \$20,000.

## Popular Opinion Turning

And then there's the potential impact on American farmers—numerically small

but among Trump's most loyal voters. In the last election, Trump won nearly 78% of the vote in the 444 counties where farming dominates. As *The Atlantic* put it, "Tariffs will indeed hurt farmers badly. Farm costs will rise. Farm incomes will drop. Under Trump's tariffs, farmers will pay more for fertilizer. They will pay more for farm equipment. They will pay more for the fuel to ship their products to market. When foreign countries retaliate, raising their own tariff barriers, American farmers will lose export markets. Their domestic sales will come under pressure too, because tariffs will shrink America's disposable incomes: Consumers will have to cut back everywhere, including at the grocery store." Trump has long believed that both allies and adversaries have exploited the post-World War II trade regime - where the US promoted global prosperity with low import tariffs while enduring higher tariffs on its exports - to enrich themselves at America's

expense. As two economists recently wrote in *Foreign Affairs*: "Trump possesses few consistent political ideologies but has promoted tariffs since the 1980s as a means to reduce trade deficits and spur US manufacturing, dismissing economists' warnings that they would raise prices and potentially stagnate the U.S. economy." "Make them pay for the privilege of selling to or being defended by the US' - whether NATO, Japan, or South Korea - is a core Trump and MAGA tenet.

## Just 'A Little Disturbance'

Today, Trump sees tariffs as a cure-all for America's economic woes. Short-term pain - what Trump calls "a little disturbance" - is a price he seems willing to pay to fulfill this vision. He argues that the tariffs will restore American manufacturing and generate "trillions and trillions of dollars" in government revenue, which could be used to lower taxes and pay down the national debt. According to his team's projections, the announced tariffs would generate \$6 trillion over a decade. Just the flat 10% tariff on all imports, they say, would alone create 2.8 million jobs by reshoring industries. And there are signs, Trump's team claims, that his "America First" trade policy is already yielding results - namely increased domestic investment and early signs of reshoring. According to the White House press site, some two dozen post-inauguration investment decisions have been made by U.S. and global giants across sectors including IT, AI, automobiles, and pharmaceuticals. These commitments total well over \$1 trillion, including:

## Trump Tariffs On India: Cheaper Bourbon And A Rich World Of Opportunities

Written By : Abhijit Majumder

The Trump tariffs may have left the Indian Sensex 2,227 points down in the Monday mayhem, but the nation has a reason to look up to a world of new opportunities staring at it.

Just as India turned the modern world's worst health crisis, Covid-19, into an opportunity to overhaul its health infrastructure, coming up with its own vaccine and administering it to a billion people twice over, and sending the rest to help about 75 countries, it can invert the breaking trade war on its head. American President Donald Trump has imposed a 26 per cent tariff on Indian exports to the US in addition to a baseline duty of 10 per cent applicable to all countries. The blow will most heavily fall on the electronics, gems, and jewellery industries.

But that impact is likely to be limited and short-term because the country's global exports have started expanding fast but have not reached a scale that would hurt. India exports \$91 billion in goods to the US, which accounts for 18 per cent of its overall



exports. There are several ways in which the globally bleak time may usher sunshine for India.

Trump may have slapped tariffs on New Delhi as some sort of equaliser for India's high tariff card for most US products, but he has imposed much higher tariffs against India's competing economies like China, Vietnam and Indonesia in the export sector. New US tariffs on China is 54 per cent, Vietnam 46 per cent, Sri Lanka 44 per cent, and Bangladesh 37 per cent.

The BBC reported: "The new trade realities

also throw up opportunities for India. Its new tariff differential with Asian peers may potentially lead to some export re-routing." Indian exporters stand to benefit. If the government and the private sector play well, India can wean away a major chunk of garment and footwear business from China and Bangladesh, for instance.

India was also the first mover as the only country that began negotiations with the US for a bilateral trade agreement (BTA). The US had sent a team only to India for negotiations on tariffs after Trump took office

in January. The BTA is supposed to be firmed up by autumn, but may happen much sooner now.

And while countries like China and Canada reacted angrily with retaliatory tariffs, India, Vietnam, and Taiwan quietly agreed to work on agreements without taking a confrontational route.

The trade war which has broken out and will only escalate also gives India the reason to expand export markets beyond the US and focus on regions where tariffs remain low, such as Europe, southeast Asia, and Africa, say economists. Most importantly, it unwittingly gives India a massive impetus to up its game in manufacturing and make it easier for entrepreneurs to do business. "Strong domestic manufacturing, continued government handholding by introducing strategic policy measures like the Product Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, Make in India, and Atmanirbhar Bharat, among others, will support India's growth resilience," Hemant Jain, president of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, has been quoted saying.

# Two visions within Trump world are battling for primacy. Which will win?

By Ben Davis

The start of the second Trump administration has been chaotic, to put it mildly. It is difficult for Americans to understand what exactly the administration is trying to do and how it will affect them. It has been simultaneously a colossal remaking of the US state and the entire global order, but also seemingly haphazard, with significant policy decisions such as spending cuts and tariff rates clearly made with little thought or preparation. Analysts and commentators of all stripes have speculated on the motives and strategy behind the Trump administration's huge overhaul of society. But what is the Trump administration's plan for the US? The primary moves the administration has made are major cuts to federal government capacity through the "department of government efficiency" (Doge) and now an unprecedented tariff regime that has sent financial markets into a free fall. Some view these



changes as part of a grand overarching strategy to rebuild some version of an imagined past America: globally hegemonic and able to exercise power nakedly over other countries, economically self-sufficient with a large manufacturing base, and a reassertion of the previous social norms and order around gender, race, and sexuality. But a deeper dive into the Trump administration's explanation of their policies and vision reveals that rather than a single, coherent ideological project, the Trump administration is sclerotic and

being used as a vehicle for more than one competing ideological project.

While the first Trump administration had no real ideological project, with Donald Trump's surprise win being based on a personalist coalition without the backing of an organized movement, and different factions within the administration battling for control over policy and favor from the president, the second Trump administration was backed and is staffed by two major ideological projects, representing different segments of capital: the

oft-discussed "national conservatism" of the Claremont Institute, the Heritage Foundation and Project 2025, and tech capital, which has used Trump as a vehicle for its own priorities. These two overarching political projects and visions both see Trump as able to advance their goals, but these projects are competing with each other. Both have accepted that Republicans will lose the midterms in 2026, as the president's party nearly always does, and are thus trying to radically reshape society in that time in ways that can't easily be reversed. They have deeply different visions for the future, and whether one wins out or both of their incompatible sets of policies are carried out will have enormous implications for the lives of Americans and people around the globe. On tariffs, the administration has offered multiple, mutually exclusive visions: with some viewing tariffs as primarily a way to rebuild US manufacturing by incentivizing producers to build in the US; some

viewing tariffs as primarily a way to raise revenue, cut the deficit, and in the long-term replace the income tax entirely; and some viewing tariffs primarily as a negotiating tool to force countries to make concessions to the US on a variety of issues. Trump personally has suggested that the US become an autarky, with no trade of any kind with the outside world. It's unclear which of these will be the plan because they each have dramatically different implications for how the tariffs are structured in the long-term, how long they will last, and their effects on US workers. In the first two views, the tariffs are a part of the national conservative project of returning the US to a previous social order. They view the nation-state as the primary actor in a zero-sum anarchic global order of competing nation-states seeking to dominate each other. Tariffs are then a way of reasserting US national power relative to other states.

## Can India satisfy Trump with tariff reduction? Vietnam has already tried and failed



tax cuts, a spur for domestic manufacturing through import substitution, and a leverage to compel countries to enable access to US manufacturing and energy exports—in that order. This has implications for India's negotiating strategy, necessitating adjustments. But first, let's trace the rationale of India's approach so far.

### Sources of India's current approach

India has had a rich and largely successful experience of engaging Trump 1.0 and this has led us to a certain set of inferences and conclusions. These are —"Trump is a businessman and he is transactional", "We can do business with him" and "Trump can be won over with a smart plan, an appeal to benefits and a lot of flattery". Furthermore, India is not a US ally and hence Trump would not have as much leverage over us on trade matters as he does with allies such as Europe and Japan.

By Sidharth Raimedhi

To understand the effect of Trump 2.0 on India and Delhi's negotiating strategy, one has to understand the dynamic between Trumpian America and India—in context and with some chronology. India's diplomatic challenge is unprecedented in many ways, given that the contours of Trump 2.0's trade and strategic agenda appear to be shifting by the week, if not by the day. To fully gauge and understand the 'dynamic', one has to take stock of recent trends in Indian economy, Trump's real objectives

in waging a global trade war, as well as the value that each places on the overall bilateral relationship. In this series, I argue that India's starting assumptions towards Trump 2.0's objectives are too narrow and hence likely to mislead. For its own economic interests, India should question (but not rule out) the prospect of being able to satisfy the Trump administration via tariff reductions and various regulatory concessions. Trump's trusted and close economic advisors see tariffs as a great source of revenue that enables his planned



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# Pakistan plans to expel 3 million Afghans from the country this year

(News Agency)- Pakistan plans to expel 3 million Afghans from the country this year, as a deadline for them to voluntarily leave the capital and surrounding areas expired on Monday. It's the latest phase of a nationwide crackdown launched in October 2023 to expel foreigners living in Pakistan illegally, mostly Afghans. The campaign has drawn fire from rights groups, the Taliban government, and the U.N.

Arrests and deportations were due to begin April 1 but were pushed back to April 10 because of the Eid al-Fitr holidays marking the end of Ramadan, according to government documents seen by The Associated Press.

About 845,000 Afghans have left Pakistan over the past 18 months, figures from the International Organization for Migration show.

Pakistan says 3 million Afghans remain. Of these, 1,344,584 hold Proof of Registration cards, while 807,402 have Afghan Citizen Cards. There are a further 1 million Afghans who are in the country illegally because they have no paperwork.

Pakistan said it will make sure that Afghans do not return once deported. Authorities wanted Afghan Citizen cardholders to leave the capital Islamabad and Rawalpindi city by March 31 and return to Afghanistan voluntarily



or be deported.

Those with Proof of Registration can stay in Pakistan until June 30, while Afghans bound for third-country resettlement must also leave Islamabad and Rawalpindi by March 31.

Authorities have said they will work with foreign diplomatic missions to resettle Afghans, failing which they will also be deported from Pakistan.

Tens of thousands of Afghans fled after the Taliban takeover in 2021. They were approved for resettlement in the U.S. through a program that helps people at risk because of their work with the

American government, media, aid agencies, and rights groups.

However, President Donald Trump paused U.S. refugee programs in January and 20,000 Afghans are now in limbo.

**The Taliban want Afghan refugees to return with dignity**

"No Afghan officials to be made part of any committee or formal decision-making process," one of the documents said about the expulsion plans. A spokesman for Afghanistan's Refugee Ministry, Abdul Mutalib Haqqani, told The Associated Press that Pakistan was

taking decisions arbitrarily, without involving the U.N. refugee agency or the Taliban government.

"We have shared our problems with them, stating that unilaterally expelling refugees is neither in their interest nor ours," said Haqqani. "It is not in their interest because expelling them in this way raises hatred against Pakistan."

"For us, it is natural that managing so many Afghans coming back is a challenge. We have requested they should be deported through a mechanism and mutual understanding so they can return with dignity."

Two transit stations will be set up in the northwest province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to help with deportations. One will be in Nasir Bagh, an area in the Peshawar suburbs. The second will be in the border town of Landi Kotal, some 7 kilometers from the Torkham crossing.

Afghans are unsure of their future in a country they don't know

It is not clear what will happen to children born in Pakistan to Afghan parents, Afghan couples with different document types, and families where one parent is a Pakistani citizen and the other is Afghan. But officials indicated to the AP that social welfare staff will be on hand to help with such cases.

## Trekkers and Climbers Stranded Amid Pakistan Permit Dispute



(News Agency)- The bitter dispute between Pakistani Authorities and local outfitters over 300 percent price increases for trekking and climbing permits has not settled down. In fact, the conflict has worsened. Some travelers have already lost their vacations because the government is not issuing permits until the issue is resolved.

Stakeholders worry that the unprecedented increase will scare away potential visitors. Some then took the case before the Chief Court

of Gilgit-Baltistan. This area encompasses Central Karakoram National Park, Nanga Parbat, and most of the country's higher mountains.

The tribunal put the price increase on hold while the question is studied. That seemed to resolve the situation in favor of the outfitters, at least for this year. Both local and international companies are desperately trying to finalize their expeditions to the Karakoram. The season is just beginning.

However, after the court ruling, events took a turn for the worse.

No increase, no permits

In response, the government has delayed issuing permits altogether. Some early trekkers in Pakistan had to return home without ever leaving town, and hundreds of others are currently on stand-by.

"Over 200 foreign trekkers and mountaineers through their tour operators have already applied for trekking and mountaineering in Gilgit-Baltistan, but the tourism department has not issued permits," the Dawn newspaper reported.

So what seemed like a break in the dispute a few weeks ago has now become a serious blow to Pakistan's mountain tourism.

Warning for travelers

The president of the Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (PATO), Niaz Ahmed, told Dawn that the court only suspended the price increase and was not responsible for delaying the permitting process. However, sources at the Tourism Department say they can't issue permits at the old 2024

rates because the Act establishing those prices has already been revoked.

Adventure Tours Pakistan CEO Naiknaam Karim told Dawn that a group of his clients had planned to trek along the Panmah Glacier to Sim Pass beginning on March 24. They had to fly home after waiting several days in vain for a permit. Anyone who plans to visit Pakistan should take note of this uncertainty.

For Gilgit-Baltistan, mountain tourism is a major source of income.

"Unless a solution comes soon from either the Chief Court or the Gilgit-Baltistan government, the situation will definitely affect trekkers and mountaineers," Ali Porik of Jasmine Tours confirmed to ExplorersWeb.

Ali Salto of Alpine Adventure Guides told ExplorersWeb he hopes the issue will be resolved soon. The Chief Court took the case yesterday. However, when or if permits will be issued again and at what price remains unclear. Few clients are willing to wait until the last minute only to pay radically higher than what they had in mind.

# Pakistan says US companies seek to invest in the country's untapped minerals sector

(News Agency)-vU.S. companies are seeking to invest in Pakistan's largely untapped minerals sector that boasts one of the world's largest copper and gold deposits, the Pakistani government said Wednesday. Eric Meyer, Senior Bureau Official for the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, conveyed that interest directly to Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif during a meeting in Islamabad, according to a government statement.

The meeting came a day after Meyer attended the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum, an international summit aimed at attracting foreign investment in the country's mining sector. Apart from gold and copper, Pakistan is also rich in lithium used to make batteries, as well as other minerals.

The summit has drawn



participation from major international companies, including Canada-based Barrick Gold, as well as government officials from the United States, Saudi Arabia, China, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Azerbaijan and other nations.

Pakistan's massive copper and gold deposits are located in Reko Diq, a district in restive Balochistan, which has

witnessed a surge in attacks by Baloch separatists in recent years.

In the latest such violence, gunmen opened fire on a police van in Quetta, the capital of minerals rich Balochistan, killing three officers on Wednesday night, police said. Sarfraz Bugti, the chief minister in Balochistan, in a statement condemned the attack.

On Tuesday, Pakistan's powerful army chief Gen. Asim Munir had told foreign companies and investors at the summit that the military would ensure their security. The statement said Meyer "acknowledged the potential of Pakistan's mineral sector," adding that American companies are interested in exploring investment opportunities.

He reaffirmed Washington's interest in expanding bilateral cooperation, including in such sectors as trade, investment, and counterterrorism, the statement said. Sharif said Pakistan's minerals sector offered "immense opportunities" and encouraged U.S. companies to take advantage of the investment potential.

Sharif expressed Islamabad's desire to strengthen ties with the Trump administration. Meyer's visit marks the first by a Trump administration official since the U.S. imposed a 29% tariff on Pakistani exports as part of his trade war.

Sharif's office said in a statement later Wednesday that the Pakistani prime minister will dispatch a high-level delegation to Washington to negotiate with Trump administration officials over the tariffs issue and to discuss how to enhance bilateral trade.

## Pakistan moves to reset ties with Bangladesh as China factor grows



Pakistan is stepping up efforts to reset ties with Bangladesh amid growing Chinese influence in the region. Following Bangladesh Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus' visit to China, Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar is preparing for a visit to Dhaka -- marking the first high-level visit from Islamabad since 2012, when former Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar travelled to Bangladesh.

Ahead of Dar's visit, Pakistan Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch will travel to Dhaka on April 17 to set the stage for the diplomatic engagement.

Confirming the upcoming visit, Bangladesh's Foreign Adviser Md Touhid Hossain told local reporters, "It has been finalised that he will come. We will be able to confirm the date within the next couple of days." Official dates are expected to

be announced soon, with sources indicating the visit could take place between April 20 and 21.

The trip is expected to lay the groundwork for a revised framework agreement between the two nations. Key items on the agenda include defence cooperation, fighter aircraft procurement from China, training mechanisms, and a student exchange programme starting this week. Intelligence-sharing initiatives and the Pakistan-Bangladesh Political Consultative Meeting are also likely to be discussed.

These developments come at a time when diplomatic dynamics are shifting in the region following the exit of former Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in August last year. India is watching the evolving ties between Bangladesh, Pakistan, and China closely.

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# Planned nuclear talks between US and Iran ease war fears, for now



(News Agency)-A potential regional war is a bigger worry in the Gulf than tariffs, but that risk has been momentarily defused after Washington and Tehran agreed to hold nuclear talks in Oman. While no timeline was announced to reach a deal, the meetings this weekend could offer a path to easing tensions, according to Deputy Special Envoy to the Middle East Morgan Ortagus. But the window won't stay open for long, she warned. The diplomatic overture follows Israel's claim that it has weakened Iran's air defenses and a watchdog's warning over Tehran's accelerating uranium enrichment. Meanwhile, the US is ramping up its regional diplomatic and military presence — the latter with strikes against the Houthis in

Yemen and a carrier battle group on its way to the Middle East. Against this backdrop, some of the most senior leaders from the US and the Middle East — including Israel — joined talks in Abu Dhabi this week, where they discussed how the region can "contribute more to mutual defence and stability," former US diplomats Elliott Abrams and Thomas R Nides wrote.

## Your US Visas, Green Cards Will Be Cancelled For These Social Media Posts



US immigration authorities said that they will deny visas and residence permits to people who post anti-Semitic content on social media. Posts considered anti-Semitic will include social media activity in support of militant groups classified by the United States as terrorists, including Hamas, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthis. Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem "has made it clear that anyone who thinks they can come to America and hide behind the First Amendment to advocate for anti-Semitic violence and terrorism — think again. You are not welcome here," department spokeswoman Tricia McLaughlin said. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services "will consider social media content that indicates an alien endorsing, espousing, promoting or supporting anti-Semitic terrorism, anti-Semitic terrorist organizations or other anti-Semitic activity as a negative factor", the statement said.

# Filipino Politician Faces Backlash For 'Joke' About Sleeping With Single Mothers



(News Agency)- A Filipino congressional candidate is under scrutiny for misogynistic remarks made during his campaign. During a speech on April 3, Christian Sia, a lawyer-turned-politician and congressional candidate from Pasig City, made comments about single mothers, which many have deemed "sexist and degrading". Sia is facing potential disqualification from the upcoming May elections after making controversial statements about single mothers and his assistant's physical appearance. "Any lonely, single mother who is still having her period... let me be clear, she should still be having her period, I will sleep with her for one night," he said at a rally," the South China Morning Post quoted Sia's statement. After his controversy, the Philippine Commission on Elections (Comelec) issued a show cause notice asking him to explain why his remarks should not lead to sanctions or removal from the ballot. Women's rights organisations condemned his statement, arguing that Sia's comment trivialised the challenges faced by single parents, turning their struggles into a crude punchline.

## 'Drip, Drip, Drip': Donald Trump Signs Order To Make 'American Showers Great Again'

(News Agency)-US President Donald Trump has signed an executive order lifting water-pressure restrictions on showerheads, a move the White House said would "make America's showers great again". Trump has long complained about inadequate water pressure in American bathrooms which he blames on federal water-conservation regulations. "In my case I like to take a nice shower, to take care of my beautiful hair," Trump told reporters as he signed the order in the Oval Office on Wednesday. "I have to stand under the shower for 15 minutes till it gets wet. It comes out drip, drip, drip. It's ridiculous." The order directs the Energy Department to roll back "radical green" regulations limiting the flow of showerheads to 2.5 gallons of water per minute. The White House said the order "frees Americans from



excessive regulations that turned a basic household item into a bureaucratic nightmare" and ends the "Obama-Biden war on showers". Trump has targeted water-pressure standards for showerheads, toilets, dishwashers and other household appliances, since his first term. "My hair, I don't know about you, but it has to be perfect, perfect," he said outside the White House in 2020. "I take a shower, I want that beautiful head of hair to be just lathered," Trump said in Detroit in June 2024. "I get this best stuff you can buy and I dump it all over. And then I turn on the water and the damn water drips out. I can't get the stuff out of my hair. It's a horrible thing." But according to the Appliance Standards Awareness Project, "shower head standards save consumers money on their water and energy bills and help the environment". "Testing has repeatedly shown that today's models can provide an excellent shower," the NGO said in a 2024 report.

# Trump's tariff feud with US Senator turns personal: Smallest neck I've seen

(News Agency)- Donald Trump's remarks come as Adam Schiff cements his role as one of Trump's most vocal and unrelenting critics on economic policy, warning that the administration's aggressive tariff strategy is steering the nation toward what he has ominously dubbed a looming "Trump recession".



In a moment that quickly went viral, President Donald Trump turned a political disagreement into a personal spectacle, delivering a bizarre and scathing attack on Democratic Senator Adam Schiff. With cameras rolling and supporters laughing, Trump mocked Schiff's physical appearance.

"Adam Schiff has the smallest neck I have ever seen and the biggest head we call them watermelon head," Trump said, pointing to his index finger and wondering aloud how Schiff's "big fat face" could rest on such a thin neck. "It's a mystery, no one can understand," he said.

The president's remarks come as

Schiff cements his role as one of Trump's most vocal and unrelenting critics on economic policy, warning that the administration's aggressive tariff strategy is steering the nation toward what he has ominously dubbed a looming "Trump recession". "But he is the most dishonest person I have ever seen, and how we can allow people like that to run an office is a shame."

Responding to Trump's tirade, Schiff posted a video of the speech on X with a pointed caption. "The President of the United States seems oddly

focused on me. Shouldn't he be focused on the economy he's crashing?"

Schiff has been a consistent and outspoken critic of the administration's trade policy, warning that Trump's tariffs could plunge the US into a deep economic downturn.

"This is uncoordinated, capricious and simply destructive. He's going to tank our economy, and he could tank much of the economy around the world," the California senator said, accusing Trump of isolating the United States on the global stage.

"The only nations that seem to

be immune from his caprice are the dictatorships like Russia, Iran, and North Korea. He's treating countries like he's treating corporations, like he's treating law firms, like he's treating members of the press. It's part of the same caprice that you will often find with a dictator."

In a recent appearance on NBC's Meet the Press, Schiff rejected Trump's assurances that the tariffs would spark an "economic revolution". "I don't agree with any part of that," he said bluntly.

"And unfortunately, he's wrecking our economy." Schiff added that if the US does enter a recession, it would bear the president's name. "I hope and pray we stay out of recession," he said. "But if we head into a recession, it will be the Trump recession."

The senator painted a stark picture of the economic fallout already being felt across the country. "I'm hearing from farmers who still haven't recovered market share from the tariffs during the first Trump administration. I'm hearing from

people in the tourist industry. You have people from other countries now who don't want to come here, most particularly Canadians," he said.

Amid the turmoil, Schiff posted another scathing critique of the president's "priorities". "USD 5 trillion in retirement accounts and investments erased, and Donald Trump is... golfing. But those billionaire tax cuts? The Senate is working nights and weekends to make that happen for him. Gotta have priorities," he wrote on X.v

Trump recently imposed a sweeping 104 percent tariff on Chinese imports, along with a 20 percent tariff on goods from the European Union and other key trading partners, and a 26 percent tariff on Indian imports. While the EU had proposed a "zero-for-zero" tariff agreement on cars and industrial goods, Trump dismissed the offer and said Brussels must commit to buying USD 350 billion worth of American energy to receive any reprieve.

## China issues travel alert for nationals visiting US amid tariff war with Trump



China on Wednesday issued a risk alert for Chinese tourists travelling to the US, according to a statement from the culture and tourism ministry. The ministry said it reminded Chinese

tourists to assess the risks of travelling to the US and travel with caution, citing recent "deterioration of China-US economic and trade relations and the domestic security situation in the US".

**Think that's scary?**

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# Art of The Deal'- Dealing with "Bad Actors"

(SAI Bureau) New York- Suddenly, Donald Trump's trade war is in much sharper focus. Rather than a fight on all fronts against the world, this now looks far more like a fight on familiar Trumpian territory: America v China. The 90-day pause on the higher "retaliatory" tariffs levied on dozens of countries still leaves a universal across-the-board tariff of 10% in place. For a politician who first fought his way to the White House on the back of an anti-China message, there is much more to this than simple retaliation.

For Trump, this is about the unfinished business of that first term in office. "We didn't have the time to do the right thing, which we're doing now," he told reporters.

The aim is nothing less than the upending of an established system of global trade centred on China as the factory of the world, as well as the once widely held view that underpinned it – the idea that more of this trade was, in and of itself, a good thing.

China now produces 60% of the world's electric cars – a large proportion of them made by its own homegrown brands and - and 80% of the batteries that power them. So, now Trump is back, with this tit-for-tat escalation on levies.

It would, arguably, be the biggest shock ever delivered to the established global trading system, were it not for all the other on-again off-again tariff measures the US president has rolled out in recent days. What happens next depends on two key questions. Firstly, whether China takes up that offer to negotiate.

And secondly, assuming it eventually does, whether China is willing to make the kind of major concessions that America is looking for, including a complete overhaul of its export driven economic model. In answering them, the first thing to say is that we are in completely uncharted territory, so we should be wary of anyone who says they know how Beijing is likely to react. But there are certainly



reasons to be cautious.

China's vision of its economic strength - one based on strong exports and a tightly protected domestic market - is now closely bound up with its idea of national rejuvenation and the supremacy of its one-party system. Its tight control over the information sphere means it will be unlikely to drop its barriers to American technology companies, for example. But there is a third question, and it is one for America to answer. Does the US still believe in free trade? Donald Trump often suggests that tariffs are a good thing, not merely as a means to an end, but as an end in themselves.

He talks about the benefit of a protectionist barrier for America, in order to stimulate domestic investment, encourage American companies to bring those foreign supply chains back home, and raise tax revenues. And if Beijing believes that is indeed the primary purpose of the tariffs, it may decide there is nothing to negotiate anyway. Rather than championing the idea of economic co-operation, the world's two biggest superpowers may find themselves locked in a fight for winner-takes-all economic supremacy. If so, that really would mark a shattering of the old consensus, and a very different, possibly very dangerous, future.

Retreat or negotiating strategy? Trump steps back from all-out trade war

For days, Donald Trump and his White House team had insisted they were fully committed to their decision to impose sweeping "reciprocal" tariffs on dozens of countries. They even derided a report on Tuesday that said the president was considering a 90-day pause – news that triggered a brief stock market surge.

But now that pause on higher tariff rates, with a few notable exceptions, is a reality. The reordering of the global economic order is on hold, and Trump's promise of a golden age of American manufacturing will have to wait. The White House has said that going big on tariffs and then hitting the pause button, before entering negotiations with individual countries, was the plan all along.

"We've had more than 75 countries contact us, and I imagine, after today, there will be more," Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent told reporters shortly after the announcement.

That framing from the White House is not surprising, of course. And it is difficult to ignore the investor panic, tumbling bond market and growing chorus of Republican criticism and public disapproval that preceded the announcement.

So was it a strategic retreat in the face of unexpected resistance, or yet another example of Trump's "art of the deal" negotiating strategy at work? It didn't take long for Trump's

aides – many of the same people who said he would never back down – to fan out and celebrate the president's move.

Trade adviser Peter Navarro said Trump's tariff situation "unfolded exactly the way it should".

"You clearly failed to see what President Trump is doing here," press secretary Karoline Leavitt told a crowd of gathered reporters. "The entire world is calling the United States of America."

They were less clear about the details of Trump's tariff suspension, announced via a post on his Truth Social website. Did the reprieve in higher tariffs apply to the EU? Were Mexico and Canada, which had avoided the original 10% baseline tariffs, somehow now included? Were tariffs targeting specific sectors affected?

Ultimately, the White House provided some clarity on these questions – but for hours US trading partners were left to scrutinise Trump's Truth Social post and glean details from answers to questions shouted by reporters at press gaggles. On Wednesday afternoon, Trump acknowledged that the markets had looked "pretty glum" and that "people were getting a little queasy" – a reflection that undercut some of the bravado he expressed over the past week and could hint at the real reason for his tariff change of course.

Earlier in the day, he

was on Truth Social, urging people to "BE COOL!" and promising that "everything is going to work out". And on Monday he lashed out at what he called "panicans" - a party based on "weak and stupid people" who weren't patient with his efforts.

In the end, it was Trump who made an abrupt change of course.

He insisted, however, that his tariff announcement was one that had to be made, and that any economic disruptions reflected a sickness that had been allowed to fester in the American economy.

Democrats, meanwhile, painted a less rosy picture. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer accused Trump of "governing by chaos".

"He is reeling, he is retreating, and that is a good thing," he said.

In the end, the thought process behind Trump's decision may not really matter.

The reality is that the US is now making nice – or at least nicer - with nations that had faced their retaliatory trade fire, even though Trump is still imposing a 10% across the board tariff that by itself would have been huge news just a few weeks ago.

It is enough of a step down for the stock market to bounce back, however, and Trump is now leaning into a trade war with China which he hit with 125% tariffs. That will have global economic repercussions of its own, but it is more in line with recent American foreign policy - including that of Democratic President Joe Biden - as it seeks to constrain Chinese ambitions.

The big unknown, however, is whether Trump's actions over the past week – setting allies scrambling and threatening the established global order – will have made such a strategy more difficult to pursue.

And in 90 days, when Trump's pause expires, this week's economic drama and uncertainty could begin all over again.

# Why Trump May Get Away With His Tariff Trauma

As President Donald Trump announced historically high tariffs across the world this week, I expected a number of affected governments to rapidly and collectively fight back.

Instead, with the exception of China and a few scattered reprisals from allies, we're seeing mainly cautious reactions. Foreign officials are talking about "calibrated" responses and keeping a "cool head." Some are clearly hoping diplomacy will persuade Trump to back off some or many of his tariffs.

In conversations with diplomats, economists and former U.S. officials, I asked why. Weren't they concerned this muddled, cautious global reaction would be too weak to persuade Trump to change course, or even embolden him to get tougher?

But these experts argued that there are compelling reasons many governments are not acting fast or in unison — not the least of which is that the world's countries are not good at collective action, and many believe they have a better shot at accomplishing more, for themselves at least, if they avoid escalating the fight with Trump. Besides, it's not at all clear if any moves by other countries will deter Trump's tariff mania.

Trump has been a proponent of tariffs for many years, a product of his long-held belief that America's trade deficits mean that other countries are ripping off the United States, even if that's not how trade deficits work. Countries had months to prepare for Trump's tariffs, including devising their own menus of retaliatory actions.

But Trump, in his second term, seems to have a much bigger goal than he did in the past: a complete restructuring of the U.S. economy.

It appears to be a legacy issue for him, and, from what we've seen so far, he doesn't care as much as he did before about stocks sliding. Trump has even said Americans should expect short-term discomfort, indicating there could be a recession, while also saying that in the long-term he will be proven to have done the right thing.

The bottom line is that when it comes to Trump today, "We don't know what the pain threshold is," said Brian Gardner, chief Washington policy strategist for investment banking firm Stifel Financial. Whatever it is, it's "significantly higher than people had previously estimated." The U.S. economy also is big and diverse, with the ability to absorb signifi-

cant shocks — meaning the pain could take a while to feel.

But what if the infliction of pain comes from a coalition of countries — governments banding together to strategically hit the U.S. economy? Would that make Trump think twice?

It's a nice theory, but not very realistic, I was told. Governments simply don't easily come together to unite in action, even when they are faced with a common threat.

Each government has its own national interest and doesn't trust others won't stab them in the back, said one foreign diplomat, who likened it to the classic "prisoner's dilemma." Remember how little global solidarity there was during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic as countries raced to secure medical supplies?

The European Union is a long-established exception on the trade front, obviously, and it is preparing at least two sets of retaliatory tariffs, though it's spacing them out, reportedly in hopes of negotiations. But other groupings have yet to emerge to take on Trump's tariffs.

There were reports that China may coordinate its tariff response with

Japan and South Korea, but few people took the idea seriously given those three countries' contentious histories with one another. (One economist told me they "giggled" at those headlines.) And on Friday, China retaliated unilaterally against the U.S. with 34 per cent across-the-board tariffs.

Many countries are still trying to sift through the details of Trump's announced tariffs, but they have come to accept that he is going to tariff the world somehow. So they're also looking for ways to negotiate a better deal than others.

"I can't be the last one to reach a deal with Trump, because if I'm the last one, then I'm the one who's going to get screwed," the foreign diplomat said. Like others, the diplomat was granted anonymity to be candid about a sensitive issue. "If I'm the first one to reach the deal, then it might be the most advantageous possible thing, and compared to other countries, I'll be better off. And so my trade will suffer relatively less."

I can't be the last one to reach a deal with Trump, because if I'm the last one, then I'm the one who's going to get screwed."

## The US-China Tariff War Math As Trump And Xi Go 'All-In'

The two largest economies in the world - the United States and China - are at war, with tariffs being used by either side as its weapon. While the US has increased reciprocal tariffs on all Chinese goods from 10 per cent on April 1, to 125 per cent today; China has retaliated by upping tariffs on all American goods from 67 per cent on April 3 to 151 per cent today.

The rest of the world, still unsettled by the crash of the global stock markets - where trillions of dollars were wiped out within a matter of days, is sensing the gravity of the situation. Fears of a worldwide recession arising from this tit-for-tat battle seem to be heading towards becoming a reality. **'NO-LIMITS' POKER DUEL**

While the two major economies clash with each other, dealing blow after blow, both leaders are in the midst of a staring contest - with neither willing to blink. US President Donald Trump is determined to teach "tariff abuser" China a bitter lesson, and Chinese President Xi Jinping has said he is willing to "fight to the very end" over what his country has described as American "blackmail".

What started off as a reciprocal tariff move by Trump, seems to have turned into a no-limits poker duel. While the US President raised tariffs on China on April 2nd, calling it "Liberation Day", Beijing matched Washington's move, over and above its old tariffs, infuriating Trump.

The US President then sent an ultimatum to his Chinese counterpart and gave him 24 hours to "withdraw" his move. China's

Xi decided to 'check', standing his ground, hoping to call Trump's 'bluff'. But Trump followed through by 'raising' tariffs further. Xi Jinping, now 'committed' to the high-stakes battle, 'matched' Donald Trump yet again in terms of reciprocity of retaliatory tariffs - resulting in China exceeding US' 104 per cent to reach 151 per cent, leaving President Trump to make his next move.

**US' 125% vs CHINA'S 151% - THE TARIFF MATH SO FAR**

As both Trump and Xi well on their way to go 'all-in', dragging the rest of the world into an uncertain economic future, here is a look at how the tariffs stand so far:

Before April 2 - 'Liberation Day' - China used to levy tariffs on US goods at 67 per cent, while US used to impose a 10 per cent tariff on goods from China. This, President Trump said, "robbed" and "ripped-off" the US economy for decades. He said it is only fair for the US to match China. So, came "Liberation Day" - to free American exporters of punitive duties by other nations, and help "make America wealthy again". (Till now China's 67 per cent vs America's 10 per cent)

On April 2nd - Donald Trump announced "reciprocal tariffs" on all nations that tariff American goods. This included China, who he described as a "tariff abuser for decades". Trump explained that "As the term suggests, today's tariffs are just reciprocal - which means - we do to them, what they do to us." But he added

that the US would be "kinder" by charging roughly half of what the rival nation charges. So, for China, which charged 67 per cent at that time, Trump announced a 34 per cent hike in reciprocal tariffs. (Till now China stood at 67 per cent vs America's 10+34, equaling 44 per cent).

Later, on April 2nd - Shortly after Trump's announcement, the White House said in a statement that the US will be charging all nations in the world a non-reciprocal 10 per cent tariff. The statement said that due to a "national emergency" which has stemmed from security concerns due to persistent trade deficits, the US will now be imposing a "baseline" 10 per cent tariff on all countries. (China's basket of tariffs now stood at 44+10 = 54 per cent. While China's tariff levy on the US still stood at 67 per cent).

On April 4 - Forty-eight hours after US's reciprocal tariff move, China retaliated. Beijing announced that Trump's moves would impact Chinese exports significantly, and so, to counter the move, Xi Jinping decided to match Trump's 34 per cent increase, infuriating the US President who had warned all nations not to retaliate, else they will suffer further. (US's tally of Chinese tariffs now stood at 67+34 = 101 per cent vs China's tally of US tariffs remained at 54 per cent).

April 7th and April 8th - The weekend went by, and by now the US-China trade

war had resulted in global markets losing several-trillion dollars in investor wealth. But Trump and Xi remained unmoved. Donald Trump issued a 24-hour ultimatum to Xi Jinping to "withdraw" its retaliatory 34 per cent tariff, or face "an additional 50 per cent tariff" on all Chinese goods, starting April 9. President Xi vowed to "fight till the end" and stood his ground, so President Trump followed-through 24-hours after his threat. (US' tariffs on China now stood at 54+50 = 104 per cent, while China's tariffs on US stood at 101 per cent).

April 9, 2025 - Vowing not to give in to American "blackmail", Beijing decided to further retaliate US tariffs by again matching Trump's "additional 50 per cent" move. This raised China's retaliatory tariffs from 34 per cent to 84 per cent. Donald Trump made his next move, a punishing one, swiftly, raising US tariffs on Chinese goods from 104 per cent to 125 per cent, while pausing tariffs he had imposed on other nations for 90 days, during which those nations and the US can negotiate favourable terms for both. (So, as of now, US tariffs on China stand at 125 per cent, and Chinese tariffs on US stand at '101+50' or '67+84' - either way making it 151 per cent). The trade war between the United States and China has surged in less than a week and shows no signs of dying down. Economists have warned of a possible recession in the making, as stock markets, oil prices, trade, supply chains, and logistics have taken a massive hit.

# The rise of 'Frankenstein' laptops in New Delhi's repair markets

In a dimly lit, cluttered workshop in Delhi's Nehru Place, the air hums with the sound of whirring drills and the crackle of soldering irons. Sushil Prasad, a 35-year-old technician, wipes the sweat off his brow as he carefully pieces together the guts of an old laptop. It is a daily ritual — resurrecting machines by stitching together motherboards, screens, and batteries scavenged from other trashed older laptops and e-waste — to create functional, low-cost devices. "Right now, there is a huge demand for such 'hybrid' laptops," Prasad says, his hands swapping out a damaged motherboard. "Most people don't care about having the latest model; they just want something that works and won't break the bank." Across India, in metro markets from Delhi's Nehru Place to Mumbai's Lamington Road, technicians like Prasad are repurposing broken and outdated laptops that many see as junk. These "Frankenstein" machines — hybrids of salvaged parts from multiple brands — are sold to students, gig workers, and small businesses, offering a lifeline to those priced out of India's growing digital economy.

"We take usable components from different older or discarded systems to create a new functioning unit. For instance, we salvage parts from old laptop motherboards, such as capacitors, mouse pads, transistors, diodes, and certain ICs and use them in the newly refurbished ones," says Prasad. As he explains, Manohar Singh, the owner of the workshop-slash-store where Prasad works, flips open a refurbished laptop while sitting on a rickety stool. The screen flickers to life, displaying a crisp image. He smiles — a



sign that another machine has been successfully revived. "We literally make them out of scrap! We also take in second-hand laptops and e-waste from countries like Dubai and China, fix them up, and sell them at half the price of a new one," he explains. "A college student or a freelancer can get a good machine for INR 10,000 [about \$110 USD] instead of spending INR 70,000 [about \$800 USD] on a brand-new one. For many, that difference means being able to work or study at all." Singh recalls a young engineering student who visited his shop last year, desperate for a laptop to complete his coursework. "He had saved up for months but was still short of money. I put together a machine for him from spare parts, and he left with tears in his eyes. That is when you know this work matters." But this booming market does not exist in isolation. It is entangled with

a much larger battle, one between small repair technicians and global technology giants. While these Frankenstein laptops are a lifeline for many, the repair industry itself faces significant roadblocks. Many global manufacturers deliberately make repairs difficult by restricting access to spare parts, using proprietary screws, and implementing software locks that force customers to buy new devices instead of fixing old ones. Satish Sinha, associate director at Toxics Link, a nonprofit working on waste management, believes repair technicians like Prasad and Singh are on the front lines of a larger battle. "India has always had a repair culture, from fixing old radios to hand-me-down phones. But companies are pushing planned obsolescence, making repairs harder and forcing people to buy new devices instead,"

Sinha says. We need to encourage such reuse of materials. These repaired or new hybrid devices minimize waste by extending a product's lifespan and reducing overall market waste. Reusing components cuts down on the need for new materials, lowering energy use, resource extraction, and environmental impact," Sinha adds. The Indian government has started discussions on right-to-repair laws, inspired by similar efforts in the European Union and the United States. However, progress remains slow, and repair shops continue to operate in legal limbo, often forced to source different parts from informal and e-waste markets.

As a result, many repair technicians have no choice but to rely on informal supply chains, with markets like Delhi's Seelampur — India's largest e-waste hub — becoming a critical way to source spare parts. Seelampur processes approximately 30,000 tonnes (33,069 tons) of e-waste daily, providing employment to nearly 50,000 informal workers who extract valuable materials from it. The market is a chaotic maze of discarded electronics, where workers sift through mountains of broken circuit boards, tangled wires, and cracked screens, searching for usable parts.

Farooq Ahmed, an 18-year-old scrap dealer, has spent the last four years sourcing laptop components for technicians like Prasad. "We find working RAM sticks, motherboards with minor faults, batteries that still hold charge and sell it to different electronic workshops," he says. "These parts would end up in a landfill otherwise."

## US Woman Travels To This Indian Village To Marry Her Instagram Friend

A US woman has travelled thousands of miles to marry the love of her life - a man who comes from a remote village in Andhra Pradesh.

Jaclyn Forero, a photographer, fell in love with Chandan after she came across his Instagram profile and was drawn to his simplicity and warmth.

Their love story began with a simple 'Hi'. It blossomed into heartfelt conversations. Over the next 14 months, they spoke with each other and fell in love. The couple is now planning to tie the knot.

In an Instagram post, Ms Forero wrote, "14 months together and ready for a BIG new chapter." Sharing several moments of being together in a 45-second clip and revealing how a casual message turned

into an unbreakable bond, she wrote, "I messaged Chandan first. From his profile, I saw that he was a passionate Christian man who knew theology."

She was drawn to his passions, which beautifully aligned with hers - music, art, and photography. Ms Forero added, "After 8 months dating online and getting my mother's overwhelming approval, she and I flew to India for the trip of a lifetime."

Describing how people reacted to their relationship, she wrote, "People have been everything from judgemental, to supportive to rude to very positive, awkwardly silent and everything in between. and let's not forget the age difference." She is nine years older than him.

She concluded the video, "The odds were stacked against us, but God has been miraculously opening doors and providing for us each step of the way. Because he [Jesus] brought us together and he'll see us through." Their love story received immense support online.

One user commented, "9 years is nothing. My husband and I have a 10.7 age difference. There will always naysayers. If you both are hearing from the Lord, them go for it. So happy for you both!" Another wrote, "You both look fabulous together."

Sharing a similar story, a user wrote, "Seven months later, I was flying to India to marry him! That was 3 1/2 years ago, and he just arrived in the US last April!

It's a crazy journey but so worth it."

Another wrote, "Me and my husband are also an international couple. We met online, met for the first time in Paris. Married the year after so we could stay together. It's been 9 years already. I hope the best for you both in your romantic love story." Ms Forero and Chandan also have a YouTube channel, and their bio reads, "A divorced Christian mother struggling to find love centred on faith meets a younger man on Instagram living in a remote village in Andhra Pradesh."

The couple is now applying for Chandan's visa to start their lives together in the US. She said they were excited for a new chapter with big adventures in store.

# Gurmeet Ram Rahim gets to leave prison for 21 days, walks out of jail amid security

The Haryana government on Wednesday granted controversial Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim a 21-day furlough. Gurmeet Ram Rahim is serving a 20-year prison sentence in connection with two rape cases. This marks the 13th time Ram Rahim has walked out of jail since his conviction in 2017. In January, he was granted a 30-day parole just days ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections held in early February.

On Wednesday morning, under heavy police security, Ram Rahim left for the Dera headquarters in Haryana's Sirsa, where he will be staying during his furlough. His close aide, Honeypreet Kaur, had arrived personally at Rohtak jail to receive him and the duo left surrounded by a large carcade. After his release, Ram Rahim's lawyer and spokesperson, Jitendra Khurana, said, "Revered Saint Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh Insan has been granted a 21-day furlough by



the competent authorities of the state as per the rulebook. During this period, he will be staying at the Sirsa ashram". Gurmeet Ram Rahim, who has a large following in Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and other states, addressed his followers and asked them to continue sewa (service) and blessed them, Khurana added. He also extended greetings to

Dera followers on the occasion of the foundation day and foundation month of the Dera. He appealed to followers to remain at home and follow the guidance given by the Dera's appointed representatives.

Interestingly, Ram Rahim's past paroles have mostly coincided with elections in north Indian states. In October 2024 too, he was released on parole

three days ahead of the Haryana Assembly elections. Three months later, he was again released before the Delhi polls.

Meanwhile, Gurmeet Ram Rahim's frequent release from jail on parole or furlough has drawn criticism, with the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC) challenging it.

The premier Sikh religious body knocked on the doors of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in 2024, and subsequently the Supreme Court, alleging that the Haryana government was misusing its authority under Section 11 of the Haryana Good Conduct Prisoners (Temporary Release) Act, 2022, by repeatedly granting parole and furlough to Gurmeet Ram Rahim.

However, the Haryana government defended its decision to grant furlough to the Dera chief, saying that it was given on "merit".

"Among 4,000 prisoners, there are three furloughs granted and any untoward incident or emergency is also taken into account. The commissioner decides the fate as per the jail manual. Throughout the year, there are elections that keep happening. But now there are no elections anywhere. So it is decided on merit," Haryana Jail Minister Arvind Sharma told India Today.

## Ice director wants to run deportations like 'Amazon Prime for human beings'

The head of Immigration and Customs Enforcement said he would like the agency to implement a system of trucks that rounds up immigrants for deportation in a system similar to how Amazon delivers packages around the US. "We need to get better at treating this like a business," the acting Ice director, Todd Lyons, said. He said that he wanted to see a deportation process "like [Amazon] Prime, but with human beings". His comments were first reported by the Arizona Mirror. Lyons was one of a series of Trump administration speakers at the 2025 Border Security Expo at the Phoenix convention center. Other speakers were Trump's "border czar", Tom Homan, and the secretary of the US Department of Homeland Security, Kristi Noem. Speakers at the expo praised Trump's use of the Alien Enemies Act to deport Venezuelans, the 1798 law that was last used during the second world war to intern Japanese Americans. Noem promised to expand on its use to more

efficiently deport immigrants. Lyons also called the act "amazing". Homan said "that is a law enacted by Congress, and we are using that", referring to the Alien Enemies Act. At around the time of the expo, the US supreme court ruled that the Trump administration may continue using the law to deport alleged gang members. Homan added that it "bothers him" when judges attempt to prevent him from using the act. He also said that family detention was still "on the table" as a policy. Lyons also spoke highly of other new technology being potentially implemented in the deportation process. He expressed hopes that the agency could utilize artificial intelligence to "free up bed space" and "fill up airplanes", allowing Ice to deport immigrants at a quicker pace. The Ice director also said that he has been working with Elon Musk's "department of government efficiency" (Doge) for access to social security numbers to look for "voter fraud".

## Whoopsie daisy Bitcoin!

Sure, the stock market is melting down after the US declared a global trade war. But have you considered that crypto is also melting down?

Starting around April 6, the Bitcoin price fell off a cliff — and is sitting at \$78,800 as of this writing, after touching a low of about \$74,000. That's quite a fall from the all-time highs it hit in January, when it was worth more than \$100,000. Even last week, it was worth almost \$90,000. It's not just Bitcoin; the carnage is general in the crypto market.

If Bitcoin were — as true believers often say — a government-free currency, Donald Trump's idiot tariffs should have strengthened it. After all, one of the main use cases for Bitcoin is crime, and given the sheer volume of tariffs, smuggling and tax evasion seem like they're about to get very popular. But for Bitcoin's sizable base of casual owners, the allure is financial speculation. And unsurprisingly, as money shows signs of getting tight, they seem to be bailing. The casualties have been part of what made Bitcoin explode in both price and relevance in the last several years. Bitcoin's original stated goal was to avoid financial institutions and central banks, — a kind of libertarian-anarchist people's currency. As a

point of fact, it has not been that in quite some time, as the Bitcoin ETFs show. Since its inception the price has gone way, way up as adoption has spread beyond the libertarian true believers — by normal people and also by Wall Street. But these people aren't ideologically committed. One of the first things people do in a bear market is sell off their riskiest assets. And so many people who

put their "fun money" in Bitcoin are selling, because they need that "fun money" in real currency now. So in the global financial turmoil, Bitcoin is not doing so hot. Bitcoin is valuable because dollars (or yen, or euro, or whatever) are valuable, and insofar as it is a financial asset that lets you get more dollars, Bitcoin is useful. Now, it's clearer than ever that it's not useful for much else. I could go over the various ways that Bitcoin is bad at being money — how it sucks for transactions, has an associated serious risk of scammers and hackers, and is wildly volatile — but the fact that it's been used primarily for speculation I think makes the case for me. The many people who've sent the value of Bitcoin up aren't viewing it as the technology or money of the future, they just like Number Go Up. Well, now Number is Going Down.



# Maharashtra's Trillion-Dollar Vision: A Bold Step Towards An Economic Powerhouse



**Written By : Tuhin A Sinha and Sumit Kaushik**

Maharashtra stands at the cusp of an extraordinary economic transformation. With Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis reaffirming his government's commitment to turning Maharashtra into a \$1 trillion economy by 2029, the state is once again asserting its dominance as India's premier investment destination. This ambition is not just a dream—it is a vision backed by policies, infrastructure, and an unrelenting drive to position Maharashtra as the heart of India's economic future.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) first mooted the idea of a \$1 trillion economy in 2016-17, recognising Maharashtra's unmatched potential to spearhead the nation's economic ambitions. Today, that goal is within striking distance, thanks to the state's ability to attract investments across sectors, its emergence as a fintech and startup hub, and the robust policy framework laid out by the government. Maharashtra has consistently been at the forefront of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows, barring a brief period under the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government. The renewed focus on economic expansion is already yielding positive results, with significant FDI inflows returning to the state, reaffirming investor confidence in

Maharashtra's business ecosystem.

## **MAHARASHTRA: THE FINTECH AND DATA CAPITAL OF INDIA**

Maharashtra is not just the financial capital of India—it is now cementing its position as the fintech and data capital as well. Mumbai, the beating heart of the country's financial ecosystem, continues to attract global players, with institutions like the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and the National Stock Exchange (NSE) setting up their global headquarters in the state. The Maharashtra government has already allocated prime land in Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) for NPCI's headquarters, further solidifying Mumbai's status as the hub of digital transactions and fintech innovation.

Simultaneously, the startup ecosystem in Maharashtra is witnessing a paradigm shift. Mumbai, which once played second fiddle to Bengaluru in terms of startup traction, is now witnessing reverse migration—entrepreneurs who once moved out of Mumbai are returning to establish and expand their ventures. With an increasing number of startups choosing Maharashtra as their base, the state is poised to lead India's startup revolution, creating thousands of jobs and driving technological innovation.

NAINA, an acronym for Navi

Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area—Maharashtra's upcoming mega-smart city—has the potential to emerge as India's 'Science Data' capital, drawing inspiration from China's Guiyang. Strategically positioned near the soon-to-be-operational Navi Mumbai International Airport, NAINA is designed to be a hub for new-age industries, with data and allied sectors at its core. With Maharashtra set to attract \$20 billion in investments—nearly half of India's total—the city can be a game-changer in the country's \$14 billion data centre market by 2029.

## **VADHAVAN PORT: INDIA'S GATEWAY TO GLOBAL TRADE**

A developed Maharashtra is essential for a developed India, and infrastructure is the backbone of this vision. In a move that will redefine India's maritime trade, Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year laid the foundation stone for the Vadhavan Port. Set to be India's largest container port, this Rs 76,000 crore project is a landmark initiative that will double the country's container handling capacity. Built in two phases—one concluding in 2030 and the other in 2039—the port will transform Maharashtra into a global logistics hub. With a staggering 20-metre depth and a projected handling capacity of 298 million metric tonnes per annum, Vadhavan is set to be one of the top 10 ports

in the world.

Strategically located on the west coast, the port will serve as the primary feeder for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEEEC) and enhance trade flow through the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). This project is not just about trade—it is about empowering Maharashtra's economy with job creation, connectivity, and infrastructure development that will echo across industries. With an estimated employment potential of 12 lakh people, Vadhavan Port will be a monumental leap forward in Maharashtra's journey towards economic supremacy.

## **SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING: POWERING THE NEXT INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**

Maharashtra's industrial ambitions do not stop at ports and fintech—it is also leading the way in semiconductor manufacturing. The pandemic-induced disruption in global supply chains exposed India's overdependence on semiconductor imports. Recognising the need for self-reliance, Maharashtra became the first state to launch a dedicated semiconductor policy and lay the foundation for a robust ecosystem.

The recent inauguration of the state's first semiconductor OSAT

(Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test) plant in Navi Mumbai is a step towards technological self-sufficiency.

This initiative is a game-changer, fostering technical innovation, strengthening local supply chains, and creating opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The semiconductor revolution in Maharashtra is not just about manufacturing chips—it is about skilling the local workforce, enhancing research and development, and ensuring that India is at the forefront of cutting-edge technology. This industry will play a pivotal role in shaping the future of electronics, artificial intelligence, and Industry 4.0, reinforcing Maharashtra's position as the nucleus of India's digital revolution.

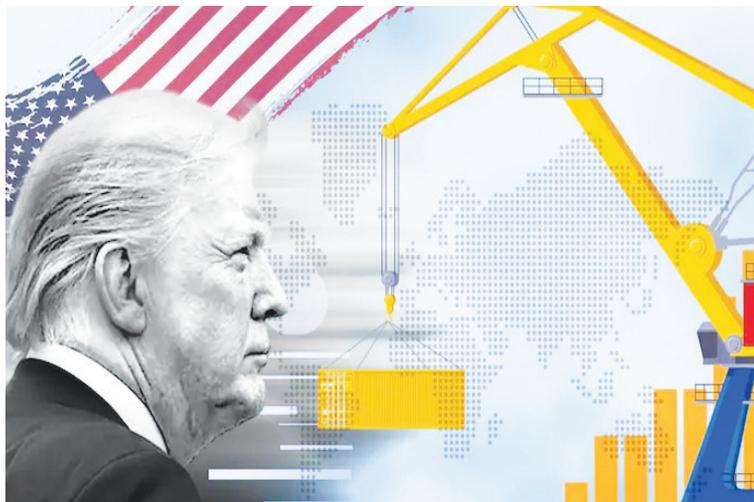
Maharashtra is set to become a semiconductor powerhouse with the \$10 billion JV between Tower Semiconductor and Adani Group, approved by the state cabinet. The upcoming chip manufacturing facility in Taloja, Navi Mumbai, will have an initial capacity of 40,000 wafer starts per month (WSPM), scaling up to 80,000 WSPM in later phases. With Rs 58,763 crore earmarked for Phase 1 and Rs 25,184 crore for Phase 2, this project positions Maharashtra at the forefront of India's semiconductor revolution.

## **MAHARASHTRA: THE ENGINE OF INDIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH**

Maharashtra's economic trajectory is a testament to its resilience, strategic vision, and investor-friendly policies. The state government's unwavering commitment to economic reforms, infrastructure development, and technological advancement has made Maharashtra the first choice for businesses, both domestic and global. As Maharashtra races towards its \$1 trillion economy goal, it is not merely setting benchmarks for itself—it is paving the way for India's emergence as a global economic powerhouse. From fintech to startups, from ports to semiconductors, the state is firing on all cylinders, ensuring that its growth story remains one of ambition, innovation, and unparalleled progress.

# 'Could get worse if...': JPMorgan CEO warns Trump tariffs could trigger recession

US stock index futures tumbled on Wednesday after China announced additional tariffs on American goods, retaliating against President Donald Trump's reciprocal duties that took effect earlier in the day.



credit spreads are gapping out, which they're going to, I think you'll see more credit problems," Dimon said.

Dimon urged fast progress on trade negotiations with US trading partners in order to calm markets, which have been roiled by tariff announcements. "I hope what they really do is... get those things done quickly," he said, referring to trade negotiations between US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and other nations. "If they want to calm down markets, show progress on those things."

Dimon, 69, is one of the most prominent voices in corporate

America and has regularly been consulted by administrations during times of crisis. His name was floated for senior economic roles in government during the 2024 presidential campaign, including Treasury secretary, but he stayed put at the bank. "I'm taking a calm view, but I think it could get worse if we don't make some progress here," Dimon said.

JPMorgan's economists raised the risk of a US and global recession this year to 60 per cent from 40 per cent after Trump unveiled the trade barriers.

US stock index futures fell sharply on Wednesday after

China announced more levies on US goods, retaliating to President Donald Trump's reciprocal tariffs that took effect earlier in the day. US stocks were also expected to open sharply lower today.

The world's second largest economy would impose additional tariffs of 84 per cent on all US goods from April 10, up from the 34 per cent previously announced, China's finance ministry said.

Dimon also said that the economy is facing considerable turbulence and tariffs will have lasting negative consequences in his annual letter published on Monday.

JPMorgan Chase CEO lead to a recession and defaults Jamie Dimon said on by borrowers, he told Fox Wednesday that sweeping Business' Mornings with Maria. tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump will probably going up... inflation is sticky and

## India Ends Trans-Shipment Facility For Bangladesh To Export Goods To Other Countries



The government has terminated the trans-shipment facility that allowed export cargo from Bangladesh to third countries using Indian land customs stations en route to ports and airports, according to a government circular.

Indian exporters, mainly from the apparel sector, had asked the government to withdraw this facility to the neighbouring country. The facility enabled smooth trade flows for Bangladesh's exports to countries like Bhutan, Nepal, and Myanmar. It was provided by India to Bangladesh in June 2020.

"It has been decided to rescind... circular... dated June 29, 2020, as amended with immediate effect. Cargo already entered into India may be allowed to exit the Indian territory as per the procedure given in that circular," the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs' circular,

dated April 8, said. The announcement comes at a time when the US imposed sweeping tariffs against a number of countries, including India and Bangladesh.

The earlier circular allowed transshipment of export cargo from Bangladesh to third countries using Indian land customs stations (LCSS) en route to Indian ports and airports. According to trade experts, the decision will help many Indian exporting sectors like apparel, footwear, and gems and jewellery. Bangladesh is a big competitor of India in the textile sector.

"Now we will have more air capacity for our cargo. In the past, exporters have complained about lesser space due to the transshipment facility given to Bangladesh," Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) Director General Ajay Sahai said.

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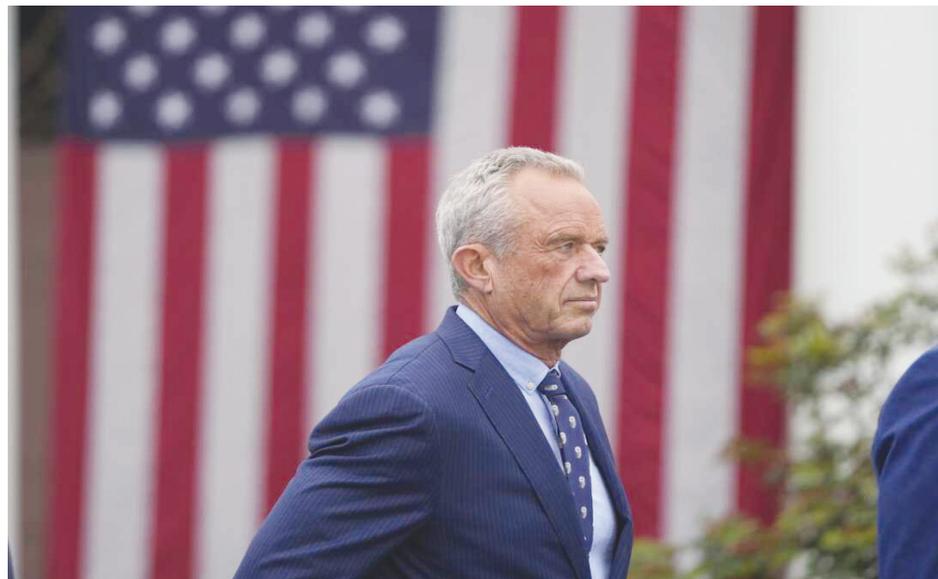
# RFK Jr. encourages people to get measles vaccine in first network TV interview since becoming health secretary

Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. told CBS News he encourages people to get vaccinated against measles as an outbreak primarily in West Texas has killed two children and infected more than 500 people in the area.

"We encourage people to get the measles vaccine," Kennedy told CBS News chief medical correspondent Dr. Jon LaPook on Tuesday during his Make America Healthy Again tour in Arizona, marking the first time Kennedy has publicly urged people to get the measles vaccine since becoming HHS secretary.

Asked by LaPook what the federal government's official position on the vaccine is, Kennedy reiterated, "The federal government's position, my position, is that people should get the measles vaccine," but added, "The government should not be mandating those."

Kennedy had previously acknowledged the vaccine's efficacy in



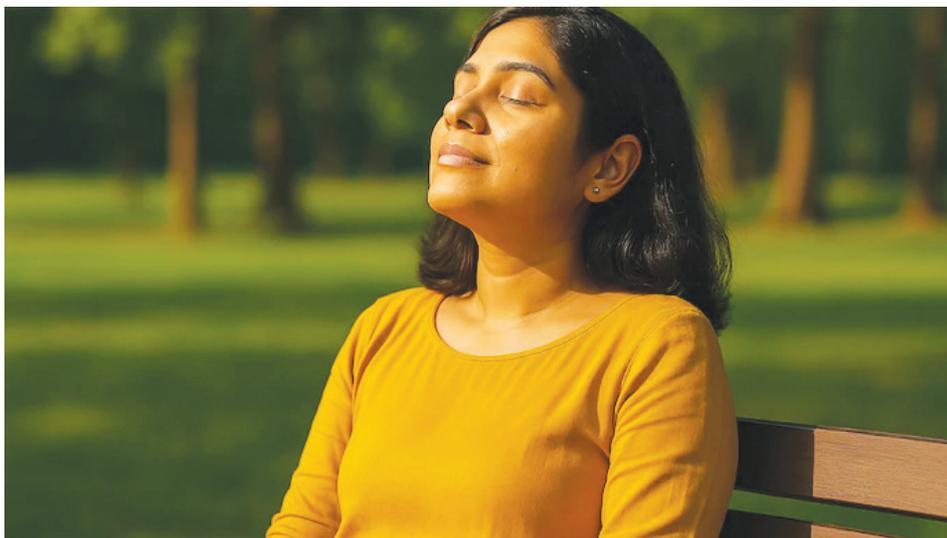
an opinion piece published by Fox News in March, in which he wrote that he was "deeply concerned about the recent measles outbreak" and said, "Vaccines not only protect individual children from measles, but also contribute to community immunity, protecting those who are unable to be vaccinated due to

medical reasons." And on social media last weekend, Kennedy wrote, "The most effective way to prevent the spread of measles is the MMR vaccine." But he stopped short of recommending people actually get the vaccine in both instances. Prior to that, Kennedy had downplayed the growing number of

cases and made several false and misleading claims about the safety of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. Kennedy, referring to the ongoing outbreak, had at one point called it "not unusual." However, with more than 600 cases nationwide just four months into 2025, the U.S. has seen the most measles infections in a single year since a 2019 outbreak, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Measles is highly contagious and can cause severe infections in the lungs and brain that can lead to cognitive issues, deafness or death. But doctors and health officials say the MMR vaccine is extremely safe and effective. Most people who develop measles will see their symptoms improve, but about 1 in 5 unvaccinated people will be hospitalized. About 1 out of every 1,000 children with measles will develop brain swelling that can lead to brain damage, and up to 3 of every 1,000 children who become infected will die, the CDC says.

## Is your vitamin D low? Your gut might be paying the price

**That post-lunch bloat, those unpredictable bathroom visits, and even chronic conditions like IBS or IBD could be tied to that sunshine vitamin you've been neglecting.**



There is no denying that we often associate vitamin D with bone health and sunshine, but there's a growing body of research - and expert opinion - pointing to another aspect: your gut health. Yes, that post-lunch bloat, those unpredictable bathroom visits, and even chronic conditions like IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) or IBD (Inflammatory Bowel Disease) could be tied to that sunshine vitamin you've been neglecting.

A study published in the *Oman Medical Journal* investigated the prevalence of vitamin D deficiency amongst patients with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) compared to a healthy control group. The research included 60 IBS patients and 100

healthy individuals, revealing that 82% of the IBS group had vitamin D deficiency, significantly higher than the 31% observed in the control group. The findings suggested a notable association between vitamin D deficiency and IBS.

Another review article titled "Vitamin D, the Gut Microbiome, and Inflammatory Bowel Disease" explored the relationship between vitamin D levels, gut microbiota composition, and the pathogenesis of inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD). It concluded that vitamin D plays an important role in modulating the immune system and maintaining intestinal barrier integrity.

What does vitamin D have to do with your gut?

Turns out, quite a bit. Dr. Sanjay Khanna, co-chairman, Manipal Institute of Gastroenterology, Hepato-Biliary and Pancreatic Sciences, Manipal Hospitals Dwarka, says, "Vitamin D modulates the gut microbes. If there's a deficiency, your microbiota may get disrupted, leading to poor gut health. This imbalance often triggers inflammation, and in many cases, can escalate to conditions like IBS or IBD."

Dr. Kunal Das of Yashoda Super Speciality Hospital, Ghaziabad, further explains that vitamin D and its receptor pathways actually influence how your gut barrier functions. It also determines how your immune system reacts and how balanced your gut bacteria stay.

But does that mean low vitamin D causes bloating?

Not directly - but don't dismiss it either. "Vitamin D itself doesn't cause bloating, but when your gut flora is off balance, which can happen due to a deficiency, bloating might follow. People with such symptoms do report improvement after supplementing," says Dr. Khanna.

Dr. Das adds, "Some studies do show that vitamin D deficiency can trigger digestive issues, including bloating." So, while it might not be the root of all tummy troubles, it definitely

doesn't help. IBS, leaky gut, and more: how bad can it get?

According to both doctors, vitamin D deficiency has been tied to worsening symptoms in people with IBS, leaky gut, and even more chronic autoimmune conditions of the gut. "Deficiency leads to an inflammatory state. When corrected, many patients see an improvement in overall gut function and related symptoms," Dr. Khanna explains.

So, how do we fix it? A lot of you might think that popping a supplement can fix the issue, but doctors stress on a more holistic approach. Sun exposure (between 11am-2pm is optimal), a balanced diet that includes vitamin D-rich foods like seafood, eggs, and fortified products, and regular testing to know where your levels stand should help.

"People with mostly indoor lifestyles or elderly individuals with limited sun exposure are especially prone," says Dr. Khanna. Dr. Das also flags smoking and lack of exercise as culprits that can make absorption worse. And while supplements are helpful and often necessary, they're not a silver bullet. It's ultimately a combination of good food, regular exercise, sunshine, and healthy habits that help your gut microbiome thrive.

## Gossip can be good. Here's how to make it healthy (and harmless)

**"Let it be, ya. We shouldn't gossip about anyone." If that's how you wrap up your elaborate gossip sessions, you're not alone.**

Gossiping has always been portrayed as a shameful act of demeaning others, leaving a pall of guilt hanging over us after a hearty gossip session. Pope Francis even called it an evil that destroys social life. And that's not an exaggeration — when done unabashedly and carelessly, gossip has the power to ruin relationships. Nevertheless, we all indulge in it — knowingly or unknowingly. Researchers say that too.

But beyond its bad reputation, gossiping can also be healthy (and have several benefits). Psychologists call it 'social glue' that brings communities together. It is also deemed good for mental health (when it is harmless). "Gossip serves as a way to build bonds, share knowledge, and exchange information," says Apsy Sam, a counselling psychologist from Mumbai.

"From the perspective of internal family systems, gossip can also be a means of belonging. It also helps individuals find their place within social dynamics and communities. In some cases, it even amplifies the voices of those who have been isolated or unheard, bringing attention to



stories and perspectives that might otherwise be overlooked," adds Sam. Take the case of a young woman living in an apartment in a housing society. She mostly keeps to herself, unaware that the landlord has been unfairly overcharging her compared to other tenants. One day, during a casual evening gathering, a group of neighbours chat about their rents, and someone mentions how much they're paying for a similar flat. The word spreads, and soon, she realises she's being charged way more than the usual rate. She confronts the landlord and negotiates a fairer rent or starts looking for another accommodation.

It is also through gossip that we understand society's unwritten social rules. We learn

through stories about others. Gossip also promotes mental health by giving us ways to process emotions. Talking about other people's situations helps us think about how we might handle similar challenges.

Not to forget how it helps people vent out their feelings and develop close bonds with people. Moreover, complete abstinence from gossip may not even be realistic. People process and bond through sharing stories. It is all about awareness, and intention is everything.

If you're doing it to connect, understand, or seek advice, it's human. If it's for drama or control, it's harmful. Conscious communication over careless commentary that's the line," says Sohini Rohra, a relationship and fertility

psychologist and author.

Now, this good side of gossip obviously does not include deliberately hurting someone's reputation or dividing people. In fact, good gossip is a major social skill — it means you understand ethical boundaries, have great judgement of things, and know when to filter what information and what to say (and not) in front of whom.

"As much as I refrain from gossip almost entirely, I can safely say that gossip, in its rawest form, is often just human curiosity trying to understand the world. As a psychologist, I hold confidentiality sacred, so I don't engage in gossip personally, nor can I afford to. But from a psychological perspective, I can say that when done with compassion, it can even provide emotional relief, promote social learning, and affirm shared values," says Rohra.

How to gossip (in a non-distasteful manner)

With intention and practice, you can give gossip a 360 makeover. It is all about reminding your mind of little things like speaking with compassion, turning the subject into the subject of the story,

sharing stories of people's growth and progress, and not passing on speculations.

"One way to practise this kind of gossip is by speaking about others with compassion. Instead of jumping to assumptions, try offering empathy for what someone might be going through. It becomes less about "spilling tea" and more about understanding," says Sam.

Meanwhile, Dr Chandni Tugnait, psychotherapist and founder-director of Gateway of Healing, suggests the following tips to practise healthy gossip:

**Protagonist perspective rule:** Before sharing information about someone, mentally position them as the hero of their own story rather than a character in yours. This subtle shift promotes empathy and contextual understanding, transforming potential criticism into perspective-taking. Check your inner state first: Ask yourself — am I sharing this from a place of connection, reflection, or unresolved emotion? Often, the energy behind gossip is more telling than the words. When you're grounded, you're less likely to use gossip to vent or project.

## Bollywood, influencers swear by raw milk for skincare. But do experts approve?



Out of all the trends making waves this year, if there is something that has caught our attention, it is the use of natural ingredients and things found in your kitchen for solving your skincare woes.

However, experts often don't agree with the supposed benefits of all-natural products

that often go viral on Instagram.

One such trend that has resurfaced among Instagram skinfluencers is the use of raw milk as a skincare remedy. They use it as the first step in an elaborate facial or just as a skincare remedy for fading acne marks. However, this time,

we think this obsession with raw milk for the face might have been led by Bollywood, as using raw milk has been a favourite amongst celebs for a while now.

For instance, Mira Rajput Kapoor, the entrepreneur and wife of the Bollywood celebrity Shahid Kapoor, who is known for her preference for natural beauty ingredients, also shared on her YouTube channel that she and her mother use raw milk as a toner to keep their skin hydrated and radiant. Another advocate of raw milk's benefits is the glamorous actress Shobhita Dhulipala, who, in an interview, shared that she often incorporates natural ingredients like raw milk into her beauty

regimen, citing its simplicity and effectiveness, as well as the presence of lactic acid, which aids in gentle exfoliation.

What are the benefits, you ask? Generally used as a toner, raw milk is said to be beneficial for fading acne marks, skin glow, and even dealing with hyperpigmentation. Sounds like a dream product, right?

But with all the hype surrounding this age-old remedy, what do experts have to say?

What are experts saying? Experts, though, acknowledge the benefits (only anecdotal) but claim that the cons outweigh the so-called pros of using raw milk directly on your skin. Celebrity

cosmetologist Dr Mahnaz Jahan Begum, an aesthetic expert, entrepreneur, and founder of Keraderm Clinics, Kolkata, says, "Raw milk might help with acne. Its antibacterial properties, particularly lactic acid, deep cleanse pores and remove acne-causing bacteria, reducing inflammation and giving you clear, smooth skin." Dr Begum further adds, "The beta hydroxy acid present in raw milk is effective for exfoliating the skin, while the lactic acid helps remove tan, blemishes, and correct uneven skin tone, resulting in a brighter and more even complexion." She also notes that raw milk boosts collagen production, which may reduce fine lines and wrinkles.

# Does being in a happy relationship really make you gain weight?

“When a woman feels safe with her partner, the level of cortisol, the stress hormone, decreases, while the production of oxytocin and serotonin, on the contrary, increases. This is when the body relaxes, stores energy, and prepares for a possible pregnancy. During this process, metabolism slows down, and appetite increases. All of these changes occur naturally,” explains Kate Novaya, an integrative doctor and ‘biohacker’ who goes by the username doctor.novik. Kate’s Instagram post, which went viral, has sparked a heated debate online.



In her post, she suggested that women often gain weight when they are in healthy relationships. She also claimed that if a woman significantly loses weight during a relationship, there is a 90 per cent chance that she is not in a healthy relationship. While some agreed with her post, others completely disagreed, saying that it’s actually quite the opposite. Kate is not alone in her observations. It’s a common phenomenon where couples

tend to ‘grow together’, and sometimes, that growth includes weight gain. We’ve all come across those relatable Reels where women show their eating habits on a first date versus a year into the relationship.

Now, there’s no denying that in many relationships, comfort and familiarity grow over time, and partners often influence each other’s eating habits. Sharing food can be a love language for some, with

occasional indulgence becoming part of their bonding experience. And let’s be honest - how many of us have been guilty of ordering extra fries because our partner was craving them?

But the larger question remains - can your weight truly indicate the health of your relationship? Can the inches you gain or lose reveal whether your partner is a green or red flag?

We spoke to some experts.

The relationship weight gain is real

Kushal Pal Singh, a fitness and performance expert at Anytime Fitness, explains that having a healthy relationship at times leads to one’s weight gain, but it varies with everyone too. He suggests that studies say that happy, secure couples could possibly have habits such as having more takeout, comfort food, or even less exercise. Singh says that the scientific explanation for

this effect is based on research, where people in stable relationships gain weight due to psychological and behavioral reasons.

“The ‘relationship weight gain’ hypothesis suggests that when a person feels secure in a relationship, he/she will be less concerned about having a certain body weight than when single. Moreover, eating together and being less tense about diet and exercise can contribute to people gaining weight,” Singh adds.

Here are a few reasons why: Decreased focus on appearance: During the initial stages of a relationship, there’s often a greater effort to look appealing. As comfort and security grow, maintaining a healthy lifestyle through proper eating and exercise might become less of a priority.

Dining out more often: Couples often indulge in dining out during dates, exploring various cuisines and restaurants. The generous portion sizes and calorie-rich dishes commonly offered can contribute to weight gain.

## Why pre-marriage counselling needs to be non-negotiable in India



In India, divorce rates are at an all-time high. And suppose you dig a little deeper into the reasons. In that case, one that really stands out is this: more and more couples are no longer okay with silently bearing the overwhelming challenges that come with marriage. Women today are self-sufficient, financially independent, and fully capable of making a life on their own. So, they’re no longer taking the injustices in a marriage lying down. They’re standing up, speaking out, and walking away when things get toxic.

Let’s face it- when it

comes to weddings in India, we spend months picking the venue, the perfect shade of lehenga, curating guest lists, finalising the dinner menu, throwing countless parties, and even planning the honeymoon. But rarely do we stop to ask: are we emotionally and mentally ready for the marriage itself?

Neither men nor women today want to be coerced into an incompatible marriage or, if things go south, simply accept it as their fate. Things are changing, evolving for the better, which is why, now more than ever, pre-marriage

counselling should be non-negotiable in India. “Love gives strength during difficult times, like adjusting to a new family or sharing responsibilities, but what truly makes a marriage work is the ability to grow through those changes as a team. Love needs to be supported by emotional maturity, mutual respect, and communication,” says Shallu Chawla, a Delhi-based matchmaker and founder of Make My Lagan (matchmaking service). “

Dr. Rajendra More, retired from the Army Medical Corps and now a counsellor at Oasis Counsellors, agrees. “Only love cannot sustain a healthy marriage. Trust, respect, helping nature, standing for each other—these are the ingredients that truly hold a marriage together.”

So, if we know marriage demands so much more than just butterflies and a shared playlist, why are we not preparing couples for this reality?

The Indian context: Where families marry, not just people We really do not have to go on and on about the way marriage functions in India, because by now everyone knows that the quintessential Indian means marrying not your respective partner but their families too. It is a full-blown social arrangement—two families, two value systems, two lifestyles coming together. That’s exactly why India needs pre-marital counselling more than most.

“As counsellors, we help couples look beyond the romanticised lens of marriage,” says Chawla. “Many young people walk into marriage with expectations shaped by movies or social media. They aren’t always prepared for the daily grind—be it finances, adjusting to new family dynamics, or long-term compatibility.”

Expectation vs reality: The ultimate relationship curveball A major reason marriages stumble is misaligned expectations. Who’s going to

manage the money? What does intimacy mean to each person? What role will each partner play in the family structure? Who takes the kitchen responsibilities? The choice of staying with family or not – the list can go on. That is the reason why a lot of people suggest living-in together before taking the big leap. But due to moral reasons, many look down upon this option, and that leaves you with one resort – pre-marriage counselling.

“Sometimes, people have unrealistic or even strange expectations from their partners,” says Dr. More. “Counselling helps sort those out logically and cognitively. It brings clarity and often uncovers deeper needs or insecurities that weren’t spoken about before.”

“Everyone brings their own version of what marriage should look like. But when couples sit down in a counselling session, it becomes easier to identify where those versions overlap—and where they don’t,” says

# Why Germany May Be The Next Big Thing For Young Indians

By Syed Zubair Ahmed

Last month, the German parliament gave the green light to a record-breaking financial push - massive loans designed to supercharge its military, modernise its creaking infrastructure and fast-track climate protection. It's one of the boldest moves in post-war German history. But big ambitions and deep pockets alone cannot guarantee success. For Germany's transformation to truly take off, it needs speed and a huge pool of talented workforce. The €500 billion stimulus needs a serious influx of skilled professionals to get things moving on the ground.

That's where India's incredible talent pool could come into play. For young Indians exploring opportunities abroad - whether it's for study or work - Germany's ambitious reinvention might just be the most exciting, under-the-radar opportunity for some years. With the right focus and a little bit of a mindset shift, this moment could offer more than just jobs - it could be a chance to be part of shaping the future of Europe's largest economy. Read on.

A Meeting In 2013

Back in 2013, I struck up a conversation with a representative from the German Chamber of Commerce in Hannover, a city best known for its ties to Volkswagen and the



Image Credit: unsplash.com

global automobile industry. He spoke passionately about India. Not only had he visited every Indian state, but he was in fact on a mission to persuade young Indians to look beyond the traditional English-speaking destinations - UK, US, Canada - and consider Germany for higher education and meaningful careers. His vision was bold: an India-Germany tech partnership that could rival the magic of Silicon Valley. He kept urging Indian youth to invest their time in learning German instead of or besides English. In his eyes, German was more than just a language - it was the gateway to real, long-term opportunity in Europe's economic powerhouse. And he wasn't wrong. A few years later, I had a conversation that brought his words

back to life. A driver at a Delhi-based media company approached me for advice about his son's future. The boy was an average student and unsure of his path. I suggested he learn German and apply to one of Germany's many tuition-free universities. The same young man is now a sought-after professional in Germany's tech sector. It's one story, but it's not the only one. I have seen similar journeys unfold, even within my own family.

Shah Rukh Khan Connect

The man from the German Chamber of Commerce jokingly but tellingly even brought up Shah Rukh Khan as an example, a name that was beginning to resonate in Germany around 2010 onwards, thanks to a string of

Bollywood hits shown on a German TV channel. According to him, Khan effected a subtle but smart shift in mindset: instead of focusing solely on the English-speaking world, he leaned into Europe, and it paid off. By accepting an invitation to the Berlin Film Festival, he opened the door to a whole new audience. That appearance sparked real interest, earned him recognition, and helped him carve out a space for Indian cinema in the European imagination. It was proof, he said, that even a small pivot towards Germany could open big doors. 'SRK' did not need to learn German to become famous in the country.

Why Germany Is Struggling

Our colonial legacy still tugs at us.

English is the default dream. We naturally gravitate towards the US, the UK, Australia, and Canada, especially since, over the last few decades, the Indian diaspora has played a huge role in shaping Silicon Valley's digital and AI revolutions. But while that India-US partnership changed the world, Germany, despite its might in manufacturing, largely missed the bus.

And now, the consequences are showing. Once known as an industrial powerhouse, today's Germany is struggling with outdated infrastructure and sluggish innovation. Here's an unbelievable statistic: in 2023, a staggering 82% of German businesses were still using fax machines. And its fibre broadband rollout is among the worst in the OECD (mostly made up of big- and medium-sized economies). Needless to say, this digital lag is hurting its global competitiveness. Germany was trundling along, despite the obvious problems with its economy. Then came the geopolitical wake-up call, when the Trump administration excluded Germany - and the broader EU - from talks on a future Ukraine-Russia peace settlement. The Germans, betrayed and bewildered, got the message loud and clear: the era of relying on American protectionism was over.

## Hurt Over Rs 2-3 Crore Loss, Mary Kom Leaves Husband Onler: Report



Married since 2005, Indian boxing legend Mary Kom is reportedly going through a tough phase in her personal life. Mary and her husband Karung Onkholer, aka Onler, are said to

be on the verge of divorce, having been living apart from each other for a while now. The trouble in the couple's paradise is said to have started after Mary's husband, Onler's defeat

in the 2022 Manipur Assembly Elections. The couple had reportedly spent Rs 2-3 crores while campaigning, but the defeat in the elections left the two shattered.

As per a report in Hindustan Times, Mary has since moved to their Faridabad house with all four children. Onler, on the other hand, is in Delhi.

"Mary moved to Faridabad with their (four) children, while Onler has been living in Delhi with some family members," a source close to the couple told the paper. "Their differences escalated after the elections. Mary was reportedly unhappy about the financial losses - around INR 2-3 crores - incurred during the campaign and (the fact) that he lost."

The report also claimed that

Onler wasn't keen on entering the political landscape but agreed to contest elections on Mary's insistence.

"It was Mary's idea. He didn't want to contest and had warned her that Manipur's political landscape was volatile at the time," the paper quoted a source as saying. "After the defeat, things worsened. Their usual marital disagreements turned serious, and Mary moved into her Faridabad house with the kids." No official communication from the couple has yet been made public, but a boxer, on the condition of anonymity, has said that the rumours of Mary and Onler getting a divorce might actually be true. In fact, the boxer even claimed that Mary is also in a relationship with another boxer's husband.

"The separation rumours about Mary Kom and Onler might not be just rumours. No one knows the reason for sure, though. Everyone whispers about Mary ma'am being in a relationship with another boxer's husband. Speculation has been fuelled further by her recent Instagram posts featuring him as her business associate." The report also pointed out the pain Onler has had to go through since Mary moved out.

"He's heartbroken. He has always been a devoted father and gave up his football career to support Mary and raise their kids. Now he's unable to meet them, and it's taken a toll on him emotionally. It is no secret that he put his career on hold so that Mary could build hers," the source said in the report.

# Japan's matcha is on Shark Tank India too. Can it replace your morning coffee?

Sorry, coffee lovers, but tea holds the crown as the world's second most beloved beverage, right after water. Traditionally, tea comes in two primary forms - black (fermented leaves) and green (unfermented leaves). While the benefits of green tea have been known for decades, what if we told you there's a drink vying to replace your morning chai or coffee?

Enter matcha

Matcha, which literally means 'powdered tea', is a vibrant green powder made from ground-up, young, shaded green tea leaves, typically from the second or third harvest. These leaves are carefully steamed, dried, sorted, destemmed, and deveined before being finely milled into the brilliant green powder known as matcha.

Once exclusive to Japanese households and then to elite Western health freaks (Read: Kourtney Kardashian), matcha now appears to have found its way not only into mainstream Western markets but also into



India's thriving wellness scene. In fact, matcha recently made its debut on Shark Tank India, courtesy of the brand Glow Glossary. Although the company couldn't secure funding from the sharks, they acknowledged the growing demand for matcha in India. This increasing demand is evident from the entry of many well-known tea brands into the matcha market, along with new ones. Today, you can find matcha in Indian cafes and homes. The data also shows the same. The matcha tea market in India is experiencing remarkable growth, with

projections forecasting a robust compound annual growth rate of 8.6 per cent from 2024 to 2030, potentially reaching 167 million US dollars by the end of the decade.

The demand has increased so much that Japan exports almost half of its produce to the world. According to Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan has seen a 185 per cent increase in matcha production in the last decade.

However, since matcha can only be harvested in the springtime, it has caused a shortage and has significantly impacted the organic matcha market, despite

the increase in production. According to Vriti Srivastav, a holistic dietitian and gut health expert, "Matcha is essentially a concentrated form of green tea, known for its strong and distinct flavour. It's more of a developed taste, so not everyone enjoys it. While it has gained popularity, it still caters to a niche audience who consume it regularly."

Despite its niche appeal, matcha's popularity is growing, driven by its reported health benefits and potential as a coffee/tea alternative.

What experts suggest about the benefits of matcha

Experts agree that matcha's nutritional profile is impressive, boasting antioxidants, fibre, vitamins, and minerals.

Dr Navjot Kaur, senior dietitian at Livasa Hospital, Khanna, says, "Unlike regular green tea, where leaves are steeped and discarded, matcha involves consuming the entire leaf in powdered form, which enhances its nutritional profile significantly."

According to her, matcha is rich in essential vitamins and minerals such as vitamin A, C, E, K, potassium, calcium, and iron. Its antioxidant content, particularly catechins like epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), is especially notable for promoting cardiovascular health, boosting metabolism, and supporting mental clarity.

"Matcha's unique combination of caffeine and L-theanine provides a smoother, longer-lasting energy release, improving focus and mental clarity," she adds.

Certified nutrition coach and holistic wellness expert Payal Rangar agrees. She adds, "Matcha is rich in antioxidants, particularly catechins, that help protect against free radicals. It also provides fibre, vitamins like A and C, and minerals like potassium."

Komal Malik, head dietitian at Asian Hospital, Faridabad, points out that matcha is a potent superfood with potential benefits ranging from cognitive support to weight management.

## Can higher Trump tariffs on Asian rivals make Indian exports more competitive?

Trade tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump have triggered a bloodbath in the global markets. For India though, there is a silver lining: that higher tariffs on its Asian trade competitors could make Indian products more competitive in the US market. Trump's reciprocal tariff on India is 26 per cent as against 54 per cent on China, 46 per cent on Vietnam, 37 per cent on Bangladesh and 36 per cent on Thailand, offering a relative competitive edge to Indian exporters.

Precious stones & metals, electric goods, marine products like fish, pharmaceutical products, apparel and textile, machinery, minerals, chemicals, iron and steel, and vehicles are among top export categories to the US, as per the United States International Trade Commission. One of the most prominent areas of opportunity lies in textiles and garments, as per a

Global Trade Research Initiative report. "The high tariffs on Chinese and Bangladeshi exports create room for Indian textile manufacturers to gain market share, attract relocated production, and increase exports to the US. India's strong base in textile production, coupled with lower tariffs, could drive greater global demand and new investments in the sector."

Countries like Vietnam and Thailand are likely to lose cost competitiveness in the electronics, telecom, and smartphone sectors due to the steep US tariffs, the report says. This opens a window for

India, which has in recent years invested in electronics manufacturing through the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. India may emerge as a preferred destination for new manufacturing setups and component assembly lines for global brands seeking to diversify their supply chains away from high-tariff territories.

India could also gain from tariff-related relocation for segments like

toys and machinery where China and Thailand currently lead. The Indian government has already stepped up efforts to boost toy production and export. In this year's budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced to introduce new scheme to make India a global hub for toys. "The US's protectionist tariff regime could act as a catalyst for India

to gain from global supply chain realignments. However, to fully leverage these opportunities, India must enhance its ease of doing business, invest in logistics and infrastructure, and maintain policy

stability. If these conditions are met, India is well-positioned to become a key global manufacturing and export hub in the coming years," economist Ajay Srivastava wrote in his report. Economist Yuvika Singhal says the US tariffs are likely to sap the China+1 strategy that had "conveniently helped re-routing of Chinese goods to US through other economies". "Having said, any export leg up, will be a medium-term play - contract renegotiations, quality assurances and ultimately cost advantage (post currency adjustments) will be critical hurdles that India will need to surmount," she concludes.



# Congress at Patel chowk, will it take the revival turn?

By Yudhajit Shankar Das

An interesting event was organised in Gujarat to mark the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in 2023. Descendants of 50 royal families, who had ceded to Patel's call for integrating with the Union in 1947, were felicitated by a Patidar community organisation. Speaking at another event, Home Minister Amit Shah mentioned how Sardar Patel integrated 550 princely states into India, and how Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid him a tribute through the Statue of Unity, the world's biggest statue.

The Statue of Unity, on the banks of the river Narmada, stands at 182-metre (600-foot). The BJP has presented it as a befitting tribute to the man who unified India, and statesman "ignored by the Congress". The statue was inaugurated by PM Modi in 2018.

The Congress claimed the BJP, which had few leaders who fought for independence, was trying to appropriate its icons. The BJP has argued that the Congress, obsessed with the Nehru-Gandhi family, has ignored national icons, including Patel. On Tuesday (April 8), the Congress tried to revive



the tug-of-war over Sardar Patel's legacy with a resolution at the Congress Working Committee (CWC) session in Gujarat. If the Statue of Unity is large in symbolism, the Congress's choice of venue for the meeting of the extended CWC meeting -- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Museum in Ahmedabad -- was rich in symbolism too.

As the Congress tries to use Gujarat -- the land of Patel and Mahatma Gandhi, and some historic Congress sessions -- as a laboratory to experiment with its revival strategy, there's a question that

hangs in the air. Is the party's attempt to reclaim the legacy of Sardar Patel, the Iron Man of India, too little too late?

**WHY CONGRESS IS TRYING TO RECLAIM SARDAR PATEL**

In its resolution, 'Flag-bearer of the freedom movement - Our 'Sardar' Vallabhbhai Patel', passed by the extended CWC, the Congress said its top leadership had gathered in Ahmedabad -- the land of Gandhi and Patel -- "to give India a new direction".

The Congress also accused the BJP of trying to "usurp his legacy under a well-

planned conspiracy".

It alleged that the BJP and the RSS have been "propagating lies" that Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru were at loggerheads. It said the two Congress leaders shared a great bond and were like two sides of the same coin.

The Congress must have chosen Gujarat for its revival experiment because the big state is headed for the Assembly election in 2027, and it is also the home state of PM Modi.

The Congress wants to show its intent to take the fight to the lion's territory.

**GUJARAT, CONGRESS AND PATEL POLITICS**

In choosing Gujarat, the Congress couldn't have highlighted just Gandhi and left out Patel. It needed to clutch onto whatever was left of Patel's legacy with it. That was evident from the bytes that Congress leaders gave to the media from the CWC session.

"This is the land of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel -- this is Gujarat. And it is from Gujarat that we are beginning our fight against the fascist agenda of the BJP," Congress's Rajya Sabha MP Jebi Mather said.

## Trump's Tariff Tantrums and Aapada Mein Avsar



During the Vietnam War, the Americans doused the jungles with a combination of herbicides to strip the leaves off trees hiding the communist guerrillas. Their own soldiers came back poisoned, coughing up the cost of that genius plan. The toxic cocktail, Agent Orange, was banned soon after, but sixty years on, its toxic baggage, dioxin, still twists the lives of Vietnamese kids. Meet Donald Trump, Agent Orange Hair. He's carpet-bombing global trade with tariffs, scorching supply chains. From Brussels to Hanoi, from Delhi to Delaware, the world is watching this man defoliate the world economy. The fallout will linger long after his trade war circus packs up.

He's fiddling with tariffs, his latest obsession after gender and DOGE, daily

- adding, slashing, hiking, dropping, pausing - like a bored manchild with a matchbox near a haystack. His tariffs slap flat and wide, hitting everything from countries the US runs trade deficits with, never mind what they make or why. Protecting industries? Restarting factories? Trump's just smashing things to flex. He once peddled "reciprocal" tariffs - match their rates, keep it even. Nice story. Now "reciprocal" means whatever he fancies in Peter Navarro's Excel sheet. China's choking and kicking. India and other so-called friends have kept calm and are quietly negotiating. Why? So Trump can sit back, sip his Diet Coke, and watch his friends grovel. This is Trump play-acting as President, a role he's clung to since his real ventures crashed and TV career didn't take off. A

casino is where the house always wins. Trump made the house lose. Deal-making genius?

Picture a toddler spotting a glass teetering on a table's edge, ah, the intense urge to push it, watch it smash, and giggle at the outcome: that's Trump and tariff. Trump's been tariff-mad since his ghost-written Art of the Deal days. He thinks they're a magic fix. They're not. They're a bulldozer of the last century. America's economy - once a high-tech titan - gets dragged back to making cheap trinkets we in India are condemned to produce. The US outgrew that game because China did it cheaper. The US climbed by innovating, leading, even tossing crumbs to smaller players, earning respect. But when a superpower squabbles with developing countries like India over "equality," it's not might; it's small-mindedness that strips America of the moral clout it has enjoyed for a century.

Trump's too addicted to the spotlight to stop craving attention he never earned in Hollywood or his boardrooms. He will relent; the basics of economics will force him to. He will be unrelenting, however, in pressing on with other madcap moves. The future of global trade and geopolitical balance is uncertain. That's for certain. So what do we do? There are no permanent friends, only permanent interests and India's interests lie in turning this adversity into an

opportunity.

**Aapada mein Avsar**

With a manufacturing juggernaut churning out everything from plastic Ganapatis to cutting-edge microchips, China is a beast. Their industrial output dwarfs ours: \$4.9 trillion in 2023 to India's measly \$450 billion. They are the world's factory, holding 30% of global manufacturing value-added, while we limp along at 3%. Geopolitically, they're the dragon on our doorstep; economically, they're far, far ahead.

But Donald Trump's tariff obsession has turned the US-China trade game into a smoking graveyard. US-China bilateral trade, once \$650 billion in 2018, has shrivelled to under \$400 billion last year, with imports from China dropping 20% since his first term's tariffs kicked in.

China's loss better be India's gain. The Global Trade Research Initiative reckons we could lure \$50 billion in manufacturing investment over five years if we play this right.

We can sweeten the pot for Trump without breaking a sweat. Slash tariffs. Halve the 15% average slapped on American goods in 2022. Harley-Davidsons and bourbon won't flood our markets and drown desi players as we fear. Our consumers are too price-savvy, and US products lack the cost edge to dent them significantly. Last month, we dropped duties on motorcycles and whiskey. Why not double down?

# ELON MUSK BY WALTER ISAACSON

Alternately admiring and incorrect. Instead, Musk has a critical, unvarnished, and a gift for leveraging the genius closely detailed account of a of others in order to make



Elon Musk by Walter Isaacson

troubled innovator. A warts-and-all portrait of the famed techno-entrepreneur—and the warts are nearly beyond counting. To call Elon Musk (b. 1971) “mercurial” is to undervalue the term; to call him a genius is

things work. When they don't, writes eminent biographer Isaacson, it's because the notoriously headstrong Musk is so sure of himself that he charges ahead against the advice of others: “He does not like to share power.” In this sharp-edged biography, the author likens Musk to an earlier biographical subject, Steve Jobs. Given

Musk's recent political turn, born of the me-first libertarianism of the very rich, however, Henry Ford also comes to mind. What emerges clearly is that Musk, who may or may not have Asperger's syndrome (“Empathy did not

come naturally”), has nurtured several obsessions for years, apart from a passion for the letter X as both a brand and personal name. He firmly believes that “all requirements should be treated as recommendations”; that it is his destiny to make humankind a multi-planetary civilization through innovations in space travel; that government is generally an impediment and

that “the thought police are gaining power”; and that “a maniacal sense of urgency” should guide his businesses. That need for speed has led to undeniable successes in beating schedules and competitors, but it has also wrought disaster: One of the most telling anecdotes in the book concerns Musk's “demon mode” order to relocate thousands of Twitter servers

from Sacramento to Portland at breakneck speed, which trashed big parts of the system for months.

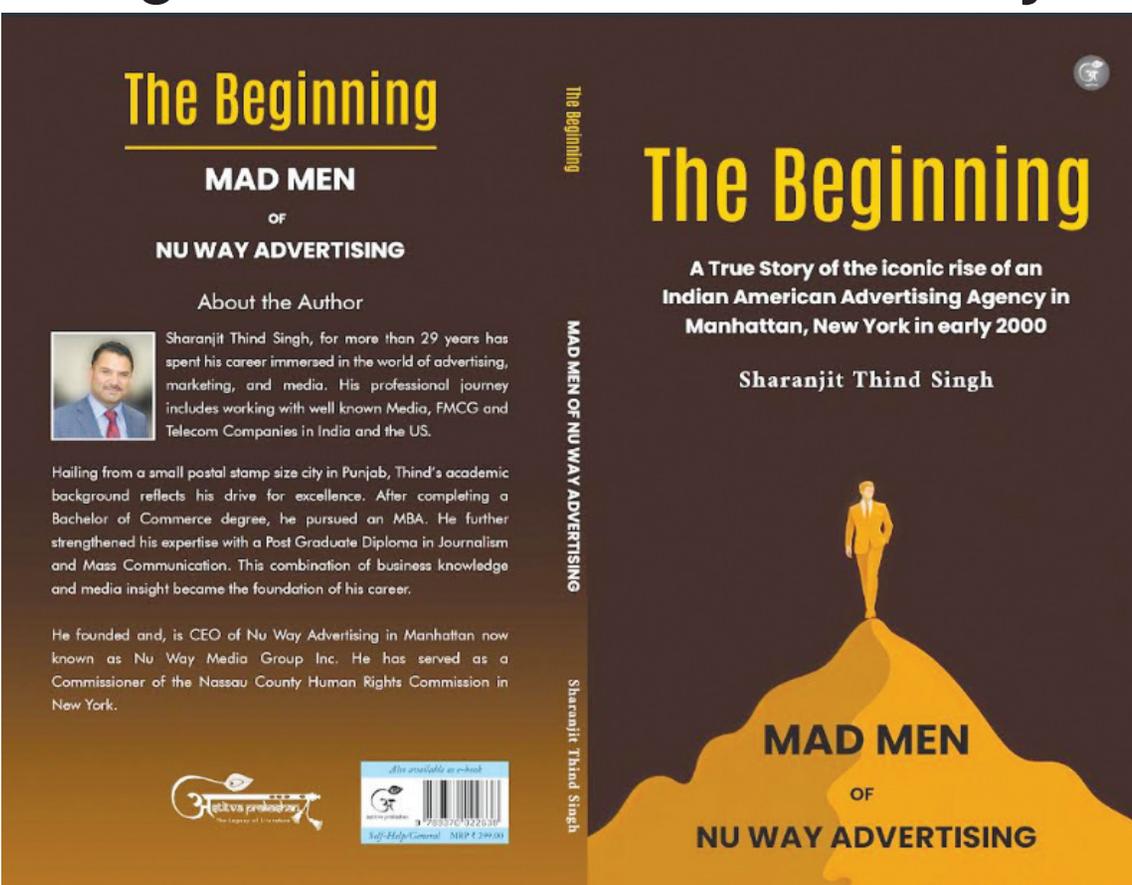
To judge by Isaacson's account, that may have been by design, for Musk's idea of creative destruction seems to mean mostly chaos. Alternately admiring and critical, unvarnished, and a closely detailed account of a troubled innovator.

## 10 books we're looking forward to this spring



# The Beginning : Mad Men of Nu Way Advertising

The Beginning — Mad Men of Nu Way Advertising is a tribute to all entrepreneurs and their families who dared to chase their dreams, stepping out of comfort zones to build something meaningful. Their journeys remind us that success is not just about reaching the destination but about resilience, effort, and unwavering commitment through obstacles and failures. Starting a business, especially an advertising agency, requires more than creativity. It demands relentless dedication, sleepless nights, financial risk, and constant support from family and team. This book, based on real experiences (with some names and locations altered), reflects the struggles and triumphs of building a business in a fiercely competitive industry. Nu Way Advertising was founded on one core principle: the customer comes first. Long before global giants like Amazon and



Apple adopted this philosophy, we made it our foundation. We focused on understanding client

needs, solving problems, and delivering results that exceeded expectations—building trust and

long-term relationships. One client, initially rejected by broadcasters, was rebranded into

a new market category, allowing us to place his campaign successfully. What began as a \$60,000 yearly client grew into a million-dollar account. In another instance, a telecom client faced challenges due to lack of media commissions. Instead of giving up, we worked without commissions, and our persistence paid off when the client's trust led media houses to offer us direct payments. These examples highlight what Nu Way Advertising stood for: creative problem-solving and putting clients first. The message is clear—success isn't about shortcuts but hard work, persistence, and prioritizing customers. They are not just numbers; they are the foundation of any business. This book is a journey of lessons, showing that with determination and a people-first approach, anything is possible—even through mistakes, growth continues.