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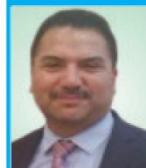


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Trump says he 'will not allow' Israel to annex West Bank



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Owners of Radio Shack, Pier 1 Imports
and other brands accused of running
\$112 million Ponzi scheme



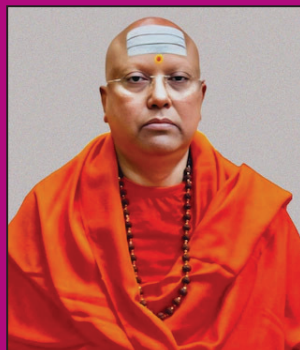
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Former FBI Director
James Comey Indicted



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Come to my
room: Delhi
godman's
indecent
messages to
women he
'molested'



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Grandmother, 73,
deported to India
after 30 years in
US, didn't get to
say goodbye



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Diwali at Times Square 2025 Celebrating 10th Anniversary in North America



(By Our Staff Reporter) The Consulate General of India in New York, hosted a press conference on September 10, 2025. Consul General Binaya Srikanta Pradhan extended his warm support to the 10th anniversary celebrations, "Diwali at Times Square has become an extraordinary



universal message of light between India and the backgrounds in the heart of producer of 'Diwali at Times Square' proudly unveiled the celebration of India's triumphing over darkness. It United States, bringing New York City." Neeta Bhassin, the founder and program for the 10th anniversary.

Mayor Eric Adams and FIPA Healthcare and Business Leaders Reception Celebrated at Gracie Mansion

(By Our Staff Reporter) Mayor Eric Adams and FIPA Healthcare and Business Leaders Reception Celebrated at Gracie Mansion. The Federation of Indian Physicians Associations (FIPA) President Dr Raj Bhayani in collaboration with New York City Mayor Eric Adams hosted a prestigious Healthcare and Business Leaders Reception at Gracie Mansion, the prestigious official residence of New York City Mayor Eric Adams.



The evening brought together prominent healthcare professionals, business leaders, and community figures in celebration of leadership, innovation, and service as well as networking. Mayor Eric Adams warmly welcomed guests and commended the contributions of Indian physicians and business leaders toward strengthening the city's healthcare system and economy. "The our city stronger, healthier, and more vibrant," said Mayor Adams.

Canada's population growth almost flat in 2nd quarter as number of non-permanent residents declines

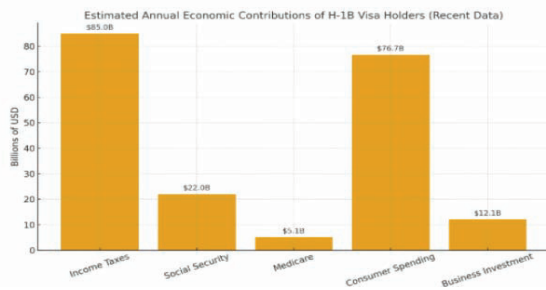
(By Our Staff Reporter) Canada's population growth was nearly flat in the second quarter of 2025, according to new data from Statistics Canada, following similar figures at the start of the year. The country's population ticked up 0.1 per cent between April 1 and July 1 of this year — the same rate as January to March — with the country adding 47,098 people to its population. According to Statistics Canada, that's the lowest second quarter growth rate (outside of pandemic years) since 1946, when comparable record-keeping began. The flatlining was mostly due to a drop in the number of

non-permanent residents in the country. In the quarter, 58,719 non-permanent residents left Canada — the largest quarterly decline since 1971 outside of the pandemic, the agency said. This comes after the federal government made changes to their immigration policy in 2024 to limit the number of non-permanent residents allowed into Canada. This included reducing the number of temporary foreign workers allowed into the country and restricting when employers could hire these low-wage workers, as well as slashing the number of study permits given out. Before that, the fed-

eral government had loosened restrictions on non-permanent residents when Canada was facing a labour shortage following the pandemic. As a result, Canada's population ballooned by about 1 million people per year from 2022 to the beginning of 2025. Statistics Canada said the number of people in Canada on work permits or study permits specifically dropped in the quarter, leading to the decrease in non-permanent residents. An influx of asylum claimants moderated the decline in the total number of temporary residents, the agency added. Armine Yalnizyan, an economist

and Atkinson fellow on the future of workers, says the slowing population numbers might not have an effect on the economy immediately but could in the long run. While Canada's unemployment is high right now, Yalnizyan says there are certain sectors that rely heavily on foreign workers — including construction, long-term care, child care and food production. Exemptions have allowed employers in many of those sectors to keep hiring low-wage foreign workers at higher rates, but Yalnizyan says those sectors will likely feel the pinch "sooner or later."

GOPIO Appeals to President Trump to Reconsider or Substantially Reduce New H1-B Fee for America's Interest



(By our staff reporter) New York, NY- The Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) has written to the White House to reconsider the proposed fee hike for new H1-B Visa, at the very least, reduce it substantially in the interest of America's long-term economic vitality and global leadership. The letter was jointly sent by GOPIO International Chairman Dr. Thomas Abraham and President Prakash Shah.

"Our U.S.-based members, as American citizens, are committed to supporting policies that advance the nation's economic strength, competitiveness, and global leadership," GOPIO wrote. "The H-1B visa program has long been an essential driver of American growth and innovation and we urge the Administration to reconsider this significant fee increase, which we believe would run counter to the best interests of the United States," said GOPIO Chairman Dr. Abraham.

Reception for Prof. Jagmohan Singh, Nephew of Shaheed Bhagat Singh



(By our staff reporter) Over 80 prominent Indian Americans gathered at MINT Restaurant Honor Professor Jagmohan Singh Nephew of Shaheed Bhagat Singh - the revolutionary martyr who shook the foundations of British colonial rule in India and inspired generations

to fight for freedom. The event was organized by Varinderr Bhalla, Chairman and Founder of the Coalition of Indian American Associations of New York (CIONY) and supported by the American Punjabi Society.

Srini Gopalan to Succeed Mike Sievert as T-Mobile CEO on November 1, 2025



(By our staff reporter) New York" T-Mobile announced that it has named current Chief Operating Officer Srini Gopalan as T-Mobile's next Chief Executive Officer, effective November 1, 2025. Gopalan will assume the role from Mike Sievert, who has been appointed to a newly created management position at T-Mobile, Vice Chairman. As Vice Chairman, Sievert will continue in a management role and on the Board, to support T-Mobile's CEO and leadership team, advising on matters of long-term strategy, innovation, talent development and external relations. This transition is consistent with the Board's comprehensive succession planning process to continue T-Mobile's growth strategy and the next era of Un-carrier leadership.



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SEIZE THE AWKWARD



When Silence Becomes Betrayal: Tharoor's Call To The US Desi Diaspora

(By our staff reporter) Congress Member of Parliament Shashi Tharoor has triggered a debate about the duties of the Desi diaspora to their country of origin. Are they de-facto ambassadors for their homeland in their adopted countries? Tharoor certainly thinks so. He was taken aback when a US Congressional delegation told him that they had yet to receive even one phone

call from the Indian-American community urging them to use their offices to champion India's cause with the Trump administration. This alleged sin of omission prompted Tharoor to counsel the diaspora, remarking: "If you care about the relationship with your motherland, then you also have to fight for it, speak for it and press your political representatives to stand up for India." As chairperson of the powerful Parliamentary Standing Committee for Foreign Affairs, Tharoor knows that every bit of advocacy matters at a time when India is being buffeted by stormy trade winds emanating from Donald Trump's Oval Office. Tharoor's plea isn't unreasonable. After all, consider the American Jew-

ish diaspora that ferociously canvasses for Israel and is a key reason why Washington, DC remains an unflinching advocate for Tel Aviv's interests in West Asia. But Tharoor's invocation will only make an impression if the Indian diaspora still feels obliged to consider itself Indian. What if they have become so "naturalised" that they have, in a manner of speaking, whitewashed their Indianness? This is very likely in the case of Indians who hold positions of prominence in the United States. With the premium America places on "integration," these Indians cannot afford to be caught between two flags. This perhaps explains why, when Trump hosted a business dinner at the White House with the heads of the world's most influential tech companies, none of the Indian-origin CEOs challenged him on the selectiveness of his anti-India diplomacy. Not just CEOs, but prominent Indian-origin lawyers and academics in the US have also chosen to remain neutral. Do they fear the "patriot test"? While the term doesn't have a single fixed meaning among expatriates or immigrants, the "patriot test" generally refers to whether these sections of society continue to support their country of origin when a critical choice needs to be made. To be sure, several members of the Desi diaspora in the US continue to have strong religious and cultural ties to their motherland. They gather to celebrate festivals and visit places of worship closely associated with India. But

does this attachment mean they are obliged to root for India in political or diplomatic disputes?

High-profile figures highlight this dilemma. The UK's former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is a British Desi and a practicing Hindu, but that didn't mean he felt obliged to conclude the India-UK trade deal on India's terms. In fact, talks floundered under his watch. Similarly, US Vice President JD Vance's wife Usha is an Indian-American. By all accounts she remains

deeply connected to Indian culture. But does that mean she was expected to confront her husband over punitive US trade policies toward India?

Consider a reversal. What if Adnan Sami, the erstwhile Pakistani singer who acquired Indian citizenship, were to make a passionate case with ministers of the NDA to lift the trade embargo against Pakistan? Would ordinary Indians uphold his right to free speech, or would they condemn him as treacherous?

Brewer Molson Coors names insider Rahul Goyal as CEO

(By our staff reporter) Molson Coors opens new tab named insider Rahul Goyal as its CEO on Monday, to succeed Gavin Hattersley who retires this year, as the beer maker battles weakening demand and tariffs in the United States. Goyal, currently chief strategy officer at the Coors Light maker, is set to assume the role on October 1. He has been with the company for more than two decades, having served in roles including finance chief for the company in India. The new CEO will be tasked with steering the company at a tough time for the industry, with alcohol consumption among American adults falling to its lowest level on record. "Few executives know Molson Coors better than Rahul Goyal. His cross-company experience and role in pushing the brewer beyond beer position him to meet fast-changing consumer demands," said EMarketer analyst Zak Stambor. "But with many consumers turning away from beer and alcohol altogether, guiding the company's path forward won't be easy." Demand for alcohol in the U.S. also remains uncertain, as discretionary spending among consumers is pressured due to inflation and tariff-driven uncertainty. The beer maker had forecast a drop in its annual profit in August, anticipating tariff impacts from the cost of aluminum it uses for its beverage cans. Aluminum imports have been slapped with a 50% duty, driving up U.S. Midwest aluminum premium prices. Molson Coors had announced Hattersley's retirement in April following a six-year stint at the top job. He will remain in an advisory role until the end of 2025, the company said on Monday. Shares of the company were down about 1% in early trading.





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Trump's H-1B move a lottery for UK, Europe? A reality check for Indian talent

H-1B visa: After Trump's H-1B visa clampdown, several European nations are positioning themselves as a magnet for global talent. A closer look reveals that in many countries, immigration policies are becoming increasingly restrictive.

(News Agency) The Donald Trump administration's sudden move to slam the door on Indian tech professionals with its H-1B visa clampdown has sparked a global race to grab top talent. Several European nations and China are positioning themselves as a magnet for global talent with attractive policies and reduced visa fees. However, a closer look reveals that in many countries, immigration policies are becoming increasingly restrictive. Rolled out with little warning, Trump stunned the tech sector by imposing a hefty \$100,000 (Rs 88 lakh) application fee for H-1B visas, a primary avenue for highly skilled foreign workers. Moreover, a proposal to scrap the lottery system for the H-1B selection process has raised alarm bells for Indian professionals, who make up nearly 71% of all H-1B visa holders. In such a scenario, European countries like Germany and the UK have sought to position themselves as viable alternatives to capture the "brain drain" from nations like India. China has also introduced a K-visa to lure talent in science and tech fields. However, in reality, these countries themselves have lately

introduced stricter rules for students and professionals. Moreover, anti-immigration sentiment has been on the rise in various European countries.

UNITED KINGDOM

Like in the US, Indians are one of the largest groups of student and skilled worker visa applicants in the UK. Taking advantage of the sudden shift in US policies, the UK has activated its global talent taskforce and is looking to abolish or reduce visa fees for top global talent. Through it, Britain is eyeing the world's best scientists, academics and tech experts. Among the options being discussed is scrapping visa fees altogether for applicants who have studied at the world's top five universities or won prestigious prizes, according to a report in The Financial Times. However, this also prioritises only the high-value, high-skilled professionals, just what the revamp of the H-1B is seeking to do. It leaves junior and mid-level professionals in the lurch. Moreover, UK Chancellor Rachel Reeves said the tax system could be rejigged to remove barriers and attract highly skilled people to Britain. Presently, the UK takes

in foreign workers through the global talent visa, which was introduced in 2020. It costs 766 (Rs 90,000) per applicant. One also has to shell out an annual health surcharge of 1,035 (Rs 1,24,000).

STRICTER RULES IN UK

However, the picture is not so rosy as it seems. Stricter immigration rules and measures targeting the skilled worker category brought by the Keir Starmer government have led to a sharp fall in visa applications from Indian students and workers. From July 2025, the UK has reduced the current two-year post-study work visa to 18 months, mandated higher English language requirements, and increased the qualification period for permanent residency to 10 years. Moreover, it scrapped the Health and Care Worker visa for new applicants. The numbers also tell the state of affairs. In 2023, Indian nationals cornered the lion's share of UK work visas (162,655 visas). In just a year, there was a staggering 50% decline in the number of work-related visas issued to Indians (81,463), according to the UK Home Office. Short-

term study visa refusals surged from 45% to 68%. Also, skilled worker rejections jumped from 3% in 2023 to 21% by June 2025, according to a report. Applications have also seen a drop. In the Skilled Worker visa category, applications dropped to 4,900 in July 2025 from around 6,000 a year ago. The UK's move to sharply increase the minimum salary threshold to 41,700 (nearly Rs 50 lakh) has pushed many aspirants out of contention.

GERMANY'S DOORS NOT AS OPEN AS BEFORE

Germany, which has also rolled out the welcome mat for skilled Indian professionals after the H-1B move, is no less. It has also recently shifted towards stricter immigration and foreign worker policies. Here, too, Indians make up the largest group of foreign residents, both as students and workers. Looking to seize the moment to court Indian talent, German Ambassador to India, Philipp Ackermann, posted a video message pitching the largest economy of Europe as a stable and better alternative to the unreliable US. "The average Indian working in Germany earns more than the average German.

Kashmir man who provided logistical support to Pahalgam terrorists arrested

(News Agency) Five months after 25 tourists were killed in a terror attack in the Baisaran Valley of Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, security agencies on Wednesday arrested a Kashmir-based man who provided logistical support to the terrorists of Pakistan-backed The Resistance Front (TRF). Police have arrested Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist Mohammad Yousuf Kataria, a 26-year-old resident of Kulgam, for providing logistical support to the April 22 attackers. He has been sent to a 14-day police custody following his arrest. Kataria's arrest follows the analysis of weapons recovered during Operation Mahadev, sources told India Today. Sources said Kataria, who worked in a contractual job and also taught local children, came in contact with terrorists a few months ago and began aiding their movements. Investigations revealed he assisted the Lashkar group in navigating through Kulgam's forest areas months before the Pahalgam terror attack, which killed 26 people, 25 of which were tourists. The attack took place on April 22 in the Baisaran Valley. Investi-

gators are also trying to uncover the past movements, hideouts, Overground Worker (OGW) help the Pahalgam attackers received from the time they infiltrated into Jammu and Kashmir. In June, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) announced that it had arrested two persons who allegedly provided shelter and logistical support to the attackers. The two men were identified as Parvaiz Ahmad Jothar and Bashir Ahmad Jothar, who also disclosed the names of three of the terrorists involved in the attack. A month later in July, all the three terrorists - top Lashkar commander Suleiman Shah, Afghan, and Jibrar - were killed by security forces under Operation Mahadev. They were identified as the Pahalgam attackers by those who provided them with shelter after the April 22 carnage. The very next day, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, while speaking in Parliament during the Monsoon Session, confirmed that the three slain terrorists were indeed the perpetrators of Pahalgam and belonged to Pakistan. The minister rejected claims of some opposition leaders that they might have been "home-grown" terrorists.

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Come to my room: Delhi godman's indecent messages to women he 'molested'



(News Agency Delhi Police are intensifying their hunt for Baba Chaitanyanand Saraswati, the head of a prominent ashram in Vasant Kunj, after more than 15 women accused him of molestation, blackmail, and intimidation. The Baba, who previously went by the name Swami Parthasarathy, is also under investigation for alleged fraud con-

nected to the ashram. Police have issued a Lookout Circular to prevent him from fleeing abroad, while raids are underway across Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Bihar. Investigators allege that Chaitanyanand systematically blackmailed students pursuing Post-Graduate Diploma in Management courses on EWS

scholarships at the Sri Sharada Institute of Indian Management, where he served as director. He reportedly summoned girls to his room late at night, threatened to reduce their marks or fail them if they did not comply, and lured some with promises of foreign trips. The women said he also sent obscene WhatsApp and text messages and exerted undue pressure, creating a climate of fear. Survivors disclosed several messages allegedly sent by Chaitanyanand, including: "Come to my room," "I will take you abroad on a trip," "You will not have to pay anything," and "If you do not listen to me, I will make you fail." Delhi Police further allege that Baba's three female aides, wardens and staff of the institute, actively participated in covering up his crimes. They reportedly intimidated students

and deleted incriminating messages from their phones, which were later sent for forensic examination. CCTV footage from the ashram also shows evidence of tampering and has been sent for forensic analysis. Police have seized a car belonging to the Baba, which carried multiple diplomatic number plates registered in different names, suggesting further attempts to obfuscate his activities. Statements from 32 women students have been recorded, with 17 alleging abusive language, unwanted physical contact, and repeated threats. Several students told police that Chaitanyanand specifically targeted EWS-category students, threatening to fail them in exams if they resisted, and offered foreign trips to lure compliance. While the three female wardens

have had their statements recorded, their full role in facilitating Baba's actions will only become clear once he is apprehended. At the time the FIR was filed, Chaitanyanand was in London. Police have tracked his last known location to Agra, but sources say he has been constantly changing locations and rarely using his mobile phone to avoid detection. The Delhi High Court had received an anticipatory bail plea from him, but he withdrew it after strong opposition from the police. The Sri Sringeri Math administration has removed Chaitanyanand from his post as director and publicly stated that it has severed all ties with him, describing his activities as "illegal and inappropriate". The Peeth has also lodged complaints with relevant authorities regarding his alleged acts.

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They harass whoever reports against them: Court's big remark on journalist assaults

(News Agency) :The Bombay High Court on Wednesday observed that incidents of harassment of journalists have been reported in recent times, while directing the Maharashtra Police to file an affidavit in response to a plea by a YouTuber-journalist who was allegedly assaulted in July this year and has since been receiving threats. A bench of Chief Justice Shree Chandrashekhar and Justice Gautam A Ankhad observed, "This is happening. We have this understanding that they are doing it with the journalists. Whoever reports something against them, they try to harass." The bench was hearing a petition filed by journalist Sneha Barve, who said she was assaulted with an iron rod on July 4, 2025, while reporting on illegal construction in Pune. She has sought police protection. On Tuesday, the court had asked senior advocate Mihir Desai, appearing for Barve, whether she was willing to pay for police protection. On Wednesday, Desai informed the court that she was ready to bear the charges as per the state government's policy. When asked to elaborate on the grounds for apprehension, Desai said, "She is a journalist and was beaten up badly, nearly killed on July 4, 2025. An FIR was registered. After that, there were further threats to her. She wrote three letters to the Superintendent of Police seeking protection, but no decision has been taken." The bench then asked Desai to specify the evidence supporting the petition. Desai replied that a video showed Barve being assaulted with rods while investigating illegal construction. Following the attack, she was threatened again, and the threats to her life continue. However, the bench expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of the petition, stating, "What is the evidence? You are before a writ court. You should have produced evidence. The petition is incompetent." The court further noted difficulties in dealing with writ petitions that lack necessary details or are filed in improper formats. In this case, the judges said, affidavits from witnesses to the threats should have been submitted. The bench directed the Additional Public Prosecutor representing the state to file an affidavit on the matter by September 29.

Amit Shah Hails Modi's Foreign Policy, Says History Will Judge Him Above Nehru

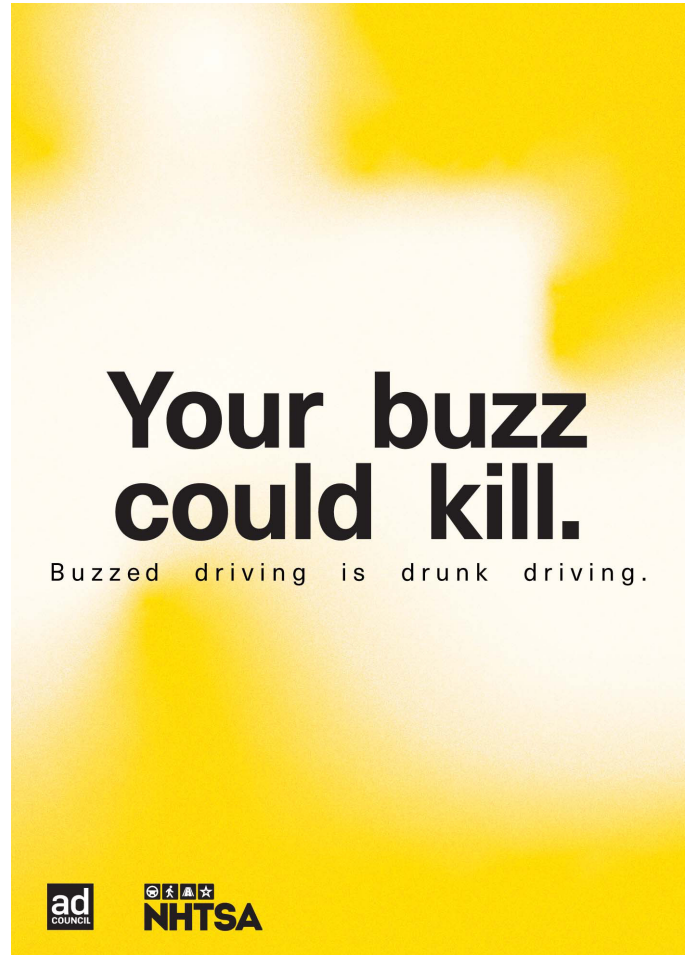
(News Agency) : Union Home Minister Amit Shah has praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, arguing that his tenure has given India's foreign policy the strength and clarity it previously lacked. In an exclusive conversation with NDTV Editor-in-Chief Rahul Kanwal, Shah compared Modi's time in office to that of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, insisting that future historians will place Modi's era ahead. Shah pointed out that Modi, with more than 11 years in office, is already India's second-longest serving Prime Minister, behind only Nehru's record 16-year tenure. Before taking national office, Modi had also served as Gujarat's longest-serving Chief Minister from 2001 to 2014. According to Shah, this continuity has allowed him to carry out transformative reforms that have reshaped India both domestically and internationally. Highlighting the government's achievements, Shah cited the revocation of Article 370, the abolition of Triple Talaq, the construction of the Ram Mandir, and changes to citizenship laws. He also pointed to economic gains, claiming that 25 crore Indians have been lifted out of poverty over the last decade, while India's economy has climbed from 11th to 4th place globally. Shah added that India's global standing has improved significantly, with the respect for the Indian passport increasing worldwide. According to Shah, Modi's foreign policy marks a departure from earlier governments. "There was a lack of spine in India's foreign policy. Narendra Modi has given it strength," he said, stressing that Modi's leadership has made India more decisive in international affairs. Having known Modi for over 40 years, Shah said his greatest quality has been the ability to adapt and succeed in every role—from grassroots worker to national leader. The comments came shortly after Modi celebrated his 75th birthday on September 17. To mark the milestone, the BJP launched a nationwide "Sewa Pakhwada," running until October 2. The campaign includes health camps, development drives, cleanliness initiatives, and events promoting local products, reflecting Modi's focus on outreach and welfare.



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AI investors are in for a rude awakening



By the end of this year, the tech industry will have invested about \$717bn over three years into large language model (LLM) AI and the infrastructure needed to support it. While estimates for next year vary, it is possible that industry will invest a comparable amount. This suggests that the industry is receiving more capital than has been invested in the rest of the tech industry since the modern era began in 1956, the year the justice department's consent decree with AT&T gave birth to Silicon Valley. In a technology investing career that now spans 43 years, I have never seen a phenomenon remotely like large language model AI. Big tech, journalists, politicians, CEOs and investors are all convinced that AI is an inevitable Next Big Thing that will change everything in our economy and society for the better. Much has been written about LLMs, including books that challenge the promises of the industry, in at least one case suggesting LLMs are a confidence game. One issue that remains unaddressed is that even if the technology delivers on its promise, many, if not most of the current players are bound to fail. The knock-on effects of these failures may be catastrophic, especially for equity investors. Depending on how you count, there are either five or six essentially identical LLM development programs in AI from big tech players in the US: Google, Amazon, Meta, xAI, and Microsoft/OpenAI, who may be either allies or competitors. This does not include Nvidia, which supplies semiconductors and software to the industry, Apple, which has a large program for internal use, Anthropic, founded by former OpenAI team members, and many others. Each one of the five or six big tech programs appears to be seeking a global monopoly, the cost of which will be measured in hundreds of billions of dollars. Investment in AI in by corporate customers in 2022 was \$91.9bn, which does not include investments from industry, investors and other sources. Gartner group

estimates that total investment in LLMs, related infrastructure and other AI services will be \$1.48tn, up nearly 50% on 2024. Even though that number includes investments that are AI-adjacent, the level of investment in AI is without precedent. According to Epoch.ai, total sales of LLM products to the public by market leaders OpenAI, Google and Anthropic were about \$1bn in 2023, growing to about \$4bn in 2024. Revenue from all sources this year may be between \$235bn and \$244bn, but the vast majority of that will go to the infrastructure required to train and operate LLMs. Almost every forecast anticipates continued high revenue growth for many years, reaching \$1tn by 2031. At least one forecaster is predicting global revenues in excess of \$3tn by 2033. But to achieve those figures, investment will have to remain gargantuan. The huge gap between capital investment in infrastructure and end user license revenue from AI software is not sustainable. Every participant is confident that the gap will close with a huge increase in end user revenue, but they may be wrong. In the meantime, investors take comfort in the fact that one company's investment is another company's revenue. For example, cloud services revenue at Microsoft, Google and Amazon has exploded during the industry's investment phase. A similar thing has happened with semiconductor sales at Nvidia. Microsoft, Google, Amazon and Nvidia have made large investments in startups, providing capital that then comes back to them as revenue. All of this investment has not yielded equivalent success for customers. Media has reported failures with AI in the law, education, wellness, software development and other categories that range between disappointing and catastrophic. The industry promises that it will fix the problems with AI, and perhaps it will. But that is a big bet, and not the only one investors and customers are making today. Investors have assumed that every major US player in LLMs will be a winner.

By Roger McNamee, The Guardian

What if I told you neither Republicans nor Democrats care about free speech?

In the wake of Charlie Kirk's assassination, the free speech debate is back in the national spotlight as Republicans and Democrats trade insults. It seems that everybody is missing that there has been a role reversal on speech in America. Democrats are posting in all caps "PROTECT FREE SPEECH" and "LEGALIZE COMEDY." Meanwhile, Attorney General Pam Bondi is threatening to "go after you if you are targeting anyone with hate speech," as if she were a progressive blogger from 2020. The irony is lost on everyone directly involved, as Democrats pretend that their free speech erosions over the past decade never happened, and Republicans apparently forget they ever cared about the issue at all. The reality is that this mess just reveals the hackery of all involved. That's clear when we look at Jimmy Kimmel's saga. The Trump administration used the Federal Communications Commission to pressure ABC to take Kimmel off the air, which the network has since reversed after blowback. It remains to be seen if the administration is going to take further action against ABC as a result. Neither the GOP nor the Democratic Party is pro-free speech.

The Kirk vs. Kimmel debate happened after Republicans spent years advocating against the Biden administration trampling on free speech during the COVID-19 pandemic, criticizing colleges that were hostile to free speech and vowing to resist efforts to ban hate speech. Looking for a free mini puzzle? Play the USA TODAY Quick Cross now. Yet, Bondi has said, "If you wanna go in and print posters with Charlie's pictures on them for a vigil, you have to let them do that," in response to an Office Depot location refusing to print such content for a Kirk memorial. "We can prosecute you for that." Such a stance is entirely antithetical to the mainstream conservative position that has existed for years. Supreme Court precedent holds

that businesses cannot discriminate based on all sorts of characteristics, but they can refuse to produce specific content of a creative work. However, Democrats, too, have flip-flopped on the issue of free speech. While they have rightly called out the attorney general for her anti-constitutional stance on free speech issues, they forget that in the past five years, they have fought against two Supreme Court cases dealing with the precise underlying issue here. When it came to the cases Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission and 303 Creative v. Elenis, Democrats fought in favor of public accommodation laws trampling the free speech rights of businesses, for a cake baker and a web designer, respectively. In each case, businesses refused to create custom creative works for a same-sex wedding. Democrats will argue that these scenarios are somehow different, but the reality is that all of these examples are the same as the Trump administration compelling businesses to produce vigil posters for a conservative activist. Compelled speech is compelled speech, regardless of what the cause is and which political party it serves. When it comes to so-called hate speech, the Democrats' record is no better. Democratic vice presidential nominee Tim Walz said, "There's no guarantee to free speech on misinformation or hate speech, and especially around our democracy," back in 2022. This isn't just theoretical; it actually happened under the Biden administration. Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg said Facebook was pressured by the White House to censor content during COVID-19, "including humor and satire." Once again, Democrats will pretend as if this is different because of the motivation, but the Constitution doesn't come with a "public health" asterisk on it.

By Dace Potas USA TODAY

The South Asian
INSIDER
Voice of South Asian Community

ISSN No. 1554 06X

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Russian aircraft invaded two NATO members in two weeks. What are we going to do about it?

Russian fighter jets recently entered Estonian airspace – a bold incursion that came just nine days after 19 Russian drones swarmed the airspace of fellow NATO member Poland. While the Kremlin has denied any intentional violations of NATO airspace, the evidence suggests that both actions were almost certainly deliberate.

These provocations appear to have been designed to test NATO for both operational and political weakness, and to tell the world that Vladimir Putin believes he can behave with impunity in Ukraine and beyond. Indeed, all of Putin's recent feints toward peace have been belied by his actions: He followed up his Alaska summit with President Trump with the largest aerial attacks on Ukraine of the past year, and ignored the ceasefire deadline offered by the president.

As NATO continues its deliberations on a coordinated response to the Polish incident and now Estonia, a unified, decisive and robust rebuke from the entire alliance is of paramount importance. The Western alliance failed to deter Russia in 2014, and again in 2022; with Putin now taking the fight even further into European territory, we cannot afford to show any weakness.

The U.S. and our European allies must show Putin that his acts of aggression will not stand, and that for every escalation and provocation, the costs to him will only multiply.

NATO is already taking action to strengthen the defense of its eastern flank – a salutary measure, but just one piece of the puzzle. The proposed withdrawal of U.S. military support in the Baltics would send a disastrous signal to the Kremlin, particularly given the incursion into Estonian airspace.

Congress and the administration should work together to ensure that the U.S. military presence in the frontline Baltic states re-



mains in place as a key component of NATO's defensive architecture. America and our allies in Europe should take additional steps to bolster the defensive capabilities of NATO's eastern frontier, forge ahead with ironclad security guarantees to Ukraine, and provide Kyiv with the defensive and offensive weapons it needs to put Russia on the back foot.

We also need to make it clear that Russia has torpedoed any prospects for peace talks for the foreseeable future. President Donald Trump has made a good faith effort to facilitate negotiations, but Putin has made it eminently clear that he has no interest in peace. Continuing to indulge the fiction that he wants what we want – or worse, that there is any kind of equivalence between Russia as the belligerent party, and Ukraine, the victim of Russian aggression – only buys Putin time and leverage.

Next, as President Trump has made clear, Europe needs to stop buying Russian oil and gas – now. It's absurd that after more than three years, some European countries are continuing to supply Russia with the revenue it needs to conduct this

brutal war on their own continent. What's more, with President Trump leading America back to energy dominance, Europe will have alternative suppliers to turn to – avoiding price hikes while cutting off precious funding for Putin's war effort.

The president is also correct to push for a coordinated campaign of financial pressure on Russia and its enablers. This should include sanctioning the Chinese banks that keep the Kremlin's war machine mov-

ing, imposing crushing tariffs and secondary sanctions on the countries that are keeping the Kremlin afloat through oil, gas, and uranium purchases. Congress should work to pass the bipartisan bill put forward by Sens. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., which includes the measures outlined above as well as expanded restrictions on Russian financial entities and transactions and the Russian energy sector.

President Trump understands that peace can only be secured through strength. It's why he pushed for Europe to assume greater responsibility for its own security in both his first and second administrations. As the former secretary of state, I know from experience that this insistence wasn't always welcome – but as we all know, it turned out to be prescient. The president's willingness to have those difficult conversations with our European allies has resulted in the landmark commitment of 5% GDP defense spending for NATO members – putting the alliance back on track to reestablish deterrence and restore Europe's territorial integrity. America must see that project through. It is critical to Europe's security, and to America's core interests, that we get this right – and that can only be done by imposing serious costs on Russia, and by showing Putin that his provocations have only strengthened the NATO alliance. Mike Pompeo serves as a contributor at FOX News Channel. Previously, he served in the Trump administration as the sixth director of the Central Intelligence Agency and the 70th U.S. secretary of state. He formerly represented Kansas' 4th Congressional District.

AM I OKAY TO DRIVE?

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IS DRUNK DRIVING

Trump, Bessent can leverage TikTok negotiations to counter China's rare earth dominance

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer met with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng and Commerce Minister Li Chenggang in Madrid last week. They announced a "framework agreement" over TikTok, the Chinese-owned app used by millions of Americans.

But the story isn't only about TikTok. It's also about how America uses TikTok as a lever – and why that lever is more necessary than ever.

TikTok is an important issue in and of itself: control over data, algorithmic influence, foreign ownership – all of which are critical for national security. In addition, however, TikTok is a tool the U.S. can and should use in ongoing trade engagement, as well as to counter China's growing leverage in rare earths, critical minerals and semiconductors.

When I served in President Donald Trump's first administration ("Trump 45"), the core issues we confronted included a massive trade imbalance, intellectual property theft, cyber-theft and China's Belt and Road infrastructure expansion. These were predatory practices in trade, tech and finance. Today, in "Trump 47," the battlefield has broadened – but one thing that hasn't changed is the psychological warfare the Chinese employ any time negotiations are underway.

I was at the center of one of the most dramatic examples of this during Trump 45...

After an exhausting month of prep work, I boarded my flight to Beijing in March 2018 with wary optimism. I had worked intensively leading up to this trip, drafting a comprehensive framework document outlining a new trade deal with China, a proposal that would overhaul virtually every aspect of the U.S.-China economic relationship.

We'd sent the proposal to our Chinese counterparts several days earlier, and now our high-level trade delegation was en route to Beijing to negotiate the largest change to trade relations in at least 10 years. The cast of characters illustrates just how significant this trade deal could be. It included Secretary Steven Mnuchin (head of the delegation), Under Secretary David Malpass and me (Treasury), Secretary Wilbur Ross (Commerce), U.S. Trade Representative Robert

Lighthizer and several of his deputies, NEC Director Larry Kudlow, Under Secretary Ted McKinney (Agriculture), and Peter Navarro (special assistant to the president and director of trade and manufacturing policy).

We arrived at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing with about an hour to review our plans one more time before we had to depart for Diaoyutai – the state guest house where Mao and every leader since has entertained foreign dignitaries. But there was a surprise waiting for us at our embassy: a brand-new proposal, drafted by the Chinese, which they were putting forth at the eleventh hour, and which we had never seen. It was about 15 pages long – and completely in Chinese!

I was one of the few people in the room who could read it. After a quick scan, I told the group: "This is wholly unacceptable. This document doesn't say anything – they're just messing with us." A heated debate ensued over how to respond, and how the Chinese were likely to react. But there was no time to reach a consensus; it was time to leave for Diaoyutai.

There was a mass exit from the secure room where we met at the embassy, and, almost like a well-choreographed ballet with a hundred moving parts, we all shuffled to our designated cars. As Secretary Mnuchin stepped into the limousine to take us to the meeting, Malpass insisted that I ride with the secretary and pushed me into the seat next to Mnuchin, saying, "We need to know exactly what this says – can you translate it on the way?"

As we sped through the streets of Beijing, I sat in the back seat, literally shivitzing as a technical term in Chinese got the better of me, and furiously translated as I read out loud, in English, what the Chinese had dropped in our laps.

Even as we climbed the stairs into the building and entered the meeting room, none of us was quite sure how Mnuchin was going to handle this hot potato. After Vice Premier Liu He's flowing stream of diplomatic pleasantries welcoming us to China, the secretary calmly stated in response, "We received your draft. Thanks for sending it over – but

we're going to use our draft for today." It wasn't the preamble they expected. But it was entirely consistent with the new tone that President Trump had set from the day he took office.

Today, China has moved from using tariffs and IP theft to controlling choke points – especially in rare earth elements, critical minerals, semiconductors and advanced manufacturing capacity. The numbers are clear indicators of China's leverage.

China accounts for about 70 % of global rare earth mining and about 90 % of the world's rare earth refining and separation capacity. In 2023, China controlled 61 % of global mining of rare earth magnet elements and 92 % of refining capacity for those magnets.

On semiconductors: while U.S. companies remain strong in chip design and advanced R&D, China's share of the semiconductor industry's

value-added has surged (from about 8 % in 2001 to over 30 % by 2016), and China is pushing aggressively to become self-sufficient in mature node production.

These are not passive metrics. They are active levers China already uses in the trade negotiations through export restrictions, licensing controls or by threatening disruptions. For example, in April 2025 China – clearly in response to President Trump's bold tariff moves – added export licenses and restrictions for seven heavy rare earth elements, including dysprosium, terbium, samarium, plus rare earth magnets—materials critical to EV motors, wind turbines, electronics and defense systems.

The challenges faced in Trump's first term have only evolved – not eased. The trade deficit is large, IP and tech theft are growing more dangerous, predatory devel-

opment finance practices continue and China's leverage in rare earths, semiconductors and control over supply chains threatens global development and American autonomy.

TikTok is a headline issue impacting critical issues of data, influence and national security. But it is also an essential lever to counter the new pressure points China is pressing. Madrid and Friday's Trump–Xi call offer a chance to reshape this broader contest. As I demonstrate in "A Seat at the Table," President Trump's strategy and policies during his first administration allowed us to exert maximum pressure on our counterparts and to stay the course with firm negotiating positions and clear red lines. Last week's dialogues demonstrate that Trump will continue to insist on substance over symbolism, an approach critical to our national interest.

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The five groups that dominate Bihar, can PK break their hold?

Caste continues to dominate Bihar politics, with five groups holding most Assembly seats. Despite calls for development-led change, surveys show a majority still prefer leaders from their own caste.

Even as myriad issues, ranging from unemployment to inflation to corruption to alleged "vote chori", plague Bihar, caste remains the biggest determinant. According to an Azim Premji University survey, in 2018, 57 per cent of the people in the state preferred leaders from their own caste versus the national average of 55 per cent.

As per the Bihar caste census, upper castes accounted for 15 per cent, OBCs 27 per cent, EBCs 36 per cent, Scheduled Castes 20 per cent, and Scheduled Tribes accounted for just two per cent. Muslims account for 18 per cent, five of whom are upper caste and 13 are OBCs and EBCs.

But only five groups — Yadavs, Rajputs, Koeris/Kushwahas, Muslims, and Bhumihars — dominate the state's politics. Rajputs and Bhumihars are upper castes, while Yadavs and Koeris are OBCs.

First of all, they have sheer numbers. Muslims (18 per cent) and Yadavs (14 per cent) account for a third of the state's population. Secondly, they are resourceful, having vast tracts of land. In the last three Assembly elections — 2010, 2015, and 2020 — of a total of 243 seats, candidates from the same caste group have won over and over again on 105 seats.

Yadavs have consistently won 27 seats, Rajputs 13, Muslims and Koeris nine each, and Bhumihars eight seats. Brahmins, Dusadhs, and Kurmis have consistently had six seats each, and EBCs five.

In 113 seats, the same caste has won twice in the last three elections. Yadavs have won 18 seats twice, Rajputs 15, Muslims nine, Koeris seven, and Bhumihars 13 seats. Kurmis won eight seats twice, EBCs 16, and non-Yadav OBCs nine.

Yadavs have won 45 seats twice or thrice in the last three Assembly polls, Rajputs 28, Bhumihars 21, Muslims 18, and Koeris 16, signifying their hold on these seats. Eight Muslim



candidates have consistently won from seats in Purnea, reflecting the demographic position of the zone.

The highest number of these seats is in Purnea (17), followed by Tirhut (15), Patna (14), Darbhanga (13), and Magadh (11). 70 per cent of seats in Purnea and two-thirds of the seats in Patna have been choosing candidates from the same caste/community for the last three polls.

Purnea also accounts for 45 per cent of the Muslim population (the highest in the state), while Patna accounts for the second-highest Yadav population in the state (19 per cent).

Both the Mahagathbandhan and the National Democratic Alliance have given maximum tickets to candidates from these five groups. The former gave 152 tickets to Yadav, Muslim, Koeri-Kushwaha, Rajput, and Bhumihar candidates (63 per cent). The latter gave 122 such tickets (50 per cent).

How do they dominate the Assembly?

Yadavs, Rajputs, Koeris/Kushwahas, Muslims, and Bhumihars have consistently accounted for more than half of the Assembly strength: 143 in 2015 and 136 in 2020.

In 2020, of the 52 Yadav MLAs, 35 (the highest) came from the Rashtriya Janata Dal. Of the 28 Rajput MLAs in 2020, the highest (16) came from the Bharatiya Janata Party. Of the 21 Bhumihar MLAs, the highest, eight, came from the saf-ron party. Of the 16 Koeri MLAs, the highest, five, came

from the Left parties. Of the 19 Muslim MLAs, eight came from the RJD.

The RJD has 54 MLAs from these five groups, the BJP 34, the Janata Dal (United) 16, the Congress, and the Left Parties 10 each. Of the 136 MLAs from these five groups, 74 won on Mahagathbandhan tickets, and 54 on NDA tickets. The former has 54 per cent of these MLAs, while the latter has 40 per cent. The Mahagathbandhan thus has a higher concentration risk and narrower representation from various caste groups.

The Mahagathbandhan won 110 seats in 2020, and two-thirds of its MLAs come from these five groups only. The NDA has better and broader representation from various caste groups. It won 125 seats in 2020, out of which only 54 come from these five groups, that is just 43 per cent.

Yadavs account for 14 per cent of the state's population but 21 per cent of its MLAs. Rajputs account for three per cent but form 12 per cent of MLAs. For Bhumihars, this ratio is three per cent versus nine, and for Koeris, it is seven and four per cent. Of these five groups, only Muslims are underrepresented, eight per cent versus 18 per cent.

This shows that there's a gap between championing social justice and working towards better representation. Despite decades of affirmative action policies, reservation systems, and rhetoric championing the marginalised, the fundamental power structures that perpetu-

ate caste-based exclusion remain largely intact.

Will PK's attempt to Break Caste-Based Politics Work?

Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj has emerged as a wildcard entry in this election. He has stated clearly that Jan Suraj is willing to do politics in Bihar around development issues and not around caste identity and ideologies.

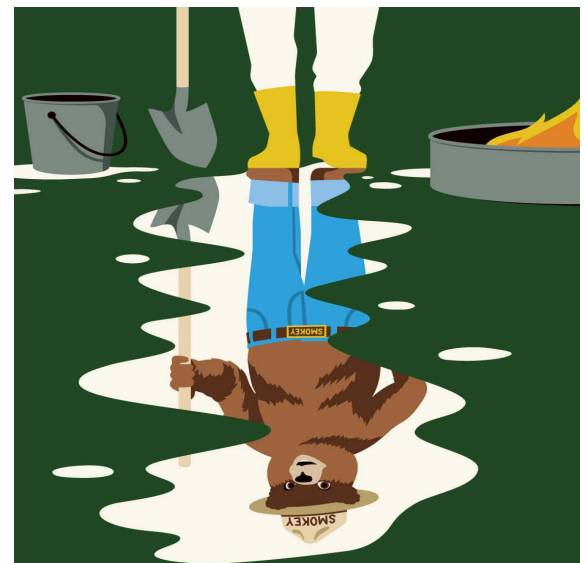
Kishor is taking an anti-NDA and anti-MGB stand, but is unwilling to have a rigid stance on caste identity and social engineering. He is talking about issues like employment, corruption, education, and health services.

He constantly blames both Nitish and Lalu for the relative backwardness of the state, ex-

horting people to cast their vote for the future of their children. He claims that about 60 per cent of the people, cutting across castes and religions, want change.

According to the Azim Premji University survey, while 57 per cent of people prefer leaders of their own caste, 12 per cent prefer leaders of other caste groups, while for 31 per cent it makes no difference at all. For 43 per cent of people, other factors like development, issues, track record of governance, vision of parties/candidates, leadership, etc, matter. These are the voters whom PK is tapping. Young, educated lot.

Can he succeed in breaking the caste barriers of Bihar society? Only time will tell.



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The UN's betrayal and Israel's fight for truth

For decades, Israel has tried, sometimes against our better instincts, to work with the United Nations. I have personally sat in numerous meetings with U.N. officials, painstakingly negotiating frameworks to ensure humanitarian aid reached civilians in Gaza. I oversaw budgets, coordinated secure passageways for convoys, and approved daily discussions with U.N. representatives about food, medicine, and fuel. We made these efforts not for Hamas's sake, but because, as Israelis, we recognize the sanctity of human life, even beyond our own side of the battlefield. Despite these efforts, the very organization we enabled to deliver aid has repeatedly turned against us. Instead of acknowledging Israel's unprecedented humanitarian measures, the U.N. issued routine condemnations. Their resolutions read less like acts of diplomacy and more like indictments prepared in advance. This is not neutrality. It is hostility, dressed in the language of international law. It is difficult to ignore the hypocrisy. Iran, North Korea, and Syria hold seats on U.N. councils, while Israel is dragged before panels that masquerade as courts of justice. At the same time, another arm of the United Nations, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), operates facilities in Gaza. These buildings were built for education and healthcare, but instead have become arsenals for Hamas rockets and serve as infrastructure for terror. The fact that U.N.-run schools and clinics have been weaponized in this way is almost always overlooked by those so quick to condemn Israel. The Human Rights Council spends more time singling out Is-

rael than addressing any other crisis on the planet. This is not a coincidence. It is the result of an institution co-opted by regimes determined to undermine the Jewish state. Last week, the U.N. released a report that accuses me personally, by name, of war crimes and, by extension, accuses Israel of genocide. I am proud to have stood in the position to defend the State of Israel. Given the choice, I would do so again without hesitation. As minister of defense, I led the IDF as it set standards for proportionality and distinction [not] seen in any modern military conflict. No other army has put greater effort into warning civilians in every possible way: leaflets, calls, texts, and warning shots, before targeting terrorist infrastructure. These are not the acts of an indifferent military; they are the actions of a nation of conscience and responsibility. Hamas, in contrast, hides rockets in schools, launches missiles from hospital courtyards, forces civilians to serve as shields, and still holds dozens of Israelis hostage. It manufactures civilian suffering and uses it for propaganda. However, in international forums, and especially at the U.N., the truth rarely gets a hearing. Israel is held to impossible double standards. When the world's only Jewish state is condemned more times than regimes responsible for documented atrocities and genocide, we must say clearly: this is antisemitism rebranded for a new era. The U.N. report points to a phrase I used in the immediate aftermath of Oct. 7, after terrorists from Gaza slaughtered, raped, and kidnapped Israeli civilians, I referred to those responsible as "human animals." That description applied to the perpetra-

tors and orchestrators of these barbaric attacks. Yet the report, like many hostile accusations since, distorts facts, intentionally ignoring the context of such sayings. The latest U.N. report is a study in selective blindness. There are no details about Hamas' tunnel network, no mention of their use of human shields, no serious accounting of the reality that their own rockets and booby-trapped buildings kill Gazans. There is only a passing mention of the Israelis murdered or kidnapped. Hamas-provided statistics are repeated as facts, Israeli actions are twisted, and humanitarian efforts are overlooked. This commission began with its verdict pre-determined and pre-written. It ignores operational realities, the complexity of urban warfare, and the unprecedented standards Israel put in place. The accusations of genocide rest on misquotes and deliberate manipulation. There is no evidence that I, or any other IDF or defense official, have ever dehumanized Palestinians as a people. For me, the real fight is, and always has been, against terrorism. The international community now faces a choice. It can allow the U.N. to remain a platform for bias and manipulation, or it can insist that truth and accountability guide its work. Israel asks for no favors, only fairness. If the U.N. wants to serve its founding mission, it must apply the same standards to all parties. It must not let humanitarian language be weaponized in service of terror. The U.N. was established to prevent future horrors like the Holocaust. Today, it tolerates hate speech in its halls, undermines Israel's right to defend itself, and emboldens those determined to bring further violence to the region.

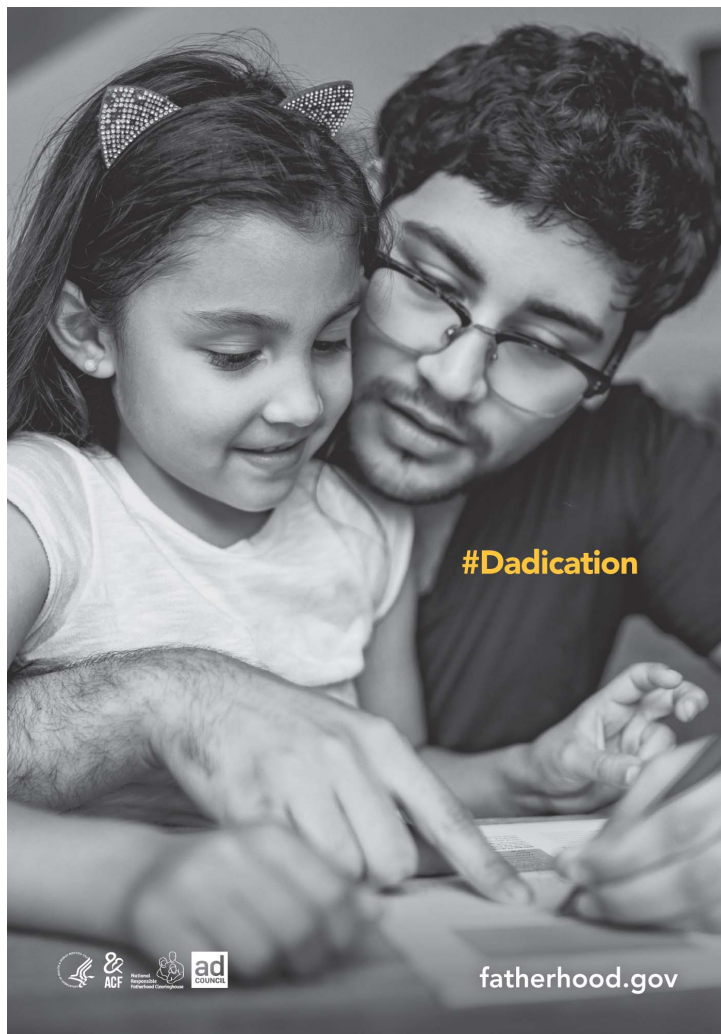


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Pakistan's Jihad Factories May Soon Be Getting A 'Saudi' Lifeline

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman signed a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA) at the Royal Court in Al-Yamamah Palace, Riyadh, on September 17. Under this pact, any aggression against either country will be treated as aggression against both, thereby spectacularly formalising and consolidating a military partnership that has spanned decades.

The details remain opaque; however, the agreement essentially consolidates what has long been an informal practice between the two nations. Pakistan has historically maintained close ties with Saudi Arabia, mainly rooted in the Islamist orientation enshrined in Article 40 of the Pakistani Constitution and sustained by decades of financial support by the Kingdom.

The Really Awkward Timing

The timing of the deal gains high notability given its arrival just days after an Israeli strike on Doha, Qatar, a Gulf neighbour of Saudi Arabia. It further follows the brief military confrontation between India and Pakistan in May, following the terror attack in Kashmir. On the face of it, the deal signals the emergence of a new security architecture linking the Indian subcontinent with West Asia. From Riyadh's perspective, the pact reflects diminishing confidence in the US as the security guarantor of the Gulf region. In that light, aligning with nuclear-armed Pakistan offers the Kingdom an added layer of deterrence and an ally with military capabilities. This is particularly considering the limited military capability in Saudi Arabia despite its strong financial resources.

With Pakistan emerging as an active security player in West Asia, New Delhi will now have to recalibrate its strategic calculations. India's key concern is how Pakistan might leverage Saudi resources - financial aid, oil facilities, and diplomatic support - to advance its hostile designs. This piece focuses specifically on how the deal strengthens Pakistan's military-jihadi complex (MJC).

What The Military-Jihad Complex Really Is

The military-jihadi complex in the Indian security doctrine essentially is a single entity in Pakistan's strategic calculus. This framework conceptualises Pakistan as comprising two overlapping but distinct components - the formal state represented by a civilian government, and the MJC, a structure dominating the commanding heights of power. Under this logic, the Pakistani military establishment is not merely a passive supporter of anti-India outfits such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed



(JeM), but is functionally intertwined with them. The MJC encompasses military support structures, militant proxies, socio-political fronts, religious ideologues, criminal syndicates, and political influence to maintain domestic dominance while pursuing a hostile anti-India policy.

The impact of this deal on the MJC ecosystem could be seen beyond the lens of financial support from Riyadh. Historically, the MJC relied on support from Gulf countries for ideology, resources, and political cover. A formalised pact between Islamabad and Riyadh could deepen those dependencies.

For decades, Saudi Arabia has financially supported clerical organisations and madrassas promoting the Salafi and Wahhabi schools of thought in Pakistan. If the new deal expands such patronage, it may solidify the ideological framework on which the MJC relies. Continued funding of extremist networks could keep the pipeline of radicalised recruits flowing, thereby, in parts, emboldening Pakistan's security establishment. In the absence of explicit intent, the agreement could hold symbolic value, signalling to militant groups that their ideological orientation remains utilitarian.

Where The Money Comes From

Financial inflow holds more significance. The Pakistani military's influence ultimately hinges on external rents. As such, resources from Saudi Arabia in terms of oil on deferred payment, direct cash transfers, or investments could offer added insulation to the MJC from domestic economic shocks and Western aid conditionalities. This cushioning will enable the security establishment in Pakistan to sustain proxy operations in Kashmir or Afghanistan, despite internal fiscal challenges and diplomatic pressure. While this outcome is not inevitable, the precedent of assistance from Saudi

Arabia suggests a high plausibility. The complex system already draws on financial resources from military-owned conglomerates, grey markets and charitable fronts.

There Are Other Perks, Too

In the long term, despite uncertainties, closer defence ties raise the possibility of indirect access for Pakistan to sophisticated Western weapons, considering Riyadh's extensive procurement from

the US and European countries. An exposure of this sort could enhance the Pakistani military's capabilities and confidence. In that light, the perception of improved strength in conventional military could consequently embolden proxy groups and inspire risk-taking in the region. Deeper support from Saudi Arabia carries geopolitical weight too. It may not prevent Pakistan from sanctions, but it may likely widen the scope for negotiations while reducing costs for non-compliance. As the custodian of Islam's holiest sites, Saudi Arabia could also provide symbolic legitimacy to solidify the MJC's position in domestic discourse.

India Must Keep Its Eyes Open

For India, continued diplomatic engagements with Riyadh are key to signalling that support for militant proxies carries deep reputational costs. On September 18, Indian foreign ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that the Indian government was "aware" of the signing of the Saudi-Pakistan defence pact and would "study the implications of this development for our national security as well as for regional and global stability".

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How Trump's \$100,000 Visa Bill Can Bleed Indian Tech Giants Dry

US President Donald Trump's latest executive order imposing a \$100,000 fee for each H-1B visa - a staggering 2,122% increase from the

received 20% of the 1.3 lakh H-1B visas issued between April and September 2024, the new fee structure could translate to hundreds of millions in

More concerning is the human dimension. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has noted that the move could "disrupt families", highlighting

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Second, diversification of international partnerships becomes critical. India should aggressively pursue wider

Indian talent. Silicon Valley companies, many of which depend heavily on Indian engineers and entrepreneurs, could become powerful allies in advocating for more reasonable visa policies.

A Reckoning

Perhaps most importantly, this crisis should spark a fundamental reimagining of India's innovation strategy. Instead of primarily serving as a source of talent for American companies, India needs to become a destination for global innovation investment. This requires creating regulatory environments that encourage risk-taking, intellectual property frameworks that protect innovations, and financial systems that support high-growth technology companies. While immediately disruptive, could ultimately prove beneficial if it forces India to reduce its dependence on temporary migration pathways and instead build comprehensive domestic capabilities. The \$100,000 visa fee is not just a policy change - it's a wake-up call demanding that India transform from being primarily a talent exporter to becoming a global innovation hub.

Utilise This Crisis

The next year will be critical. Indian policymakers, business leaders, and educational institutions must work together to create alternative pathways for growth that don't depend on the vagaries of American immigration policy. The goal should be building an ecosystem so compelling that global talent and capital flow toward India, rather than Indian talent flowing outward.

This transformation won't be easy, but it's necessary. The H-1B restrictions may close one door, but they should inspire India to build entirely new houses of innovation and opportunity.

The question isn't whether India can adapt to this new reality - it's how quickly and effectively it can turn this challenge into a catalyst for unprecedented growth and self-reliance in the technology sector.



previous \$4,500 - represents the most dramatic assault on skilled immigration in decades. This move, effective September 21, 2025, and applicable only to new applications, strikes at the heart of India's technology ambitions and forces a fundamental reassessment of the symbiotic relationship between Indian talent and American innovation.

The scale of this policy's impact on India cannot be overstated. Indian skilled workers received 72.3% of all H-1B visas issued between October 2022 and September 2023, making them the overwhelmingly dominant beneficiaries of the programme. With nearly 4 lakh H-1B applications approved in fiscal year 2024 and 7.59 lakh eligible electronic registrations for the 2024 fiscal-year lottery with only 1.10 lakh selected, the competition was already fierce. Now, the prohibitive cost barrier for the future threatens to fundamentally alter this landscape.

Concerning Numbers

The immediate arithmetic is disturbing. For Indian IT giants like Infosys and TCS, which

additional costs annually if similar trends continue in the future. A company sponsoring 1,000 H-1B workers - not uncommon for major Indian IT firms - would now face a \$100 million burden, compared to the previous \$4.5 million.

This executive order transcends mere cost considerations. It represents a strategic recalibration of America's relationship with global talent, with India bearing the brunt of the impact. The policy's timing is particularly significant, coming at a moment when artificial intelligence and digital transformation have made skilled technical talent more valuable than ever.

The ripple effects will cascade through multiple layers of the Indian economy. The IT services sector, which has built its American expansion strategy around H-1B mobility, faces a real challenge. Companies that have structured their business models around the relatively affordable movement of talent will need to fundamentally reconsider their approaches.

Much More At Stake

the personal cost of policy changes that treat skilled migration as merely an economic lever. Thousands of Indian families have built their lives around the promise of American opportunity, and this abrupt policy shift threatens to unravel carefully laid plans.

The executive order forces India to confront an uncomfortable reality: its technology sector's dependence on American market access through temporary work visas creates vulnerability to unilateral policy changes. This moment demands a comprehensive strategic response across multiple dimensions.

First, India must accelerate its domestic technology ecosystem development. The H-1B restrictions, rather than being viewed solely as a setback, should catalyse investments in creating world-class technology companies that can compete globally from Indian bases. The government's Production Linked Incentive schemes for electronics and software need expanded scope and accelerated implementation.

technology agreements with European Union countries, Canada, Australia, and emerging markets in Southeast Asia and Latin America. The Global Capability Centres (GCCs) model - where multinational companies establish significant operations in India - offers a pathway to capture high-value work without visa dependencies.

Third, the education sector requires immediate attention. Indian universities must rapidly scale programmes in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and advanced robotics. The goal should be creating talent pools so sophisticated that global companies feel compelled to establish major operations in India rather than seeking to relocate Indian talent abroad.

At the same time, India's diplomatic response must be calibrated and multifaceted. The government should engage the Trump administration through established channels while simultaneously building coalitions with American business interests that rely on

The Real Reason Behind Trump's Change Of Heart For TikTok

The White House, on September 16, gave yet another lease of life to TikTok to operate in the US. The owner of the popular video-sharing app, ByteDance, will have until December 16 to divest and transfer control to an American entity. Several corporates have evinced interest in buying the app, which boasts of having 170 million American users.

The Fears Around TikTok

Earlier, fears had been expressed that through the app, precious American data could be stolen or the access could allow the Communist Party of China (CPC) to conduct espionage remotely. Another apprehension was that through Chinese control of the app, the CPC would be in a position to manipulate public opinion in America. During Trump's first term, the Senate had unanimously passed a bill to prohibit downloading the app on devices issued by the government, citing such national security risks. The worries that TikTok was a Trojan horse, coupled with the growing Sino-American tussle over technology, led to the Joe Biden administration passing the 'Protecting Americans from Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act' in 2024. However, Trump 2.0 has not acted to enforce the legislation, and the deadline to divest ownership has been extended three times in the past.

As a result of the legislation, an agreement with China on TikTok in Trump's current term will have to pass muster in Congress. The future of the app's US operations came up during negotiations between the US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng in Madrid recently. While both sides have arrived at a "framework" for the sale of TikTok's US operations, few official details are out in the public domain. As media reports suggest, the new US company, which will operate the app, may comprise American investors having a stake of approximately 80%, with



Chinese investors retaining the remaining (below the 20% limit, as prescribed by the law). News reports have also suggested that, along with the app coming under the control of a US company, it will also have a board member nominated by the Trump administration.

What's Trump Thinking?

If the agreement eventually fructifies, then it gives us an indication into the thinking of Trump 2.0 with respect to economic security being a key element of national security. The Trump administration similarly greenlighted Nippon Steel's \$14 billion acquisition bid for US Steel, in a deal that allows America to select a member of the board in addition to retaining a 'golden share'. The gold share makes the US government a stakeholder in decisions on closing down US Steel's existing manufacturing facilities in the country, and issues like trade, labour, and sourcing from outside.

However, the issues related to economic and national security in a brick-and-mortar industry like steel and a social-media app are a world apart due to the consumer base. Treasury Secretary Bessent

has said that the agreement with China balances America's national security requirements, along with fulfilling Beijing's expectations regarding its interests, too. While China has spun the development as a win for its technological prowess, the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), the cybersecurity watchdog, maintains that it is essentially an accord over Beijing 'licensing the right to use algorithms' and 'intellectual property' to the US, subtly furthering the narrative that it is promoting the export of China's advanced knowhow overseas.

What About ByteDance?

This "routine" commercial deal is being billed by Beijing as a step to promote the stable and sustainable Sino-American economic and trade relations. Wang Jingtao, CAC's Deputy Director, stated that Beijing will decide and approve matters related to the export of TikTok's technology and licensing and usage rights of intellectual property in accordance with Chinese law. It is not clear how much leverage TikTok's developer, ByteDance, will have over the algorithm under the licensing agreement. The

US House Select Committee may travel to Beijing next on China has sought year; hence, he would not like complete divestment by to displease Xi. Another ByteDance and a fully reason for Trump's leniency decoupled algorithm.

US President Donald has soared among the app's Trump and Chinese President user base, with his personal Xi Jinping spoke on account having a following of September 19, discussing 15 million.

These dynamics could have played a part in Washington giving TikTok a long rope. The moot question is whether the notion of mutual Trump and Xi will also be benefit means that Washington meeting on the sidelines of will change its posture towards the forthcoming Asia-Pacific Beijing from open confrontation Economic Cooperation Forum to striking profitable deals, in South Korea, and the given the transactional nature former has indicated that he of Trump 2.0.



It's Not India That Should've Handled Trump Better, But The Other Way Round

Our ties with the US are the most important that we have, but how to handle them is not for us to do alone. All the provocations have come from Trump and the sycophants around him.



The management of India's relations with the US is becoming a serious challenge. Our ties with the US are the most important that we have, but how to handle them is not for us to do alone. The US has also to play its part. Of course, its ties with India are not the most important that they have, and so there is a mismatch in the weight each side gives to the bilateral relationship. Which is why Trump can take liberties with us, as he is doing.

Limited Alternatives

If the US creates unwarranted difficulties in ties, India can try to look at strengthening other relationships. But these alternatives have limits. We have serious outstanding issues with China that we have not been able to address in the last 75 years. With that record, it is not easy to visualise genuinely friendly ties in the foreseeable future.

Russia remains a steady partner, and a powerful one, but there is a limit to strengthening ties with it as an alternative. Russia cannot provide us with the same volumes of trade, investments and access to modern technology as the US can. The people-to-people ties with Russia lack the dimension of these ties with the US.

Things Were Never This Bad

Our ties with the US, notwithstanding the great progress since 2008 in particular (the nuclear deal), have continued to carry many stress points. The US has sought to interfere in our internal affairs, lectured us on human rights, democracy issues, treatment of minorities, restriction of religious freedoms, etc.

It has never been smooth sailing with the US. We have been resentful of some of the ways in which it has treated us, but we have approached the relationship pragmatically. We have protested but

have avoided polemics. During the previous administrations, we were able to manage reasonably well, striking a balance between the positives and the negatives of our ties. That on the US side, they, too, looked positively at India as a geopolitical partner, helped in this. We had managed reasonably well Trump's first term, during which Modi and Trump also struck a good personal equation. While Europe was deeply apprehensive about the prospect of Trump getting re-elected for various reasons - both ideological and those related to European security issues - India was not particularly nervous, believing that we had the measure of the man with all his impulsiveness and unpredictability.

The Unique Situation This Time

In the event, we have miscalculated because Trump has delivered serious body blows to our bilateral ties. He has put the issue of tariffs at the centre of our ties, even if we are not unique in this regard as he has also hit all countries, including US allies, with the tariff weapon. The difference is that while US allies, powerful countries or entities in themselves, have succumbed to Trump's immoderate demands, India, seen as a weaker target, has not yielded on its redlines on agriculture and dairy products. India has sought to negotiate a more balanced interim trade agreement, which is not what Trump wants. He wants a demonstrably one-sided deal in favour of the US. This will not happen as Modi has publicly asserted that India will protect its farmers, milk producers and fishermen, no matter what the cost.

Trump has obsessively called India a "tariff king". He has highly exaggerated the barriers the US faces in accessing the Indian market, to the point of claiming that the US cannot sell any-

thing to India. Although this is manifestly absurd, this means that he must, for his own image, demonstrate to his base that he has brought India to its heels by compelling it to open its markets in areas of interest to US lobbies. To achieve that goal, he has imposed a 25% tariff on India, to which he has added another 25% as a penalty for India's oil purchases from Russia. He has mixed trade and non-trade issues, making a way out difficult for both sides.

The Irresponsible Trump & Co

Worse, he has let loose senior members of his administration, such as Treasury Secretary Bessent, Commerce Secretary Lutnik and Trade Adviser Navarro, to pound India on the tariff front. They have gone to absurd lengths, with Lutnik saying almost comically that while India has a population of 1.4 billion people, the US cannot sell a bushel of corn to it. He threatened tough action if India did not remove tariffs. As it happens, India is the fifth-largest producer of corn. Over 60% of this corn is going into cattle and poultry feed. The issue is that India does not permit genetically modified corn for human consumption because of health concerns and adverse public sentiment. Bessent and Lutnik have made many statements that suggest that they are taking satisfaction from the pain being inflicted on India by the imposition of 25% penalty tariffs. Lutnik thinks that India will come to the table in a month or two and say "sorry" to Trump. Both these senior administration members are strongly advocating penalty tariffs on India by the EU, too. Navarro has gone to the extent of saying that the Ukraine war is Modi's and that we are responsible for the ongoing killings in Ukraine. There is no thought being given to how India will react to such over-the-top rhetoric by the Trump administration. No More Phone Calls Those on both sides who have felt that the downward slide in India-US relations needed to be arrested have advocated some direct contact between Trump and Modi as a way to do so. A telephone call was considered risky by Indian analysts in view of distorted versions that Trump has a habit of putting out on Truth Social or to the media, which project him as the winner and can seriously embarrass those he speaks to. Trump conducts serious diplomacy through social media platforms at the cost of discreet, behind-the-scenes efforts to address differences.

Eventually, Trump has sent some soft messages to Modi, and the latter

responded positively. One has to be cautious about what this might mean going ahead. Trump can easily change his tone depending on the mood of the moment, as he keeps contradicting himself as it suits him. The unpredictability he cultivates is unsettling for others - in this case, India, because it is difficult to judge what his bottom line is.

Rein In The Sidekicks

Despite his overtures to Modi, Bessent, Lutnik and Navarro haven't changed their discourse, which suggests that they have not received any signal to tone down their verbal aggression. The Speaker of the House has now expressed support for imposing penalties on India and China for buying Russian oil. Trump himself has commented adversely about the SCO summit to the effect that India and Russia appear lost to "deepest, darkest" China. He has also been advocating the imposition of 100% tariffs on BRICS countries.

The US ambassador-designate to India, Sergio Gor, has made some positive remarks about India in his confirmation hearings, as is to be expected, but has also made statements that indicate difficulties ahead. He informed the Senators that Trump had made it crystal clear that India must stop buying Russian oil and that he will pursue this goal while in India.

The Provocations Are Not Ours

The Trump administration has made India's purchases of Russian oil a contentious bilateral issue. The polemics around it have become uncontrolled. India cannot bend on this issue as doing so will mean yielding control over our foreign policy to the US. Moreover, with Putin slated to come to India in December for the annual summit, any step to reduce our oil supplies from Russia under US pressure will, in any case, be most inopportune.

The US has now revoked the waiver on the Chabahar port project and henceforth subject those associated with it to sanctions. This is a direct hit to a connectivity project that India has promoted for access to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Strategically, this project allows India to raise its profile in this region and balance China's hold. Trump has also launched another missile at India on the HIB visa system, of which India is the biggest beneficiary. Some Indian commentators say that India could have handled Trump better. In actual fact, Trump should be handling India better. All the provocations have come from Trump and the sycophants around him.

The White House's H-1B Proclamation - What Employers and Workers Need to Know About the New \$100,000 Fee

(News Agency) : In a rapidly evolving situation broadly impacting the business immigration community, the White House issued a proclamation on Friday, September 19, 2025, implementing significant restrictions on H-1B entry and introducing a \$100,000 fee requirement. The situation has been marked by initial confusion followed by crucial clarifications.

Timeline

September 19, 2025 – The Proclamation

The White House signed the "Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers" proclamation, effective 12:01 AM EDT on September 21, 2025. The initial language includes sweeping restrictions on H-1B entry and a mandatory \$100,000 fee.

September 20, 2025 – Agency Clarifications

Both U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) issued memoranda that substantially narrowed the scope of the proclamation.

These clarifications proved essential in understanding implementation, but still leave some questions unanswered.

September 21, 2025 – White House FAQ

The White House and Department of State (DOS) released additional guidance, providing further clarity on the proclamation's application, but again leaving some questions unanswered.

What We Know: The Current Impact Based on the federal agencies' clarifications, the proclamation applies as follows: H-1B Workers Currently Inside the United States Approved Petitions: Workers with USCIS-approved H-1B petitions filed before September 21, 2025, are not impacted. These individuals may continue to work for their sponsoring employer and travel internationally without being subject to the new restrictions. This includes workers whose petitions were approved months or years ago



and are currently working in valid H-1B status. Questions remain on whether these workers will be impacted when it is necessary to file new H-1B petitions with USCIS. Pending Petitions: Workers whose employers filed H-1B petitions before September 21, 2025, but have not yet received a decision from USCIS, are not impacted by the new requirements. These cases will continue to be adjudicated under

the previous rules, without the \$100,000 fee requirement. Questions remain on whether these workers will be impacted when it is necessary to file subsequent H-1B petitions with USCIS. Future Filings: Any new H-1B petitions filed on or after September 21, 2025, for workers currently in the United States will be subject to the new \$100,000 fee requirement. See additional information below regarding uncertainties remaining

around the types of H-1B petitions to which the fee applies. H-1B Workers Currently Outside the United States Approved Petitions with Valid Visas: Foreign nationals who have both a USCIS-approved H-1B petition (filed before September 21, 2025) and a valid H-1B visa stamp in their passport may enter the United States without restriction. This includes workers who are abroad for business travel or vacation and hold valid documentation. Approved Petitions and Applying for New H-1B Visas: Foreign nationals who have a USCIS-H-1B approved petition (filed before September 21, 2025) and are applying for an H-1B visa stamp at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate may secure the visa stamp and enter the United States without restriction. Pending Petitions Filed Before September 21: Workers whose employers filed H-1B petitions before the effective date, even if still awaiting USCIS approval, are not subject to the new restrictions.

Yale scholar slams Donald Trump's H1B visa move, says 'every country would kill to get best IIT graduates'



(News Agency) : Yale scholar Gautam Mukunda criticised United States President Donald Trump's decision to introduce a \$100,000 fee for H-1B visa applications, warning that the move would undermine America's long-standing advantage in attracting international expertise. Mukunda described the measure as "economically unsound" and argued that it would reduce the United States' ability to draw highly qualified professionals at a time when other countries are competing vigorously for the same pool of talent. He stressed that top graduates from institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) are in high demand globally, and suggested that Washington was discarding a

key advantage without justification. "Every country in the world would kill to get the best IIT graduates. But America is throwing this asset away for no reason. This H1B visa decision makes no sense at all," Mukunda said. The academic also remarked that senior figures in American industry were displeased with the policy but had refrained from expressing their concerns publicly due to fears of political retaliation. He suggested that the move appeared more symbolic than substantive, describing it as a distraction rather than a genuine policy reform. Reactions to his comments surfaced on social media, with one user on X (formerly Twitter) writing: "It's wild because the US literally benefits from decades of India's investment in education, then turns away top talent when it's time to reap the rewards. The irony is that those same grads end up fu-

elling innovation back home or in competing economies." Another contributor remarked: "Bro, calm down, Microsoft, NVIDIA, Apple, etc. are trillion-dollar companies and they will pay a premium for the IITians." Economists have also raised concerns that such a steep increase in costs could damage the United States' economic prospects. They pointed out that technology companies depend heavily on skilled international workers, particularly from India, and that a restrictive visa regime risked discouraging engineers, coders and scientists from joining the American workforce. This, they cautioned, could have long-term consequences for competitiveness and innovation. At present, a significant proportion of leading American businesses are headed by Indian-origin executives, including Google, Microsoft and IBM. In addition, Indian doctors

account for nearly six per cent of the US medical workforce. Trump's executive order introduced an annual \$100,000 application charge for H-1B visas. The programme, which allows US companies to employ foreign professionals in specialised fields such as technology, engineering and finance, grants visas for an initial period of three years, with the possibility of renewal up to six years. Each year, the United States issues 85,000 H-1B visas: 65,000 for general applicants and a further 20,000 for individuals with advanced degrees from American universities. Indian nationals account for around 70 to 72 per cent of those awarded visas. The Trump administration stated that the fee was intended to reduce reliance on foreign workers and encourage the hiring of domestic employees.

Trump Admin Floats New H1B Rules Favoring Skilled Workers, Scrap Lottery

(NewsAgency): WASHINGTON, DC — Days after President Donald Trump signed a proclamation to significantly curtail the H-1B visa program by hiking the application fee, the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has proposed to "amend its regulations" governing the process. The DHS proposal seeks to scrap the existing lottery system and implement "a weighted selection process that would generally favor the allocation of H-1B visas to higher-skilled and higher-paid aliens, while maintaining the opportunity for employers to

secure H-1B workers at all wage levels". The initiative will



be opened for a 30-day public new visas annually, allowed

US companies to hire skilled foreign workers in fields like technology and engineering through a random lottery system. Trump just a few days ago signed a proclamation to crack down on H-1B visas, announcing a \$100,000 fee for each new application. "President Trump promised to put American workers first, and this common-sense action does just that by discouraging companies from spamming the system and driving down wages. It also gives certainty to American businesses who actually want to bring high-skilled workers to our great

country but have been trampled on by abuses of the system," White House spokeswoman Taylor Rogers said.

The new proposal was announced as two senior Ministers — External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal met Trump administration officials in New York on September 22. After his meeting with Jaishankar, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that India is of "critical" value to his country and welcomed its ongoing interaction in trade. (IANS)

H1B Visa Hike: Come Back Home, Say Experts



(NewsAgency): On September 19, US President Donald Trump announced a shocking H1B visa fee hike part of his immigration reform. As per the revised regulations, effective September 21, companies recruiting foreign professionals will have to pay \$100,000 as a one-time fee for each new H1B application. After the announcement, tech giants Microsoft, Amazon, Meta and others asked their employees to return to the US by September 21 or risk being stranded. Several Indian IT stocks took a serious hit, the sharpest decline in months, with Rs 85,500 crore wiped out from IT stocks. To avoid further confusion, the US government clarified that the proposed \$100,000 H1B fee will apply only to new applicants, while existing visa holders and their employers remain unaffected. This news provided immediate relief to over 700,000 international professionals and the companies that rely on

them. How will the new H1B visa rule affect Indian professionals? According to career experts, what's happening is not a simple US door slam; it's the beginning of a sharper pivot. The changing landscape will eventually force Indian IT majors to rethink strategy, models and risk. Sanketh Chengappa K G, director and business head (professional staffing), Adecco India, explains how the new order will affect nearly 50 to 60 per cent of H1B holders who are Indian nationals. "Looking ahead, the enforcement of the fee could affect an estimated 50K+ future applicants annually, with industries such as IT, engineering and financial services most exposed. Within these sectors, high-demand domains like cloud, AI, cybersecurity and advanced engineering roles are likely to feel the greatest impact," Chengappa says. Not just working professionals, for those planning higher studies

or jobs in the US, the increased costs and stricter requirements imply that they must plan more strategically, advises Dr Karan Gupta, an internationally certified education counsellor, TEDx speaker and the founder of Karan Gupta Consulting. "Companies may hesitate to sponsor as many candidates so students will have to work harder to stand out through specialised skills and advanced degrees," says Dr Gupta. "Those already in the US will need to carefully evaluate their long-term prospects, weighing options such as employer-sponsored green cards, switching to alternative visa categories or exploring opportunities in countries with more flexible immigration policies like Canada or the UK," he explains. Pradeep Pramanik, a placement consultant and director at Fast Track Career Consultants, feels this may affect the remittances to India from NRIs which currently stands at around \$130 billion annually and continues to rise. "India has contributed immensely in shaping America's economy and leading global tech brands like Google (CEO Sundar Pichai), Microsoft (CEO Satya Nadella), Adobe (CEO Shantanu Narayen) and IBM (CEO Arvind Krishna) to name a few," says Pramanik. "Nearly 10 to 12 per cent of India's GDP comes from the IT/BPM (busi-

ness process management) sector, which accounts for 53 per cent of our total IT export. A significant portion of this revenue is driven by clients in the United States," he says. Global workforce strategies, observes Dr Gupta, are being reshaped. "Employers are expected to prioritise H1B sponsorship for niche, high-impact roles while accelerating offshore delivery and expanding global capability centres (GCCs) in India, which already employ over 1.9 million skilled professionals. "In the long run, this development could redefine how cross-border talent is deployed, how companies balance cost, capability and continuity and how organisational resilience is built in a rapidly evolving policy environment."" To meet market demand and ensure survival or growth, giants like Google, Meta, Microsoft, Tesla and Apple are likely to establish larger operations in India; otherwise, they risk losing market share to competitors from China, Japan, Korea, Germany, France, the UK and Taiwan," predicts Pramanik. What are the possible career opportunities for those planning to return to India this year? Trump's move was originally designed to nudge large companies toward local hiring, reduce dependence on imported talent and create more American jobs. But if India plays it right, the

constraints could channel demand back into India rather than killing it outright. In the current scenario, according to Dr Gupta, professionals who may be contemplating returning to India, must look beyond traditional jobs and instead find ways to generate employment within India. Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu recently took to X to advise Indians to come back home: 'I am sad to say this but for Indians on an H1-B visa in America, this may be that time. Come back home. It may take five years to rebuild your lives but it will make you stronger. Do not live in fear. Make the bold move. You will do well'. "India's start-up sector, particularly in areas like fintech, health tech and edtech, is booming and values international exposure," says Dr Gupta. "Roles in product management, data science, digital transformation and strategy are in demand," he points out. "Established multinationals with strong India operations, such as consulting firms, investment banks and technology majors also actively hire professionals with global experience. For those with entrepreneurial aspirations, returning Indians can leverage both their international skills and the strong funding environment for start-ups here," says Dr Gupta.

United Nations explains why the escalator stopped as soon as Trump stepped on



The accidental culprit? A White House videographer who most likely tripped a safety mechanism.

U.N. secretary general spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric said in a note to reporters that a technician found it was the White House

videographer who was unintentionally behind the now international incident that was caught on video. "The escalator had stopped after a built-in safety mechanism on the comb step was triggered at the top of the escalator," Dujarric said. "The

safety mechanism is designed to prevent people or objects accidentally being caught and stuck in or pulled into the gearing. The videographer may have inadvertently triggered the safety function described above." But the escalator wasn't the only thing that malfunctioned for Trump during his visit to the U.N. "I don't mind making this speech without a teleprompter, because the teleprompter is not working," Trump said soon after he took the podium to address all 193 delegations from around the globe.

"There are two things I got from the United Nations: a bad escalator and a bad teleprompter," he said. A U.N. official told NBC News that the White House was respon-

sible for operating Trump's teleprompter. The Associated Press first reported the U.N.'s findings on the two incidents. Trump appeared good-natured about all of it. "The teleprompter was broken and the escalator came to a sudden halt as we were ridding up to the podium, but both of those events probably made the speech more interesting than it would have been other wise," Trump wrote on Truth Social.

"It is always an honor to speak at the United Nations, even if, their equipment is somewhat faulty." His press secretary, however, viewed things much differently. "If someone at the UN intentionally stopped the escalator as the President and First Lady were stepping on,

they need to be fired and investigated immediately," Karoline Leavitt wrote on X. Hours later, on Fox News, Leavitt suggested U.N. staffers may have sought to injure Trump and indicated the issue was far from resolved. "When you put all of this together, it doesn't look like a coincidence to me," she told host Jesse Watters. "I know that we have people, including the United States Secret Service, who are looking into this to try to get to the bottom of it," Leavitt added. "And if we find that these were U.N. staffers who were purposely trying to trip up — literally trip up — the president and the first lady of the United States, well, there better be accountability for those people, and I will personally see to it."

NYC boy shot in head outside Dunkin' Donuts is in coma, brain-dead, family says



The 13-year-old boy shot in the head in the parking lot of a Queens Dunkin' Donuts a day ago is brain-dead and in a coma, and the family may soon have to decide whether to take him off life support, his uncle says.

The NYPD says they got a call about the shooting in front of the donut shop on Linden Boulevard in Cambria Heights around 8:30 a.m. Monday. The injured boy, identified by family as Sanjay Samuel, was taken to a hospital in critical condition. No improvement had been noted as of early

Tuesday, his uncle said. Officials have not released descriptions of potential suspects at this time. A backpack believed to belong to the shooter was recovered at the scene, which is located near three schools. Police have not said whether the boy was headed to class at the time. Anyone with information on the shooting is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-577-TIPS. "There is nothing more devastating than yet another child becoming a victim of senseless gun violence. Our hearts ache with the family

and friends of this 13-year-old who is fighting for his life because of this epidemic," Mayor Eric Adams posted on social media. The location is the same where a photo of a boy in a cap and gown hangs on a street pole.

Neighbors said it's there to honor 13-year-old Kevin Miller, who was shot and killed on his way to school in 2009. Queens news From Jamaica to Astoria to Flushing to Sunnyside and all points between, NBC New York covers Queens news, weather, traffic and more.

At UN, President Trump Champions Sovereignty, Rejects Globalism

Today, in remarks to the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, President Donald J. Trump delivered a powerful rebuke to the destructive globalism that has fueled the endless conflict and chaos around the world. During the address, President Trump was unapologetic in proclaiming American strength as he unveiled a bold vision for sovereign nations to unite against the true threats of terrorism, unchecked migration, biological warfare, and loss of cultural identity.

Here are highlights from President Trump's speech:

"America is blessed with the strongest economy, the strongest borders, the strongest military, the strongest friendships, and the strongest spirit of any nation on the face of the earth. This is indeed the Golden Age of America." (Watch) "Four months in a row, the number of illegal aliens admitted and entering our country has been zero... Our message is very simple: If you come illegally into the United States, you're going to jail or you're going back to where you came from." (Watch) "In a period of just seven months, I have ended seven 'un-endable' wars... No President or Prime Minister — and for that matter,

no other country — has ever done anything close to that... It's too bad that I had to do these things instead of the United Nations doing them — and sadly, in all cases, the United Nations did not even try to help." (Watch) "What is the purpose of the United Nations? The UN has such tremendous potential... All they seem to do is write a really strongly worded letter, and then never follow that letter up. It's empty words — and empty words don't solve war." (Watch) "Everyone says that I should get the Nobel Peace Prize... but for me, the real prize will be the sons and daughters who live to grow up with their mothers and fathers because millions of people are no longer being killed in endless and un-glorious wars. What I care about is not winning prizes, it's saving lives." (Watch) "A dramatically better future is within our reach — but to get there, we must reject the failed approaches of the past and work together to confront some of the greatest threats in history." (Watch) "My position is very simple: the world's number one sponsor of terror can never be allowed to possess the most dangerous weapon."

The History And Origin Of The H-1B Visa Program

visas specifically reserved for individuals with advanced degrees from U.S. institutions. The H-1B visa program allows holders to have "dual intent." This means that they can legally intend to migrate permanently to the U.S. and apply for a green card while working on the H-1B visa.

From its inception in the '90s, the H-1B visa program has been essential in fostering innovation and growth in the U.S. economy by filling critical gaps in the workforce. Tech giants and startups alike have benefited greatly from the contributions of H-1B workers.

Critics argue that the tight cap on H-1B visas should be more flexible and responsive to the market's needs, especially in rapidly growing industries like tech and biotech. On the other hand, proponents of the cap emphasize the protection of American jobs.

The H-1B visa program offers opportunities for skilled foreign workers to secure employment in the United States, helping to establish the country as a global leader in technological innovation by attracting the best and brightest minds from around the world.

Employers hiring H-1B workers are required to pay them at least the prevailing wage for the occupation in the area of employment. This ensures that

the hiring of foreign workers does not negatively impact the wages of American workers.

Over the years, the H-1B visa program has become a pathway to permanent residency for many skilled workers, providing them with opportunities to build their careers and lives in the United States.

Learn Today: Key Terms Explained

Glossary:

1. H-1B visa program: An employment-based visa program in the United States that allows U.S. employers to temporarily hire foreign workers in specialty occupations. It aims to address shortages in qualified, skilled labor by providing access to a global talent pool.

2. Immigration Act of 1990: Legislation in the United States that established the H-1B visa program. It aimed to admit more skilled workers into the country and address the growing demand for high-tech professionals during the tech boom of the early 1990s.

3. Specialty occupations: Jobs that require specialized knowledge and a bachelor's degree or equivalent in the field of employment. These occupations are eligible for the H-1B visa program.

4. Cap and Lottery System: The H-1B visa program has an annual cap of 85,000 visas, including 20,000 specifically reserved for individuals with

advanced degrees from U.S. institutions. Once the cap is reached, a lottery system is used to select the applications that will be processed.

5. Duration and Extension: The H-1B visa is typically valid for up to three years but can be extended to a maximum of six years, with some exceptions for those waiting for permanent residency applications to process.

6. Wage Requirements: Employers must pay H-1B workers at least the prevailing wage for the occupation in the area of employment to ensure that the hiring of foreign workers doesn't negatively impact American workers' wages.

7. Dual Intent: Unlike other nonimmigrant visas, H-1B holders can legally intend to migrate permanently to the U.S. This allows them to apply for a green card (permanent residency) while working on the H-1B visa.

8. H-1B Visa Reform Act: A legislation passed in 2004 that introduced additional requirements for H-1B employers, such as proving efforts to hire American workers first and not displacing any American worker within six months of filing an H-1B petition.

9. Scarcity of Qualified American Workers: Refers to sectors where there is a shortage of American workers with the

required qualifications and skills to fill specific roles. The H-1B visa program aims to address this scarcity by allowing U.S. employers to hire skilled foreign workers.

10. Prevailing Wage: The wage rate determined by the U.S. Department of Labor for a specific occupation in a particular geographic area. Employers must pay H-1B workers at least the prevailing wage to ensure fair compensation.

11. Green Card: Informal term for a Permanent Resident Card, which is an official document that grants an immigrant the right to live and work permanently in the United States.

12. Nonimmigrant Visa: A temporary visa for individuals who wish to visit the United States for a specific purpose, such as tourism, work, or study. The H-1B visa is a nonimmigrant visa category.

13. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): A federal agency that oversees lawful immigration to the United States. It is responsible for processing immigration and naturalization applications, including applications for the H-1B visa program.

14. Prevailing Wage: The wage rate determined by the U.S. Department of Labor for a specific occupation in a particular geographic area. Employers

must pay H-1B workers at least the prevailing wage to ensure fair compensation.

15. Permanent Residency: Also known as a green card, it is a status granted to immigrants that allows them to live and work permanently in the United States.

16. Specialty Knowledge: A specific, advanced, and specialized knowledge that is required for a particular occupation. It is one of the criteria for qualifying for the H-1B visa program.

17. Lottery System: A random selection process used when the demand for H-1B visas exceeds the annual cap. Once the cap is reached, the lottery system selects applications for processing.

18. Prevailing Wage: The wage rate determined by the U.S. Department of Labor for a specific occupation in a particular geographic area. Employers must pay H-1B workers at least the prevailing wage to ensure fair compensation.

19. Nonimmigrant Visa: A temporary visa for individuals who wish to visit the United States for a specific purpose, such as tourism, work, or study. The H-1B visa is a nonimmigrant visa category.

20. Permanent Residency: Also known as a green card, it is a status granted to immigrants that allows them to live and work permanently in the United States.

U.S. Secret Service dismantles imminent telecommunications threat in New York tristate area

NEW YORK – The U.S. Secret Service dismantled a network of electronic devices located throughout the New York tristate area that were used to conduct multiple telecommunications-related threats directed towards senior U.S. government officials, which represented an imminent threat to the agency's protective operations.

This protective intelligence investigation led to the discovery of more than 300 co-located SIM servers and 100,000 SIM cards across multiple sites.

In addition to carrying out anonymous telephonic threats, these devices could be used to conduct a wide range of telecommunications attacks. This includes disabling cell phone towers, enabling denial of services attacks and facilitating anonymous, encrypted communication between potential threat actors and criminal enterprises.

While forensic examination of these devices is ongoing, early analysis indicates cellular communications

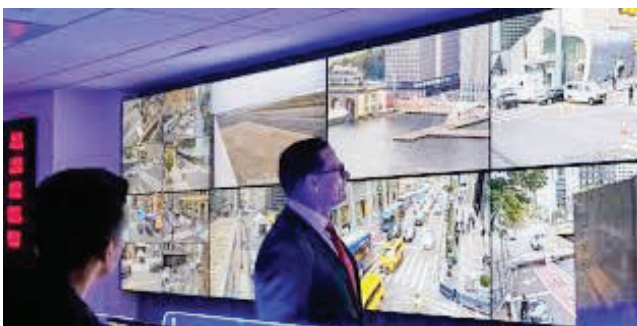
between nation-state threat actors and individuals that are known to federal law enforcement.

"The potential for disruption to our country's

imminent threats to our protectees will be immediately investigated, tracked down and dismantled."

These devices were concentrated within 35 miles of the global meeting of the United Nations General Assembly now underway in New York City. Given the timing, location and potential for significant disruption to New York telecommunications posed by these devices, the agency moved quickly to disrupt this network. The U.S. Secret Service's Advanced Threat Interdiction Unit, a new section of the agency dedicated to disrupting the most significant and imminent threats to our protectees, is conducting this investigation. This investigation is currently ongoing.

The Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Investigations, the Department of Justice, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the NYPD, as well as other state and local law enforcement partners, provided valuable technical advice and assistance in support of this investigation.



telecommunications posed by this network of devices cannot be overstated," said U.S. Secret Service Director Sean Curran. "The U.S. Secret Service's protective mission is all about prevention, and this investigation makes it clear to potential bad actors that

PM Shehbaz Sharif urges IMF to consider flood impact on Pakistan economy



Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said that the country was steadily meeting its International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme commitments but urged the lender to account for the impact of recent floods in its upcoming review, Dawn reported. He made

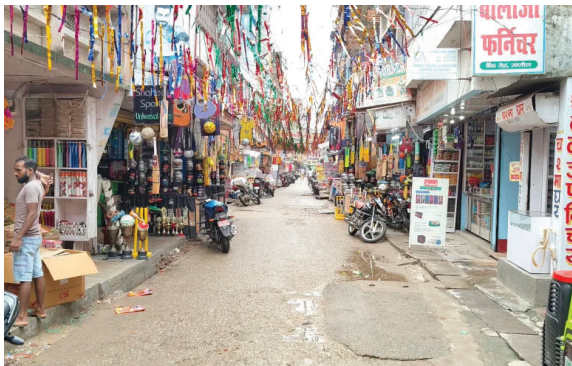
these remarks during a meeting with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on the sidelines of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. According to Dawn, Pakistan is on track to meet all seven Quantitative Performance Criteria (QPC) ahead

of the September 25 review of the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF), approved in May this year. A statement from the Press Information Department (PID) following the meeting noted: "While emphasising that Pakistan was making steady progress towards meeting the various targets and commitments under the IMF programme, the prime minister said that the impact of the recent floods on Pakistan's economy must be factored into the IMF's review." Dawn highlighted that the government had earlier projected 4.2 per cent growth in 2026, driven by a recovery in farming and manufacturing under the IMF bailout. However, record monsoon rains since June have inundated large parts of Punjab and Sindh, causing extensive losses to agriculture and industry. The newspaper cited estimates from

GEOGLAM, a global agricultural monitoring body, which reported at least 220,000 hectares of rice fields submerged between August 1 and September 16. Punjab's disaster management authority also confirmed that 1.8 million acres of farmland had been inundated. According to the PID statement, Georgieva expressed sympathy for those affected by the disaster. "She noted the importance of the damage assessment to underpin recovery priorities," the statement said, adding that she praised PM Shehbaz's "commitment to pursuing sound macro-economic policies" and reiterated IMF's support for Pakistan's reform programme. During the meeting, Shehbaz also acknowledged the IMF's continued partnership. He appreciated its assistance through the \$3 billion

Stand By Arrangement in FY 2024, the \$7 billion EFF, and the \$1.4 billion Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF). "Today, with the institution of deep-rooted structural reforms, Pakistan's economy [is] showing positive signs of stabilisation and is now moving towards recovery," he was quoted as saying by Dawn. Separately, the prime minister met World Bank Group President Ajay Banga and lauded the bank's support for Pakistan, according to another PID statement. While appreciating Banga's leadership, he briefed him on the government's "comprehensive reform agenda, encompassing resource mobilisation, energy sector reforms, privatisation and measures to build resilience against climate change."

How Nepal violence is still hurting India border trade



Raxaul, India – Ranjeet Kumar considers himself to be lucky to get any business from Nepal with the recent spate of violence in the neighbouring country. The 50-year-old runs a century-old shop of religious items in Raxaul in Bihar state in eastern India, barely 800 metres (about 2,600 feet) short of the country's border with Nepal, and the last market in the area. Kumar sells items used mostly during daily prayers in Hindu households on both sides of the border, like sacred thread and a fire pit for ceremonies. But sales have dipped from across the border since mass anticorruption protests broke out in Nepal on September 8. The protests, led by the country's Gen Z, left 72 dead, including an In-

dian national, and more than 2,000 injured in the Himalayan nation. Even though the border was closed for a week when violence broke out, residents near the border could get permission to make quick shopping runs into India, helping ensure Kumar's business was not deeply hit. "They came and went back quickly," he said. But most others have not been as fortunate. Arun Kumar Gupta, 55, a cloth trader in Raxaul, told Al Jazeera that his business came to a standstill during the violence, making it difficult to fund the salaries of his three employees. "Over 90 percent of the businesses in markets bordering Nepal depend on Nepalese citizens," Gupta said. India shares

an approximately 1,750km-long (1,088-mile) porous border with Nepal that goes through five Indian states: Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim, all of which provide multiple entry points between the two countries, and citizens of both sides are allowed to travel freely across the open border without a passport. India is Nepal's largest trading partner and biggest source of foreign investment. It also accounts for about two-thirds of Nepal's merchandise trade and one-third of services.

India sends petroleum products, chemical fertilisers, salt, sugar, rice, vehicles, copper and cotton, among several other items, to Nepal. It imports hydroelectric power, resin, yarn, and handicrafts from the smaller country. The total trade between India and Nepal stood at \$8.5bn in 2024-25, which included exports from India worth \$7.3bn and imports of about \$1.2bn during the period.

Major blow

The protests in Nepal forced the government of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli to resign, after youth agitators set the parliament building and the homes of several politicians on fire.

Navy Chief meets Sri Lankan PM, discusses maritime security, cooperation

Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi met Sri Lankan Prime Minister Harini Amarasuriya in Colombo on Tuesday during his four-day official visit to Sri Lanka, with discussions focused on deepening maritime cooperation and defence ties. The talks reaffirmed the longstanding naval partnership between India and Sri Lanka, with both sides committing to enhanced operational engagements, capacity-building efforts, and participation in multilateral maritime forums such as the International Fleet Review, MILAN, and the Admiral's Cup Regatta. Prime Minister Amarasuriya underscored the importance of collective regional efforts to secure maritime commons. She highlighted the need for closer cooperation on issues like anti-narcotics operations, illegal fishing, marine pollution, and maritime terrorism. The Prime Minister also called for stronger coordination on search and rescue missions and expanded naval training exchanges. Admiral Tripathi's visit comes amid India's increasing strategic focus on the Indian Ocean Region, particularly in response to China's growing presence in Sri Lanka and other neighbouring countries. During

his visit, the Navy Chief held a series of high-level meetings with key Sri Lankan defence officials, including Deputy Defence Minister Major General KP Aruna Jayasekera, Defence Secretary Sampath Thuyacontha, and Commander of the Sri Lanka Navy, Vice Admiral Kanchana Banagoda. He also met Commander of the Sri Lanka Air Force Air Marshal VB Edirisirighe, and Commander of the Sri Lanka Army, Lieutenant General Lasantha Rodrigo. According to the Indian Navy, the discussions "underscored the shared resolve of both nations to enhance defence cooperation and interoperability across the services." Key areas included joint training, naval collaboration, and improved maritime domain awareness. Admiral Tripathi also laid a wreath at the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) Memorial in Colombo, honouring Indian soldiers who served during the IPKF operations. The Navy described the gesture as a tribute to the shared history and sacrifices that underpin the India-Sri Lanka relationship. On Tuesday, the Navy Chief addressed officers at the National Defence College in Colombo.

Trump says he 'will not allow' Israel to annex West Bank after lobbying from allies

British officials said they feared Trump would recognise Israeli control over the West Bank in retaliation for the UK, Australia, France and other recognising Palestine

Donald Trump has said he will not allow Israel to annex the occupied West Bank, rejecting calls from some far-right politicians in Israel who want to extend sovereignty over the area and in doing so make impossible the establishment of a Palestinian state. "I will not allow Israel to annex the West Bank. Nope, I will not allow it. It's not going to happen," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office, adding "There's been enough. It's time to stop now." Trump made the comments as Benjamin Netanyahu was arriving in New York to deliver an address to the United Nations on Friday. There has been widespread speculation in Israel and elsewhere over how Netanyahu intends to retaliate for the recognition of Palestine as a state earlier this week by the UK, Australia, France, Canada and Portugal.

Officials in Jerusalem have said that anything Netanyahu does will be cleared first with Trump. Options include full annexation of the West Bank, or of smaller portions such as a strip of territory along the border with

Jordan or shuttering British, French and other consulates in East Jerusalem, analysts said.

Earlier this week, British officials said they feared Trump would recognise Israeli control over illegal settlements on the West Bank in retaliation for the moves by the UK and others.

Arab and European leaders were engaged in an intensive lobbying operation to make sure he did not go through with the recognition of West Bank settlements.

Netanyahu has faced significant pressure from far-right factions who are part of his ruling coalition to annex the West Bank, prompting alarm among Arab leaders, some of whom met on Tuesday with Trump on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

Arab and Muslim countries warned Trump about the grave consequences of any annexation of the West Bank — a message the US president "understands very well," according to Saudi Arabia's foreign minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud.

Israeli settlements have grown in size and number since Israel captured the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 war and then imposed a military occupation. They stretch deep into the territory with a system of roads and other infrastructure under Israeli control, further slicing up the land. A widely condemned Israeli settlement plan known as the E1 project, which would effectively bisect the occupied West Bank and cut it off from East Jerusalem, received final approval in August. It will cut across land that the Palestinians seek for a state.

Israeli finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, an ultra-nationalist, said at the time that a Palestinian state was "being erased from the table."

About 700,000 Israeli settlers live among 2.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, which Israel annexed in a move not recognised by most countries.

Most of the international community considers Israeli settlements in the West Bank illegal under international law. Israel disputes this, citing

historical and biblical ties to the area and saying the settlements provide strategic depth and security.

While international leaders gather at the United Nations in New York, the US presented a 21-point Middle East peace plan in a bid to end the nearly two-year-long war in Gaza.

Trump, who remains Israel's staunchest ally on the world stage, said that he spoke with representatives from Middle Eastern nations and Netanyahu on Thursday and that a deal on Gaza could happen soon. "We want the hostages back, we want the bodies back and we want to have peace in that region. So we had some very good talks," he said. Israel has drawn global condemnation over its war in Gaza, which was triggered by a Hamas raid into Israel in 2023 in which militants killed 1,200, mostly civilians. The conflict has caused major destruction and killed more than 65,000 Palestinians, also mostly civilians. A UN backed hunger monitor says part of the territory is suffering from famine.

Trump announces 100% tariff on drugs, puts India pharma exports at risk

Trump announced sweeping new tariffs, including 100 per cent on drugs and 50 per cent on kitchen cabinets, insisting manufacturers must "build here or pay up." Economists warn the tariffs could fuel inflation and economic uncertainty.

US President Donald Trump on Thursday unveiled another round of sweeping import taxes, declaring he will slap tariffs of up to 100 per cent on goods ranging from pharmaceutical drugs to kitchen cabinets. "I'm putting a 100 per cent import tax on pharmaceutical drugs unless the companies are building plants right here in the United States," Trump said on Truth Social. "Breaking ground, under construction, that's the deal. No exceptions." Trump's latest tariff blitz, set to take effect October 1, includes a 50 per cent tax on kitchen cabinets and bathroom vanities, 30 per cent on upholstered furniture, and 25 per cent on heavy trucks.

Foreign producers, he argued, were undercutting US companies. "Furniture and cabinetry are flooding the United

States. Heavy trucks and parts are hurting our own producers. Tariffs are needed — for National Security and other reasons," Trump said.

The measures come just weeks after the White House announced earlier trade frameworks and import taxes. According to the Associated Press, Trump remains convinced tariffs can help cut the federal deficit while boosting domestic manufacturing. But critics warn the strategy risks worsening inflation and stifling growth as businesses already adjusting to earlier tariffs face fresh costs and uncertainty.

The president dismissed those concerns. "We're protecting American jobs, we're protecting American factories," he said. "It's very simple. If you want to sell here, you build here."

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Comey indicted for alleged false statements, obstruction of congressional proceeding

Former FBI Director James Comey was indicted by a grand jury on two counts, alleged false statements within jurisdiction of the legislative branch and obstruction of congressional proceeding, Fox News Digital has learned. Comey will reportedly turn himself in on Friday and his arraignment is set for 10 a.m. on Oct. 9, in Alexandria Courtroom 600 before District Judge Michael S. Nachmanoff. Fox News Digital exclusively reported in July that Comey was under criminal investigation by the FBI. The probe into Comey centered on whether he lied to Congress during his Sept. 30, 2020, testimony about his handling of the original Trump–Russia probe at the FBI, known inside the bureau as "Crossfire Hurricane." "No one is above the law," Attorney General Pam Bondi said on X. "Today's indictment reflects this Department of Justice's commitment to holding those who abuse positions of power accountable for misleading the American people. We will follow the facts in this

case." FBI Director Kash Patel took to X to say, "Today, your FBI took another step in its promise of full accountability." "For far too long, previous corrupt leadership and their enablers weaponized federal law enforcement, damaging once proud institutions and severely eroding public trust," Patel wrote. "Every day, we continue the fight to earn that trust back, and under my leadership, this FBI will confront the problem head-on. Nowhere was this politicization of law enforcement more blatant than during the Russiagate hoax, a disgraceful chapter in history we continue to investigate and expose. "Everyone, especially those in positions of power, will be held to account – no matter their perch." The indictment alleges that Comey obstructed a congressional investigation into the disclosure of sensitive information in violation of 18 USC 1505. The indictment also alleges Comey made a false statement when he stated he did not authorize someone at the FBI

to be an anonymous source. According to the indictment, that statement was false. In an Instagram post on Thursday, Comey acknowledged that he and his family have "known for years that there are costs to standing up to President Donald Trump. "We couldn't imagine ourselves living any other way," he said. "We will not live on our knees and you shouldn't." "My heart is broken for the department of justice, but I have great confidence in the federal judicial system and I'm innocent. So let's have a trial and keep the faith," Comey added. Fox News Digital also exclusively reported that former CIA Director John Brennan is under criminal investigation related to the Trump–Russia probe. Under federal law, prosecutors have five years to bring a charge, with the five-year mark occurring Tuesday. The case is being handled by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia. JUSTICE IN AMERICA!" President Trump

posted to his Truth Social account. "One of the worst human beings this Country has ever been exposed to is James Comey, the former Corrupt Head of the FBI. Today he was indicted by a Grand Jury on two felony counts for various illegal and unlawful acts." He has been so bad for our Country, for so long, and is now at the beginning of being held responsible for his crimes against our Nation. MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!" The FBI opened its Trump–Russia probe in July 2016, known inside the bureau as "Crossfire Hurricane." President Trump, during his first term, fired Comey in May 2017. Days later, Robert Mueller was appointed special counsel to take over the FBI's original "Crossfire Hurricane" investigation. After nearly two years, former Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation, which concluded in March 2019, yielded no evidence of criminal conspiracy or coordination between the Trump campaign and Russian officials during the

2016 presidential election. Shortly after, John Durham was appointed as special counsel to investigate the origins of the "Crossfire Hurricane" probe. Durham found that the FBI "failed to act" on a "clear warning sign" that the bureau was the "target" of a Clinton-led effort to "manipulate or influence the law enforcement process for political purposes" ahead of the 2016 presidential election. "The aforementioned facts reflect a rather startling and inexplicable failure to adequately consider and incorporate the Clinton Plan intelligence into the FBI's investigative decision-making in the Crossfire Hurricane investigation," Durham's report states. "Indeed, had the FBI opened the Crossfire Hurricane investigation as an assessment and, in turn, gathered and analyzed data in concert with the information from the Clinton Plan intelligence, it is likely that the information received would have been examined, at a minimum, with a more critical eye," the report continued.

Owners of Radio Shack, Pier 1 Imports and other brands accused of running \$112 million Ponzi scheme

A pair of e-commerce entrepreneurs who bought a number of well-known retail brands — including RadioShack, Modell's Sporting Goods and Pier 1 Imports — out of bankruptcy are accused of running a Ponzi scheme. The Securities and Exchange Commission on Monday accused Alex Mehr and Tai Lopez, founders of the Miami-based Retail Ecommerce Ventures (REV), of defrauding investors out of approximately \$112 million. Through their holding company, Mehr and Lopez acquired distressed brick-and-mortar companies in order to turn them into successful, online-only brands. Dress Barn and Linens 'n Things were also among their acquisitions. REV acquired RadioShack in 2020, three years after the nearly century-old electronics chain filed for its second bankruptcy. RadioShack

first filed for Chapter 11 protection in 2015. Modell's Sporting Goods filed for bankruptcy in March 2020, when it also announced it would be closing all of its stores. REV bought the Modell's brand name and assets in August 2020. Pier 1 Imports — which still exists as an online store — declared bankruptcy in early 2020. REV acquired its trademark name and assets later that same year. The SEC's suit alleges that between 2020 and 2022, Mehr and Lopez, "made material misrepresentations" to hundreds of investors about the bankrupt retailers they had acquired. For example, to entice individuals to invest in their acquisitions, they said their portfolio companies were "on fire" and that "cash flow is strong." They also told prospective backers that money raised for a company would only

be invested in that specific firm. That proved not to be the case, according to the SEC's lawsuit, which was filed Monday in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida. "Contrary to these representations, while some of the REV Retailer Brands generated revenue, none generated any profits," the suit states. "Consequently, in order to pay interest, dividends and maturing note payments, Defendants resorted to using a combination of loans from outside lenders, merchant cash advances, money raised from new and existing investors, and transfers from other portfolio companies to cover obligations." Neither Mehr nor Lopez immediately responded to CBS News' request for comment. The SEC alleges that at least \$5.9 million of returns paid to investors

were actually Ponzi-like payments funded by other investors, as opposed to companies' profits. Additionally, the federal regulatory agency claims that Mehr and Lopez allocated \$16 million worth of investments for their own use, according to the filing. REV Chief Operating Officer Maya Burkenroad is also accused of aiding Lopez and Mehr's alleged crimes. On REV's website, Burkenroad, who is Lopez's cousin, was described as having "over 10 years of experience managing multi-million-dollar companies," according to the complaint. But the SEC claims Lopez and Mehr misrepresented her experience. Before joining REV, she had worked as a substitute preschool teacher, a promoter at a radio station, and as an assistant to Lopez at a prior endeavor, the complaint alleges. Burkenroad didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

Grandmother, 73, deported to India after 30 years in US, didn't get to say goodbye

A 73-year-old Sikh woman who lived in the US for over 30 years was deported to India by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Harjit Kaur, originally from Punjab, was not even allowed to say goodbye to her family before being deported to India. She was handcuffed as she was taken to the ICE centre in Los Angeles.

A 73-year-old Sikh woman was deported to India after living in the US for over 30 years, her lawyer Deepak Ahluwalia said. Harjit Kaur was not even given a chance to say goodbye to her family or collect her belongings before being sent back to India by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), according to the lawyer. Ahluwalia said Kaur was handcuffed as she was taken to the ICE facility in Los Angeles before being brought to India. Kaur, who is originally from Punjab, reached Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi on Tuesday. The matter, however, came to light on Thursday after the lawyer posted a video detailing the incident. Kaur's lawyer Ahluwalia, in the video posted on social media, revealed that she was abruptly moved from Bakersfield to Los Angeles on Sunday night, where ICE placed her on a chartered flight to Georgia, and subsequently deported her to New Delhi. He stated that Kaur's family had prepared her travel documents and requested her return on a commercial flight. "We had only two requests: to

send her back via a commercial flight and to allow her a few hours to meet her family. However, they refused to comply," Ahluwalia said.

According to her attorney, Kaur spent two days in the Georgia facility before being deported.

"From the moment she arrived in Georgia on Saturday until her departure on Monday evening, she was held in a temporary detention facility for outgoing detainees," he said.

Ahluwalia said she was denied basic amenities.

For nearly 60 to 70 hours, the 73-year-old was denied a bed and forced to share a holding room with several others, with only a concrete bench or the floor available for rest, Ahluwalia added.

She had filed several asylum appeals over the years which were rejected, with the last denial in 2012, according to her lawyer.

PROTESTS IN CALIFORNIA AFTER HARJIT KAUR WAS DETAINED

Earlier this month, Kaur's detention had sparked protests in California. She

was detained by immigration authorities in California on September 8 after she went for a routine check-in with the US agency.

The report stated that her family, joined by hundreds from the community, held a protest demanding Kaur's immediate release.

She had been detained on Monday after ICE summoned her to the San Francisco office to submit additional paperwork, according to media reports.

More than 200 people gathered outside the El Sobrante Sikh Gurdwara in Contra Costa County, holding signs that read "Bring Grandma Home". Supporters described her as "everyone's grandmother," with passing cars honking in solidarity.

IMMIGRATION JUDGE ORDERED KAUR'S REMOVAL IN 2005: ICE

The ICE told the BBC that Kaur had "exhausted decades of due process" and that an immigration judge had ordered her removal in 2005.

"Harjit Kaur has filed multiple appeals all the way up to the Ninth Circuit Court of appeals and LOST each time. Now

that she has exhausted all legal remedies, the ICE is enforcing US law and the orders by the judge; she will not waste any more US tax dollars," the BBC quoted the ICE as saying.

HARJIT KAUR MIGRATED TO THE US IN 1992 AS A SINGLE MOTHER

Harjit Kaur went to the US in 1992 from Punjab as a single mother with two sons. She was living in the East Bay in Northern California for more than 30 years.

Kaur was undocumented, according to a report in ABC7News. Her asylum case was denied in 2012, but since then she has "faithfully reported" to the ICE in San Francisco every six months for more than 13 years, her daughter-in-law Manji Kaur said. A report in Berkeleyside, a nonprofit news portal, said that the "ICE assured her she could remain in the United States under supervision with work permits until they could receive her travel documents." Kaur, who has two grandsons and three granddaughters among other relatives, had worked for over two decades at a local Indian clothing store, according to the report.

The Beginning

MAD MEN

OF

NU WAY ADVERTISING

About the Author



Sharanjit Thind Singh, for more than 29 years has spent his career immersed in the world of advertising, marketing, and media. His professional journey includes working with well known Media, FMCG and Telecom Companies in India and the US.

Hailing from a small postal stamp size city in Punjab, Thind's academic background reflects his drive for excellence. After completing a Bachelor of Commerce degree, he pursued an MBA. He further strengthened his expertise with a Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism and Mass Communication. This combination of business knowledge and media insight became the foundation of his career.

He founded and, is CEO of Nu Way Advertising in Manhattan now known as Nu Way Media Group Inc. He has served as a Commissioner of the Nassau County Human Rights Commission in New York.



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WHY A MOTHER'S WARDROBE NEVER DISAPPOINTS

Whether she's by your side or not, every piece of clothing from your mother's wardrobe is laced with memories. Practically, it might leave you wondering why your own clothes never seem to last this long.

When in doubt, peek into your mother's wardrobe. You'll always find something. Missing her a little extra? Step into her wardrobe, and it's like carrying a piece of her with you. Actress Janhvi Kapoor did the same as she attended the screening of her film 'Homebound' in Mumbai on September 22. The movie is India's official entry to the Oscars and has already been lauded at the Toronto International Film Festival and at Cannes earlier this year. Janhvi lost her legendary actor-mother Sridevi in 2018. But for the celebratory night in Mumbai, Janhvi kept her mother close - both metaphorically and sartorially. She wrapped herself in her mother's memories, slipping into a striking blue saree from her collection. It ensured her mother was present despite not being present.

Two years ago, Khushi Kapoor too carried her late mother's presence through her gown at the most special red carpet of her life - the premiere of her debut movie The Archies. The event marked the beginning of Khushi's career as an actor, a path she imbibed from her mother.

That's the thing about turning to your mother's wardrobe - whether she's by your side or not, every

piece of clothing in it is laced with memories. It could be a decade-old saree that reminds you of how youthful she looked. Or a kurta that she always felt most comfortable in. Or even a dupatta that gave her an instant glow-up. Nostalgia woven into a lifetime of memories of your very first fashion icon - your mother.

Practically, it might leave you wondering why your own clothes never seem to last this long. While your wardrobe pieces may barely survive two seasons, your mother's clothes remain intact, like a treasure trove. Was it the way she cared, or was clothing just made to last better back then? The answer is mostly 'both'.

Style-wise, pieces from her wardrobe may seem dated. But who cares when you're wearing a piece of your mother? And if you happen to care about aesthetics, archival and vintage styles are stronger than ever - even Pinterest reports suggest so. Not that it matters when the clothes are woven with memories, but just in case it does.

What makes it extra special is that every piece has a story. Perhaps it was worn at a wedding, on a milestone day, or brings back that precious festival

photograph to life - so when you wear it, you're wrapped in more than fabric; you're wrapped in nostalgia.

Oh, giggling through it often reveals treasures. Like a forgotten Banarasi, a chunky silver necklace, or even a quirky retro blouse that's back in fashion.

It's not just women - men can benefit from their mother's wardrobe too. Actor Prateik Smita Patil, for example, transformed two sarees belonging to his late mother into a blazer and tailored pants to attend the special screening of her film Manthan. He collaborated with fashion stylist Rahul Vijay and the designer duo Monica and Karishma of Jade to create this remarkable look.

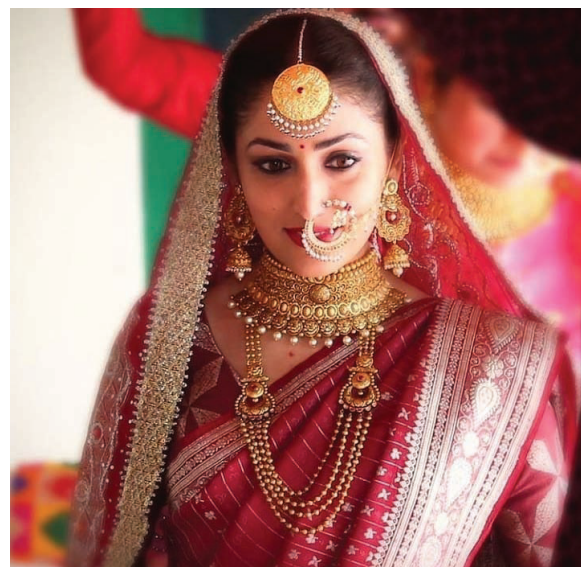
At weddings, weaving a trousseau with a touch of mother's magic has become a full-blown trend. Nothing new, though - the timeless appeal of a mother's almirah. For many, it has always been a no-brainer, requiring zero "trending" approval. But more brides now raid their mom's wardrobe like it's a treasure trove - not just for jewellery, but for sartorial pieces too.

Take Sonakshi Sinha for instance. For her intimate

wedding ceremony, she wore her mother Poonam Sinha's wedding saree. "I was very clear in my head that for my actual signing and the wedding, I wanted to wear my mother's saree and her jewellery, which is exactly what I did," she said about her special sartorial move. Raiding something from mom's closet shelf is a common wedding theme. It serves both as a moving gesture and a way to pay respects. Many brides wear their mothers' wedding ensembles as is, while others reimagine them

into shararas or simply use the dupattas to add that personal touch - to carry a piece of their mom close to their heart.

So yes, whether it was your school farewell when you first borrowed your mom's saree, your wedding day, or even an everyday office outing - there's something about her wardrobe that makes you feel your best. That something is memory woven into fabric, carrying not just her style but her scent, her touch, and the quiet reassurance that she is there.



Deepika Padukone Shot For 20 Days Before Being Dropped From Kalki 2898 AD: Report

The report claimed that Deepika had already filmed nearly 20 days of Part 2 while shooting Part 1

Days after the production house Vyjayanthi Movies confirmed Deepika Padukone's exit from the Kalki 2898 AD sequel, a new report claimed that the actress had already shot for 20 days before making her exit. A News18 report claimed, "Deepika Padukone's demand for a pay hike—significantly higher than 25%—stemmed from her conviction that she is irreplaceable. The real turning point lay in how her management approached the negotiations. Deepika was fully aware of the sequel and the strong, performance-driven role created for her. In fact, she had already filmed nearly 20 days of Part 2 while shooting Part 1—something director Nag Ashwin himself confirmed in several media interactions. Her schedule for the next phase was always meant to be decided mutually, so the claim of a date clash holds no merit," the insider told us.

NDTV has reached out to the

production house Vyjayanthi Movies for a comment on the newly surfaced report.

Why Was Deepika Padukone Dropped From the Kalki Sequel?

A few months ago, an unconfirmed report claimed that Deepika Padukone would not be part of the Kalki sequel. After months of speculation, the makers Vyjayanthi Movies confirmed the report in an X post on Thursday (September 18).

The official note on X read: "This is to officially announce that @deepikapadukone will not be a part of the upcoming sequel of #Kalki2898AD. After careful consideration, we have decided to part ways."

Despite the long journey of making the first film, we were unable to find a partnership. And a film like @Kalki2898AD deserves that commitment and much more. We wish her the best with her future projects," the note further added.

The post reminded the Internet of a similar incident in May when Deepika Padukone walked out of Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Spirit over her eight-hour work demand after embracing motherhood last year, profit-sharing clauses, and her unwillingness to deliver dialogues in Telugu.

Deepika Padukone's Response

Without addressing the buzz directly, Deepika Padukone shared a picture on her Instagram where two hands are seen interjoined. She informed fans that she has started shooting for Shah Rukh Khan's King. Deepika Padukone wrote, "The very first lesson he taught me almost 18 years ago while filming Om Shanti Om was that the experience of making a movie, and the people you make it with, matter far more than its success. I couldn't agree more and have applied that learning to every decision I've made since. And that's probably why we're back making our 6th movie."



When Rimi Sen Opened Up About "Ruining Her Own Career", Said Did Not Want To "Burden" Salman Khan

Rimi Sen worked with Salman Khan in the 2005 film Kyon Ki. She also appeared on Bigg Boss 9, where he was the host

Rimi Sen made her big Bollywood debut in 2003 with Hungama. The film was a smashing hit, and she went on to be part of several successful titles such as Dhoom, Phir Hera Pheri, and Golmaal: Fun Unlimited. However, in an interview from last year that has resurfaced, the actress spoke about how she had "ruined her own career" and why she never sought help from Salman Khan, her co-star in Kyon Ki (2005).

What's Happening

Rimi Sen was a sensation when she entered Bollywood in 2003. After delivering a series of successful films, she eventually stepped away from movies.

In an old interview with Navbharat Times Online, the actress admitted that she was responsible for her own career's decline.

She said, "When I came from Kolkata, I had nothing, but God gave it to me, right? So if it's in my destiny, God will give it. He (Salman Khan) has power, that's why people go to him for help. But why would he help me when it's my mistake? I didn't want to do my own PR. I ruined my career. If you don't know how to sell your talent, you can't achieve anything in life, no matter what field it is."

On Asking For Help From Salman Khan After Bigg Boss

Rimi Sen worked with Salman Khan in the 2005 film Kyon Ki. She also appeared on Bigg Boss 9, where he was the host, but that did not help her career either.

When asked about her bond with Salman, the actress said, "I have

a good bond with Salman. We did the film Kyon Ki together. He is a true gentleman and a beautiful person. His nature and behaviour are very good. I have never approached him for work. When someone does not have work in the film industry, they go to Salman for help. He also helps. I do not like to burden anyone. If it is in my destiny, I will get it. Salman gave me a chance. I do not like to burden anyone."

Rimi Sen Films

Since her debut in 2003, the actress has delivered several major hits. Her most talked-about films include Hungama, Baghban, Dhoom, Kyon Ki, Garam Masala, Phir Hera Pheri, Deewane Huye Pagal, Golmaal: Fun Unlimited, and Dhoom.





Nishaanchi Review: Retro Bollywood Meets Gangster Drama In A Classic Anurag Kashyap Film

It brims with raw action, earthy humour and gnarled emotions that frequently unleash full-blown violence

Marking a buoyant return for Anurag Kashyap to the gangster drama genre, Nishaanchi serves up a campy broth with a generous sprinkling of retro Bollywood ingredients that dissolve into each other in unpredictable ways.

Written by Kashyap with Rajan Chandel and Praseon Mishra, Nishaanchi brims with raw action, earthy humour and gnarled emotions that frequently unleash full-blown violence. Notwithstanding its ups and downs, the film retains its crackle all the way through.

Set in Kanpur in the years leading up to and beyond the turn of the millennium, the gritty film homes in on a family sucked into the world of crime by rage and retribution.

The family of four suffers the repercussions of impulsive acts, including a life-altering tragedy, but is held together by a woman who is no Nirupa Roy. She is the antithesis of the silent, long-suffering mother of Hindi cinema's chequered past.

Debutant Aaishvarya Thackeray, who plays a double role, is ably supported by Vedika Pinto as the male protagonist's romantic interest who is much more than just that. Her character holds her own in the midst of rampaging men, including one with raging hormones that he can barely



control.

More than anybody else, it is Monika Panwar, an actress in her early 30s rather oddly cast as the mother of a pair of terribly trouble-prone teenage twins, who stands out. Hers is a quietly smouldering presence that stands in direct contrast to the several facets of masculinity that clash and implode around her. Cinematographer Sylvester Fonseca's camera follows the characters into the cramped spaces and tight spots that they get into as they battle for survival and supremacy and captures their restless striving for elbow room.

Nishaanchi abounds in murderous brawls in prison cells (and elsewhere),

shootouts in smoky, dimly lit watering holes, chases through narrow bylanes, and manic moves in dance and wrestling arenas. The cinematographer knows exactly where his camera and lights have got to be.

With a quirky, jaunty medley of songs serving as conduits for shifts in mood, emotion and tonal emphasis, Nishaanchi recalls Gangs of Wasseypur while paying a breezy, breathless homage to 1980s and 1990s Bollywood. Although it is sans the sweep and range of GoW, it hits its chosen targets often enough.

It is replete with references to Hindi popular cinema of a

certain vintage as it careens through a tale of a bunch of men and a pair of women caught in and fighting off a web of betrayals and reprisals.

Nishaanchi has a subversive soul that does not shout from rooftops. The first sound that we hear in the film is a muezzin's call to prayer. It is followed by the gentle clanging of temple bells. The aural juxtaposition not only tells us what time of day it is, it also emphasises the pluralistic ethos that once defined the place.

A mother figure abjures the use of sindoor for she sees it as a symbol of gender subjugation. And a wrestlers' akhara is named Desh Premee Vyayamshala, a

place where the goings-on are anything that the nation can be proud of.

At the centre of a plot that moves back and forth between the 1990s and the noughties are two boys born ten minutes apart. Their father is a feared wrestler (Vineet Kumar Singh in an extended cameo) who is wronged by the head of the akhara (Rajesh Kumar). Angered, he kills a man and sets off a chain of events.

The mother of the siblings is a former shooting champion, Manjari (Monika Panwar), who gives up her personal pursuits for matrimony and motherhood but continues to stick to her guns as crisis situations threaten the family.

Amitabh Bachchan and Rajinikanth are ever-present in spirit in Nishaanchi, but the twins, Babloo and Dabloo (both Aaishvarya Thackeray), are a combination of the siblings of Deewaar and the brothers in Ram Aur Shyam.

Babloo, who assumes the name of Tony Mantena (a nod to Al Pacino's Tony Montana in Scarface), and even sports the facial scar of a self-inflicted wound, is tough and reckless. At age 10, in 1996, the boy is Kanpur Dehat's undisputed gulel (sling-shot) champ, thanks to the grooming he receives from his markswoman-mother.

Jolly LLB 3 Review: The Real Star of This Courtroom Drama Is Neither Akshay Kumar Nor Arshad Warsi

Jolly LLB 3 is a pro-farmer and anti-corruption film that succeeds in delivering laughs along with its message to a considerable extent.

You may come to watch Jolly LLB 3 for Akshay Kumar and/or Arshad Warsi, but you will stay put to be blown away by Saurabh Shukla, who delivers an effortless masterclass in acting, ably supported by other stalwarts like Seema Biswas and Gajraj Rao.

Director Subhash Kapoor does a good job of leveraging the two lead actors, both blessed with comic timing, to explore a serious and unfortunately prevalent topic like farmer suicides in a sensitive manner, barring a few quibbles.

Jolly LLB 3 appears to be a carrier of good news for both Akshay Kumar and Arshad Warsi, considering how their past movies fared at the box office. The verdict is out, and it is a win. The

film was promoted as "double trouble" with the two actors, but viewers end up watching more of Akshay Kumar on screen than Arshad Warsi. This is ironic because Jolly LLB 3 clearly makes it evident that Arshad Warsi is Jolly No 1, and Akshay Kumar is Jolly No 2.

In the second half of the film, Akshay Kumar gets a full-on chase sequence to flaunt his '90s khiladi tag, while Arshad Warsi is mostly missing in action, except when he delivers the concluding remarks in the case.

But it is Saurabh Shukla's return as the perennially irritable Judge Sunder Lal Tripathi who outshines both titular protagonists-and how! (Filing a petition for a Sunder Lal Tripathi spin-off right away.)

In Jolly LLB 3, the veteran actor shows other, sometimes more 'Tender' facets of his personality. He enters the court premises in a tracksuit, jogging his way to his chambers, and receives



thunderous applause from the audience. Recently widowed, Judge Sunder Lal Tripathi is now into self-care-he drinks protein shakes, opts for green tea over regular tea, is a fitness freak, and is a new lover on the prowl

with a massive crush on the local SHO, played by Shilpa Shukla (remember the defiant hockey player Bindiya from Chak De! India?).

Sunder Lal Tripathi may fawn over high-profile celebrity advocates or reputed businessmen, but his sense of justice and self are never misplaced. He knows he is the judge, and what the judge rules, stands.

In a key scene, after Sunder Lal Tripathi demonstrates to the courtroom why he is the judge, the camera cuts to the Tricolour kept on his desk and a red rose-one of the most meaningful cutaways in the movie.

Getting back to the film: the first Jolly LLB was set in Delhi and followed a hit-and-run case with Arshad Warsi's Jolly Tyagi at the centre. Jolly LLB 2 was based in Lucknow, with Akshay Kumar's Jolly Mishra following a fake encounter case.

Malaika Arora Shows 7 Chinese Movements That Help You Feel “5 Kg Lighter And 10 Years Younger”

The workout Malaika demonstrated is simple yet deeply effective

Malaika Arora has long been the face of fitness inspiration in Bollywood. At 51, the actor continues to defy age with her radiant skin, toned body, and enviable stamina. Her secret? A mix of yoga, strength training, and now, ancient Chinese-inspired movements that she recently introduced to her followers.

On September 24, Malaika shared a new video on Instagram where she demonstrated a set of “7 Chinese movements” that, according to her, can help lose 5 kg and make one feel 10 years younger. “7 Chinese movements that melt away your stiffness and boost your lymphatic flow. They look a little different, but they release hidden tension and open up your body in powerful ways,” she wrote in the caption.

Breaking Down The 7



Chinese Movements

The workout Malaika demonstrated is simple yet deeply effective. Each movement is designed to target different areas of the body while encouraging a free flow of energy and relaxation.

Neck rolls and shoulder

openers: These movements ease out stiffness from the upper body, especially for those who spend long hours working at desks or looking at screens. They help improve flexibility and blood circulation around the neck and

shoulders.

Spinal twists: Known for their detoxifying effect, spinal twists gently massage the internal organs while also improving spinal mobility and posture.

Arm circles and shoulder lifts: These dynamic movements

strengthen the shoulder girdle and enhance mobility while relieving tension in the arms.

Torso bends and side stretches: By lengthening the torso and stretching out the sides, these exercises increase flexibility, open up the chest, and aid deeper breathing.

Hip circles and pelvic tilts: Excellent for loosening tight hips, these movements also help release stored stress in the lower body and improve overall balance.

Leg stretches and kicks: These movements boost blood circulation in the legs, strengthen muscles, and improve coordination.

Full-body flow movement: This final sequence combines the earlier exercises into a fluid motion, promoting better energy flow, flexibility, and a sense of lightness.

Why Your Favourite Protein Source Soya Chaap Might Actually Be Worse Than Junk Food

For years, soya nuggets and soya chaap have been marketed as the perfect “protein-packed” option for vegetarians

For many vegetarians, soya nuggets and chaap have long been the go-to answer to the question, “Where do you get your protein from?” They look hearty, taste indulgent, and come with the sheen of being a healthier, high-protein option compared to fried snacks or fast food.

But the real picture isn't as pretty. Nutrition experts now warn that these so-called protein heroes could be doing more harm than good - spiking blood sugar, straining the gut, and offering little more than empty carbs.

What

For years, soya nuggets and soya chaap have been marketed as the perfect “protein-packed” option for vegetarians.

Gut Health and Hormone Health Expert Nutritionist, Tanisha Bawa warns against falling for the so-called “high-protein” tag slapped on these products.

“It [Soya nuggets and chaaps] are not what you think they are. These soya nuggets are industry processed, they have 80 to 90% of refined flour, which in turn can hike your blood sugar level. So



while you think you are having protein, you are actually having empty carbs. I personally do not recommend soya because they have anti-nutrients and can hinder the absorption of nutrients,” she explains in a recent Instagram post.

Essentially, the “protein” promise of processed soya products hides the reality, your gut may be paying a heavy price.

Ultra-processed versions like nuggets and chaap often contain refined ingredients, additives, and anti-nutrients that don't just take away from their nutritional value but can also interfere with how your body absorbs other vital nutrients, according to her.

What You Should Choose Instead

The good news is that vegetarians don't have to depend on soya nuggets to meet

their protein goals. Tanisha says a balanced, clean mix of plant-based foods can go a long way. Here are some reliable alternatives recommended by her:

- Peas
- Mushrooms
- Spirulina
- Organic tempeh
- Vegan pea protein (clean brands matter)
- Quality vegan protein shakes
- Whole grains like quinoa and amaranth (add peas for extra protein)
- Chia puddings (fortified with vegan protein)

Nuts, seeds & almond butter
The Key Is Balance If you're vegetarian, the idea isn't to chase one “magic” food. Instead, it's about combining different clean sources every day to actually hit your protein goals, without the hidden risks that come with processed soya products. So the next time you're tempted to order another plate of soya chaap, thinking it's 'protein', you may want to think twice.

The Mirage of Revolutions: Why Uprisings Fail Without Inner Freedom

The Himalayas demand a new ethic of building. It is not enough to construct ambitiously; we must construct wisely and durably. The future of mountain infrastructure rests on two simple but uncompromising essentials: placing it where it belongs, and building it to endure.

When we think of revolutions, it is often the sound that comes back first: the roar of voices in the streets, slogans ringing through capitals, crowds that feel unstoppable, and rulers suddenly brought down. For a fleeting moment, it feels as if a new dawn has arrived. Yet when the dust clears, the old shadows return. Thrones are replaced, constitutions rewritten, but the patterns of life remain strikingly the same.

From Europe's uprisings to America's civil war, from Russia's overthrow of the Tsar to the Arab Spring, the story repeats: regimes end, but the inner regime of fear and greed stays intact. We've seen it in India too. Civil Disobedience, Quit India, and even Sampoorna Kranti rattled the empire, but the deeper rot-inequality and corruption-never really left. The crowds dispersed, but the habits of thought endured. The recent student protests in Nepal offered yet another mirror. Again and again, its youth have marched against monarchy, corruption, and curbs on freedom. Sacrifice has been immense, and victories have been proclaimed. Every fresh order carries the same baggage; the old problems never really leave.

The Cycle of Hope and Disillusion

The grievances fueling Nepal's unrest are not imagined. Suppression is real, corruption entrenched, and opportunity scarce. Nearly one in five young Nepalis remain without work. Ministers' children step into privilege, while ordinary youth line up outside embassies, chasing visas to the Gulf. Social media has become both spark and spectacle. Outrage is tagged, exposed, and made viral. Hashtags light up for a moment and then fade into silence. The



script is familiar by now: anger builds, leaders emerge, power changes hands, and hope slips away. In the end, people go back home disillusioned, and many take the harder road of leaving the country for good.

The Inner Chains That Outlast Revolt

Every uprising begins with the finger pointed outward: the rulers are corrupt, the system broken. Yet history shows that a rotten structure cannot stand without consent from those who live under it. If the citizen's mind is clouded, how can the leaders be clear?

Power once wore armour and carried swords. Today it hides in screens. Algorithms decide which fears to stoke, which desires to amplify, and which distractions to feed. The morning newsfeed and the midnight scroll together shape what we believe to be our independent thought. A government may fall, but if millions still surrender their attention to the glow of a device, what freedom has really been won?

This is why revolutions so often wither. They replace one face with another while leaving the deeper blindness intact. A ballot cast without clarity is no less dangerous than a throne seized without

wisdom. The protester who claims victory today often wakes up tomorrow as part of the very establishment he fought against. In this way, rebellion is quietly absorbed not by defeat, but by the very success it proclaims.

The Wasted Fuel of Anger

The bravery of Nepal's youth cannot be doubted. Nearly twenty young lives were lost in the latest protests, an offering that should be remembered with reverence, not brushed aside. Yet courage, when unaccompanied by clarity, rarely reaches its own promise.

If sacrifice is inevitable, should it not be made for causes as vast as existence itself? The survival of the Earth now hangs in the balance, yet revolutions against this greatest threat are conspicuously absent. While America recently pushed ahead with new oil and gas projects, it simultaneously stripped funding from programs meant to raise climate awareness. Forests continue to be razed, rivers polluted, and ecosystems dismantled at an industrial scale. Scientists warn that global wildlife populations have declined by more than seventy percent in the past half-century. In

South Asia, lethal heatwaves already claim thousands of lives each summer.

And still, the streets remain largely empty. People march against governments, but not against extinction. We rise when our comfort is threatened but remain seated when our very future is at stake. Anger, after all, is raw energy-but energy without direction soon burns out. The Individual: Where Revolutions Truly Begin

Crowds may fill avenues and squares, but a society as a whole rarely revolts; only individuals do. Society itself is just a construct, a name we give to millions of private minds. If those minds remain captive, then even the loudest slogans are little more than theatre. Real transformation begins quietly, with a single person daring to ask: Who steers my desires? What voices stir my fears? Which assumptions have I carried without ever examining them? The moment those questions begin to stir, control starts to slip. Power rarely shows up with chains anymore; it usually comes wrapped as comfort, distraction, or a tempting promise. Protests and demonstrations do matter, but their force is

shallow when the individual remains inwardly bound. Defiance holds ground only when the mind is clear. And in that space, even a single word of truth can echo longer than a thousand slogans in the world.

The First Fire Must Burn Within

The true spark of revolution is not in burning buses or blocking highways. It glows quietly in classrooms when a teacher ignites independent thought. No tyrant fears stones in the street as much as he fears a mind that refuses to be enslaved.

Most schools still focus on equations and careers, but never on how fear and desire quietly run our lives. Families hand down traditions but rarely the courage to question them. In the absence of self-inquiry, blind obedience is too easily mistaken for virtue. The silence of a single awakened mind often drowns out a thousand chanting slogans. This is why half-done revolutions collapse or, worse, masquerade as victories. Unless the first uprising is within, every outer revolt remains incomplete. Nepal's youth have shown remarkable bravery; their loss of life must not dissolve into hashtags and momentary outrage. To honour their sacrifice is to ensure that courage strikes at the root of bondage, not just its branches.

Freedom That Endures

Freedom is not secured by the fall of a palace but by the fall of delusion. Revolutions in the streets can shake governments, but only revolutions in the mind can end slavery. Unless the inner tyrant is dethroned, outer tyrants will keep returning, dressed in new colours, speaking new slogans, yet ruling the same captive hearts.

The Himalayan Problem: Why bridges and roads fail in the rains

The Himalayas demand a new ethic of building. It is not enough to construct ambitiously; we must construct wisely and durably. The future of mountain infrastructure rests on two simple but uncompromising essentials: placing it where it belongs, and building it to endure.

Year after year, monsoons in the Himalayas hand us the same report card: hundreds dead, thousands displaced, and crores worth of infrastructure washed away. Roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, and entire neighbourhoods – built at great cost – collapse within hours. Disaster strikes, infrastructure falls, emergency funds are released, reconstruction begins, and the same story repeats with the next heavy rainfall – an almost ritualistic cycle. The financial costs are crippling, but deeper still are the losses in livelihoods, trust, and continuity.

Perhaps these are tell-tale signs of a larger malaise; the refusal to align construction with the realities of a changing climate and an unforgiving landscape. What is rarely asked is whether the road, bridge, or building was designed and constructed to endure the unique challenges of the Himalayas.

Beyond climate alone

It is convenient to blame every collapse on climate change. Certainly, extreme rainfall events have become more frequent and intense, and glacial melt is destabilising slopes. But climate alone cannot explain why freshly laid roads disintegrate in their very first monsoon, or why bridges collapse long before their lifespan ends.

The truth is far more convoluted. Roads are often inset into unstable hillsides without proper slope-stabilisation techniques. Drainage systems are poorly designed or altogether absent, causing runoff to undercut foundations. Bridges are sited without considering shifting river courses. Material quality is compromised by cost-cutting or corruption. Maintenance is neglected until disaster strikes. **What we label “natural calamity” often hides very human negligence.**

To break this pattern, we must act on two fronts



simultaneously: first, by planning infrastructure with foresight, and second, by ensuring that what we build is truly built to last.

Planning with foresight

Infrastructure in the Himalayas cannot be designed as though the terrain were flat ground. Hazard zonation maps prepared by the National Disaster Management Authority clearly identify flood-prone valleys and landslide-susceptible slopes. Yet, they are rarely enforced. Roads continue to be aligned along unstable gradients, and buildings rise on active seismic zones.

Planning with foresight means situating infrastructure where it is least vulnerable. Drainage design must be central, not peripheral. Culverts and retaining structures must be scaled for projected rainfall, not past averages. Geo-synthetics, rock bolting, and bioengineering techniques such as vegetative slope stabilisation should be routine.

River embankments should be designed with glacial melt and shifting courses in mind. Equally important is rethinking mobility itself. Do all mountain valleys require four-lane highways, or can ropeways, funiculars, and electric buses provide safer, more sustainable access?

Switzerland has long relied on cable systems in fragile areas,

while Japan has mastered the art of landslide monitoring and early-warning systems. These examples underline that the safest infrastructure is often the one that works with, not against, terrain.

Building to last

Even the best-suited infrastructure is useless if it collapses under predictable stress. Too often, Himalayan projects fail not because of where they are built, but because of how they are built. Consider the simple timelines involved. A mid-sized reinforced concrete bridge in the Himalayas typically takes two to three years to plan and construct, while larger suspension bridges can take up to five years. A standard two-lane hill road, depending on the terrain, can take anywhere between one and three years. In normal conditions, these are not short-term assets. Well-designed roads are expected to last 15-20 years before major resurfacing, while bridges are designed for lifespans of 50-100 years. Yet in the Himalayas, many do not survive their first or second monsoon. Each premature collapse represents not only wasted investment but decades of intended service erased in weeks.

India already has seismic safety codes, ductile detailing standards, and slope stability guidelines issued by the

Bureau of Indian Standards. Yet, compliance is sporadic. Bridges are sometimes built with shallow foundations, retaining walls without weep holes, and roads without cross-drainage. Poor workmanship and inadequate supervision leave structures brittle. This must change.

Breaking the pattern

Independent third-party audits should be mandatory, with penalties for non-compliance. Material testing should be routine rather than optional. Contracts must incentivise durability, not just completion. And maintenance cannot remain an afterthought: desilting drains, repairing retaining walls, and inspecting bridge joints must be part of annual budgets. Maintenance budgets should be ring-fenced, not left vulnerable to cuts.

Local capacity is critical. Engineers and contractors in Himalayan states must be trained and equipped to work with specialised mountain technologies, from rockfall barriers to avalanche protection. Early-warning systems, coupled with smart sensors monitoring slope movement, should be integrated into road and bridge networks.

But resilience is not only technical. It is cultural and institutional.

For decades, prestige has been tied to announcing new

infrastructure. We must shift the focus to how long they last, how well they serve, and how safely they endure. A ribbon-cutting ceremony is meaningless if the structure collapses a year later. Equally, traditional knowledge must be reclaimed. Mountain communities long knew how to build with terrain, using terraced alignments, natural drainage channels, and locally available materials. Blending this wisdom with modern engineering could prove to be more effective than many of the solutions we rely on today.

The Himalayas demand a new ethic of building. It is not enough to construct ambitiously; we must construct wisely and durably. The future of mountain infrastructure rests on two simple but uncompromising essentials: placing it where it belongs, and building it to endure.

Resilience cannot be postponed. Infrastructure in the Himalayas cannot be ornamental; it has to be looked at as a lifeline for millions of people. For these mountains to remain both home and heritage, our foundations must be strong enough not only to carry human ambition but to absorb nature's certainty. Anything less, and the Himalayas will continue to wash away our investments, our illusions, and the very futures of those who depend on them.

Badlaav vs status quo: What is Bihar's mood ahead of elections?

Travelling 2,000 km across Bihar's nine zones revealed a complex political mood where entrenched caste loyalties, corruption concerns, and hyperlocal factors shape November's Assembly elections, leaving voters torn between change and continuity.

Despite being born in Sasaram and brought up in Bokaro (erstwhile Bihar, now Jharkhand), I never really travelled across the length and breadth of the state. Now, ahead of the Bihar Assembly elections scheduled for November, I was excited at the prospect of doing just that.

I travelled around 2,000 km, covering all nine administrative zones. I spent 10 days at Sasaram, Bodh Gaya, Munger, Bhagalpur, Purnea, Saharsa, Darbhanga, Motihari, and Patna, speaking to voters, influencers, journalists, and political and community leaders. The trip, alongside VoteVibe's (where the author is a founder-partner) ongoing telephonic surveys in the state, provided crucial insights into the prevailing political mood. This analysis examines the complex interplay between change (badlaav) and the status quo (jo hai, wo theek hai) in a political landscape that defies simple categorisation.

1. A balanced environment

Contrary to expectations of strong anti-incumbency — Nitish Kumar has been chief minister for nearly 20 years — Bihar presents a remarkably balanced political environment. An influencer in Sasaram quipped, "Muddavihin chunav hai." Voters appear neither decisively against the current government nor overwhelmingly supportive, creating an atmosphere where the battle is expected to be hyperlocal. In 2020, Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party played the role of vote-cutter; this time, it could be Prashant Kishor's Jan Suraj Party. Electoral outcomes will likely depend on micro-level factors rather than broad sentiment waves, where the role of the candidate becomes very important.

2. Entrenched vote banks

The traditional vote banks of both the National Democratic Alliance and the Mahagathbandhan remain largely intact. Despite Bihar lagging in many indicators — unemployment, corruption, inflation, law and order,



education and health services — the core base of the NDA, comprising upper castes, Kurmis/Koeris, EBCs, and Mahadalits/Paswans show remarkable loyalty. "Ye forward versus backward ki ladai hai, hum gathbandhan ko vote nahin kar sakte," is a common refrain of upper caste voters.

Similarly, the core vote bloc of Mahagathbandhan, comprising Yadavs and Muslims, is sticking to it, despite minorities complaining of lesser prominence in the Rashtriya Janata Dal. "Is baar hum AIMIM ko vote nahin denge," said some Muslim voters in Purnia.

3. Change MLAs

Across zones and political parties, voters express dissatisfaction with current Members of the Legislative Assembly. Many accuse MLAs of abandoning their constituencies. We may therefore see many ticket denials to incumbent MLAs across parties. The alliance that fails to identify non-performers and replace them with fresh faces could bear the brunt of anti-incumbency.

4. Corruption challenge

Low-level corruption and bureaucratic dominance (afsarsahi) emerge as persistent concerns across the state. People complain that it is impossible to get work done without petty bribes, creating voter frustration that transcends party lines. A former mukhiya in Munger opined, "No government can rein in state officials. If they do, it would lead to a revolt,

leading to the fall of the government."

5. Jungle Raj factor

The fear of jungle raj returning continues to influence voting patterns, particularly among upper caste and EBC voters within the NDA coalition. This "majboori vote" (compulsion vote) suggests that some voters support the alliance not out of enthusiasm, but from concern about alternatives. When prodded about the recent spate of crimes in Bihar under Nitish Kumar, an elderly voter in Dehri said, "Aapne purana samay dekha nahin hai." In Banka, a community leader said, "EBC bhi kaam dhandha waale log hain, lohar, sunar, nai ityadi, inhein bhi shanti aur achcha mahaul chahiye."

6. Prashant Kishor

Political strategist Prashant Kishor appears to be gaining traction among the youth, upper castes, the middle class, and educated voters. In Kudra, at a tea stall, an elderly Muslim person said that he would back the Jan Suraj Party. But he didn't know the name of either the party or Prashant Kishor, instead identifying through its symbol colour "yellow".

A middle-aged woman who was fascinated by the JSP dropped the idea of backing it after she came to know he planned to lift the prohibition if voted to power.

Muslims show considerable scepticism toward Prashant Kishor's political ventures, viewing him through the lens

of a potential Bharatiya Janata Party B-Team. His appeal is tempered by uncertainty regarding his electoral viability, creating a situation where admiration doesn't necessarily translate to votes.

7. Voter Adhikar Yatra

The Voter Adhikar Yatra has energised Mahagathbandhan cadres and leaders. Its base of Yadavs and Muslims sees it as having improved the bloc's prospects. However, a section of Muslims I met in Muzaffarpur are unhappy with the fact that no tall Muslim leader was seen along with Tejashwi Yadav and Rahul Gandhi in the campaign vehicle during the yatra. They pointed out that even Mukesh Sahani, who represents just 2.6 per cent of voters, was seen prominently. But Muslims, despite 18 per cent of the population, are taken for granted. This may not dampen Muslim support, though.

8. Regional variations

The tour reveals distinct regional patterns, with north Bihar showing greater religious polarisation while south Bihar demonstrates more caste-based political calculations. In the former, while the youth and certain sections of the core NDA base show dissatisfaction, they highlighted that "ant mein sab Hindu-Muslim ho jayega," signifying the demographic composition of the region. In the latter, especially in Bhojpur and

Magadh, which have high Dalit populations, caste considerations matter more. Here, the Bahujan Samaj Party still has decent influence. The JSP, interestingly, has more support in the south than in the north, I found out. I spoke to a Yadav candidate from the RJD who lost in 2020 from Kosi. He said, "We have to be very careful in ticket selection. If we give ticket to a Muslim, then the BJP will easily win as it will become a Hindu-Muslim issue."

9. SCs, STs, EBCs

Educated Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, and EBC voters express dissatisfaction with representation in the NDA. Rahul Gandhi and his "vote chori" allegations are popular with this group, suggesting potential opportunities for the Opposition to make inroads in traditionally challenging demographics. Castes like Rajaks, Chandravanshis, and Kushwahs are open to voting for the Mahagathbandhan, given adequate representation. They rue the fact that the bloc is not raising their issues.

10. Caste mathematics

Caste is cast in stone in Bihar. This reinforces Bihar's reputation as a state where social engineering often trumps broader political narratives. People say the caste arithmetic of a seat will be sealed after the three main formations announce their candidates, as there are many claimants and different permutations and combinations are possible.

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