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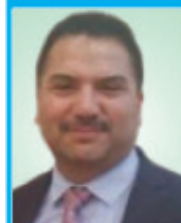


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Indian rivers in peril as climate change triggers hidden biodiversity crisis

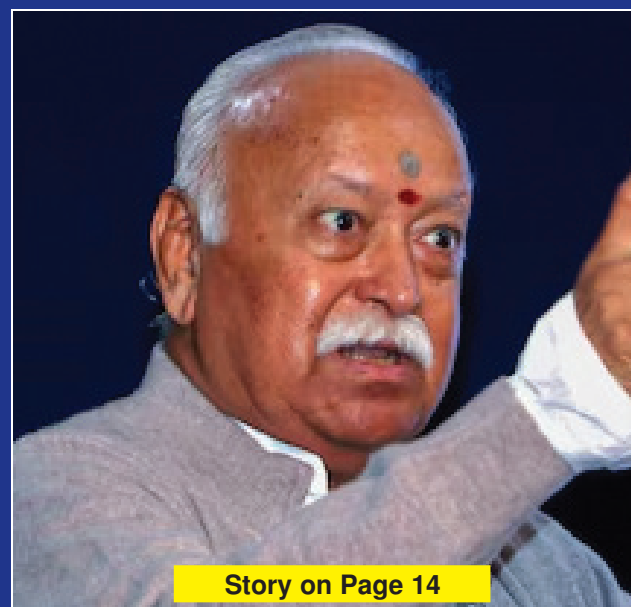
Flooding and rising river water temperatures have been exacerbated due to climate change, threatening lives, livelihoods, and biodiversity.



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'Never Said I Or Someone Should Retire At 75': RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat To News18

The RSS chief's comment scotches all speculation of him or PM Modi retiring at 75



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"Nuke India", "Kill Trump": Minneapolis Shooter's Chilling Messages On Guns

The shooter, Robin Westman, 23, used all three weapons and fired dozens of rounds at the church at the Annunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis.



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"If Indians Don't Budge...": Trump Adviser's New Trade Warning To New Delhi



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'Naples is dead': How overtourism is hollowing out Italian cities



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ALA Float at the FIA India Day Parade on Sunday August 17, 2025 at Madison Ave in Manhattan, NY



The Association of Indians in America (AIA) founded in 1967 had a float in the Federation of Indians Associations (FIA) parade held on Madison Avenue in Manhattan, New York on Sunday, 17th of August 2025.

AIA is the oldest grassroots non-profit national organization of Asian Indians with chapters spread across the United States of America. Although AIA organization has been there many many years and has a lot of achievements to its credit besides an established identity for celebrating the Deepavali Festival at the iconic South Street Seaport year after year continuously for the last 37 years, it was the first time we displayed the AIA strength on Madison Ave, New York City by taking a beautifully decorated float with its members with tricolor sashes and badges waving the tricolor Indian flag.

We are very thankful and fortunate to have the presence of New York Senator John Liu, as well as the Consul General

of India in New York, Hon Binaya S Pradhan along with the Deputy Consul General Hon Vishal Harsh and Consul for cultural affairs Tsewang Gyaltso on the Float as well as be kind enough to encourage AIA members with beautiful pictures.

The float was decorated with AIA national executive committee banners mentioning names of all our chapters in the USA as well as AIA's resolve to "Indian heritage and American commitment".

The individual names of 17 chapters in United States of America, namely; New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Minnesota, Texas, California were all lined up by the railing of the Float so that all standing and watching the parade, personally or on live worldwide TV, can see the large presence of our organization in the entire

United States of America.

Enthusiastic patriotic songs were sung and played on the float for well over two hours which showcases the passion of AIA towards our mother country India.

As the parade was moving along Madison Avenue, the announcements were being made of AIA's New York chapter Deepavali Festival being organized on October 11, 2025 for the first time at Overlook Beach in Babylon, Long Island instead of the South Street Seaport in Manhattan. Flyers for the same were also distributed to the crowd.

National President Gobind Munjal said that this was being done to attract many people from the tri-state area to see this grand spectacle of Deepavali Festival with Spectacular Fireworks as a grand finale. Free food, many booths, cultural activities, arts and crafts, Naach Inferno, kids and adult activities filled with the amazing stage performances and a mega fun filled day. Raffle prizes, a Surprise Celebrity presence on the stage

and Spectacular Fireworks will be major attractions. Overlook Beach in the town of Babylon is a very popular destination in the summer on Long Island and for the 38th Deepavali festival of AIA will be a spectacle not to miss!

The FIA parade has always had many large organizations in America showcase their presence best done by taking a Float in the parade, hoping that well over 100,000 people that line up the two sides of Madison Avenue right from 38th St. onwards for the next 12 blocks that the parade marches ahead and passes the VIP stand with dignitaries invited for the day.

NYC Mayor Eric Adams and Consul General of India Binaya Pradhan along with invited Bollywood celebrities Rashmika Mandanna and Vijay Deverakonda flags off the parade amidst heavily guarded security prompt and NYPD securing all marching groups and the rest of the lineup continues to proceed with high security around them.

“Shahidon ko Shraddhanjali” - Indian 79th Independence Day Celebrated with Pride in Long Island, New York

The Indian community of Long Island came together to celebrate the 79th Independence Day of India, organized by Navika Capital Group and Blue Sky Hospitality Solutions at the Marriott Long Island. Over 1000 community members, local leaders, and distinguished guests attended, including Bruce Blakeman, Nassau County Executive, NY, and Satnam Singh Sandhu, Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, India.

The celebration opened with the American and Indian national anthems, reflecting unity, respect, and the strong bond between the two nations. County Executive Bruce Blakeman addressed the gathering, highlighting the contributions of Indian-American residents to in business, technology, and civic life. He acknowledged Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Nassau County, wished India a happy Independence Day, and officially declared Independence Day for India across Nassau County.

Mr. Sandhu, who traveled from India especially for the event, expressed heartfelt gratitude and admiration for the Indian-American community, saying he was “stunned” by their enthusiasm and patriotism and praised their efforts to keep Indian traditions alive abroad.

Community leader Harry Singh Bola underscored the importance of unity, saying, “Our efforts will be meaningful only when we put our differences aside, represent India as one country, one people, one person equals the whole community.”

Organizers and leadership reflected on



the event's significance. Naveen Shah, CEO, said, “I wanted to celebrate the birthday of India, our soil, our nation - this celebration shows the strength of our community, our culture, and our unity”. Haridas Kotahwala, Chairman, added, “It is our honor to celebrate India's Independence Day with such pride. Including Janmashtami made the occasion even more special, reminding us of our national heritage and spiritual traditions.”

The evening featured a vibrant cultural program that went beyond music and dance, presenting a theatrical storytelling of India's independence struggle. Through songs, narration, and enactments, the performances highlighted the sacrifices of freedom fighters, revolts against colonial rule, and India's ultimate triumph, leaving the audience deeply moved. The

Nassau County Band added to the celebration by performing a parade around the Long Island Marriott, infusing the evening with energy and patriotism.

The event opened with a powerful Sanskrit invocation led by Neha Bhansali, setting a reverent and celebratory tone for the evening and soulful performance of patriotic songs by Budh Prakash, renowned for international satsangs. The Independence Day proclamation was read by Varinder Bhalla, while Dr. Raj Bhayani and Madhu Pareek served as co-hosts, expertly guiding the program with grace and professionalism. Alongside Independence Day, the community also marked Janmashtami, the birth of Lord Krishna, with a special cake-cutting ceremony. Audience members whose birthdays fell on the same

day were invited to join, adding a personal and heartfelt touch. A soulful bhajan session further enhanced the festive atmosphere before lively music and dance concluded the evening. Guests enjoyed a sumptuous dinner representing the culinary diversity of India, featuring flavors from the North, South, East, and West. Dignitaries along with our performers from India and the US were formally recognized for their contributions, underscoring the sense of community and shared pride that defined the event. As the event concluded, all attendees were presented with prasadam in the form of a sweet box for Janmashtami, generously sponsored by Dr. Deepak Nandi. Naveen Shah concluded the event with pride, unity, and a shared commitment to honor India's independence while contributing positively to life in America.

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31 dead, several feared trapped after landslide hits Vaishno Devi Yatra route in J&K

At least 31 people were killed and 23 injured after a massive landslide struck the Mata Vaishno Devi Yatra track near Ardhkumari in Katra, Jammu and Kashmir, amid heavy rains on Wednesday. Rescue teams continue to search the debris amid fears that more individuals may still be trapped.

Relentless downpours have wreaked havoc across Jammu and Kashmir, triggering flash floods and landslides. In Jammu, critical infrastructure took a major hit, with bridges collapsing and power lines and mobile towers severely damaged. More than 3,500 residents were evacuated till Tuesday after continuous heavy rains triggered flash floods and waterlogging across the district.

Jammu witnessed its highest rainfall on Tuesday between 11.30 am and 5.30 pm, recording 22 cm within just six hours, according to official data. However, rainfall significantly subsided after midnight, bringing some relief. Earlier, on Tuesday, another landslide struck the shrine route in the afternoon, killing nine people and injuring 21 others. The powerful collapse of the mountainside caused significant damage along the path and officials have warned that the death toll may increase. The route to the shrine on Trikuta hill was left in ruins.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in a post on X said he is "still struggling with almost non-existent communication" as heavy rain has disrupted several services in the



Union Territory. He added that there is "no fixed line WiFi, no browsing" and apps are opening "frustratingly slowly". Large parts of the Union Territory are facing telecom blackouts, leaving millions without communication and deepening the crisis, officials said. Meanwhile, more than 3,500 residents were evacuated till Tuesday after continuous heavy rains triggered flash floods and waterlogging across the district. Evacuation and relief efforts are underway with joint teams from the District Administration, J&K Police, NDRF, SDRF, Indian Army and local volunteers.

Additionally, a flood alert was also issued for the Jhelum River in South Kashmir after water levels crossed the danger mark of 22 feet near Sangam. According to the authorities, 20 to 30 low-lying localities and several areas in Jammu and Samba have been inun-

dated by flash floods triggered by heavy rain. The administration kept getting distress calls at its control centre seeking evacuation assistance. Infrastructure was severely damaged, with bridges collapsing and mobile towers and electricity poles breaking like virtual twigs.

Jammu and nearby areas are seeing strong thunderstorms with heavy rain and possible hail. The worst-affected places include Jammu city, RS Pura, Samba, Akhnoor, Nagrota, Kot Bhalwal, Bishnah, Vijaypur, Purmandal, and parts of Kathua and Udhampur. Lighter rain is falling in Reasi, Ramban, Doda, Billawar, Katra, Ramnagar, Hiranagar, Gool, Banihal, and nearby parts of Samba and Kathua districts. All government and private schools in the Jammu division were directed to close till August 27. The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School

Education also suspended all examinations for Classes 10 and 11 that were to be held on Wednesday. Telecom services collapsed in large parts of the union territory, leading to millions being cut off from communication and escalating problems.

Operations at Leh airport were severely impacted today due to adverse weather conditions. According to Flight tracking website Flightradar24, several flights of various airlines were delayed and some were even cancelled at the Leh airport. Delhi airport also issued a passenger advisory for flights bound for Leh, urging travelers to check flight status with their airlines. Weather experts said cloud tops are reaching up to 12 km high, showing very active storms. The storm system is moving towards the east-northeast, and rain is likely to continue in hill and foothill areas.

Furthermore, Northern Railways cancelled 22 trains scheduled to halt at or depart from Jammu and Katra stations on Wednesday across the division due to severe weather conditions. Twenty-seven trains were short-terminated at stations including Firozpur, Manda, Chak Rakhwalan, and Pathankot.

Train services between Pathankot and Kandrori in Himachal Pradesh have also been suspended following heavy soil erosion and flash floods near the Chakki River. Despite the disruptions, train operations continue on the Katra-Srinagar route.

Modi Stands Firm as U.S. Tariff Deadline Looms on Indian Imports

With the U.S. deadline for increased tariffs on Indian imports just two days away, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has reaffirmed that his government will not compromise on protecting the interests of farmers, small businesses, and local industries. The escalating trade dispute comes as President Donald Trump doubled tariffs on Indian goods to 50 percent, citing India's continued purchase of Russian crude oil despite global pressure.

India, one of the largest crude oil importers in the world, has relied heavily on discounted Russian oil to stabilize domestic fuel prices and reduce import costs. Replacing nearly one-third of its current supply in such a short window could drive up fuel costs and put additional strain



on India's economy. Conversely, maintaining current imports risks further trade penalties and challenges for export industries.

Speaking in Ahmedabad while launching several infrastructure projects, Modi emphasized that protecting small entrepreneurs, farmers, and animal husbandry

workers remains his government's top priority. "No matter how much pressure comes, we will keep increasing our strength to withstand," he

said, calling the tariff hikes "unfair, unjustified, and unreasonable."

The Prime Minister also urged citizens and businesses to prioritize locally made products, encouraging stores to visibly promote "swadeshi" goods. His remarks highlighted the government's push to strengthen self-reliance amid global economic uncertainty and shifting trade alliances. Experts warn that without a resolution, India could face a trade war with significant economic consequences. Former Reserve Bank of India Governor Urjit Patel called the situation a realization of India's "worst fears," noting that an unresolved dispute would lead to "welfare loss" and unnecessary economic disruption.

Indian National Among Five Killed in New York Tour Bus Crash

A devastating bus crash on Interstate 90 near Buffalo has left five people dead, including 65-year-old Shankar Kumar Jha from Bihar, India. The tour bus, carrying 54 passengers from Niagara Falls to New York City, overturned in Pembroke around 12:22 p.m. Friday, according to New York State Police.

The victims have been identified as Jha, Pinki Changrani, 60, of East Brunswick, New Jersey; Xie Hongzhuo, 22, of Beijing, China; Zhang Xiaolan, 55, and Jian Mingli, 56, both of Jersey City, New Jersey. Police said the bus lost control, veered into the median, over-corrected, and rolled down an embankment. Although the investigation is ongoing, authorities confirmed that neither mechanical failure nor operator impairment caused the accident.

The bus, operated by Staten Island-based M&Y Tour Inc., was carrying passengers ranging in age from one to 74, many of them Indian, Chinese, or Filipino nationals. Officials reported that every passenger suffered some form of injury, with several hospitalized, though none of the survivors are in life-threatening condition. The crash shut down sections of the New York State Thruway for hours, with lanes reopening late Friday evening.

India Alerts Pakistan of Flood Risk Amid Indus Treaty Suspension

Amid strained diplomatic ties, India extended a rare goodwill gesture to Pakistan by warning Islamabad about potential flooding in the Tawi River. According to reports from Pakistani media citing official sources, the alert was conveyed through the Indian High Commission in Islamabad on Sunday, bypassing the usual Indus Waters Treaty communication channel, which has been suspended since the April terror attack in Pahalgam.

This marks the first known instance of India using its diplomatic mission to share such critical information. The Indus Waters Treaty, signed in 1960 and brokered by the World Bank, traditionally facilitates water-related data sharing between the two nations. However, India halted these exchanges after suspending the treaty as part of its response to the Pahalgam attack, which killed 25 Indian tourists and one Nepalese citizen. Following the alert, Pakistani authorities issued warnings to residents in flood-prone areas, helping local



administrations prepare for possible evacuations. The information is particularly crucial as Pakistan faces severe monsoon flooding that has already claimed at least 788 lives and injured more than 1,000 people since late June, according to Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority. The Indus River system plays a vital role in both nations, with 80 percent of its waters allocated to Pakistan and 20 percent to India under the treaty. Historically, India's early flood warnings during the monsoon

season have been instrumental in helping Pakistan manage emergency responses in Punjab and Sindh. Across the border, Indian officials are also on high alert. In Jammu and Kashmir, Jal Shakti Minister Javed Ahmed Rana has ordered continuous monitoring of water levels across major rivers, including the Indus basin's Jhelum, Ravi, and Tawi rivers. Advisories have been issued urging residents to stay clear of water bodies and landslide-prone zones, as heavy rains and potential cloudbursts are forecast to continue through August 27.

India has floating F-35: Rajnath Singh's mention of US jet at warships'



Defence Minister Janthah Singh made a striking comparison between India's state-of-the-art frigates -- INS Udaygiri and INS Himgiri -- and the United States' F-35 supersonic stealth multirole fighter jets, as the Navy commissioned the two warships on Monday. "Today, you have launched the indigenous F-35 warships. There is one country in the world that has the F-35, which takes off into the air. You have created an F-35 that sails in the sea," Singh said, highlighting India's growing naval power. The F-35 fighter jets are considered among the most advanced combat aircraft in the world and were also used in the recent escalation between the US and Iran. Their capabilities extend beyond air-to-air combat, with advanced avionics, a powerful onboard computing

system, and highly sophisticated integrated sensors. Similarly, the two multi-mission stealth frigates commissioned today are each equipped with eight BrahMos missiles and feature a suite of advanced weapons and sensors developed by indigenous manufacturers. "These warships' weapons and sensor packages make them unparalleled guardians of the sea. I have been told that these warships also include many advanced capabilities. These two warships, which can cover long distances, are equipped with advanced systems such as surface-to-air missiles, supersonic BrahMos missiles, torpedo launchers, combat management systems, and fire control systems," Singh added.

Can't copy US, China models, Op Sindoor showed India's primacy: Air Force chief

Air Chief Marshal AP Singh said India must avoid rushing into theatre command models, stressing that Operation Sindoor proved air power's decisive role and left Pakistan's military on the back foot.

Chief of the Air Staff, Air Marshal AP Singh, on Tuesday cautioned against rushing into the creation of theatre commands, arguing that India must evolve its own structures instead of borrowing models from the US or China. Speaking with Lt Gen Raj Shukla (retd) at a fireside chat on the sidelines of Ran Samwad 2025, Singh reiterated that the Indian Air Force achieved its objective during Operation Sindoor. "For now, we don't need any new structure at the lower level. Any joint structure is fine as long as the core competence of each service is retained. Let us have a joint planning and coordination centre in New Delhi. We plan centrally and execution of tasks is decentralised," Singh said. "We cannot pick theatre command structures from the US or China. We have to think what we need here," he added. The Air Force chief emphasised that jointness

among the tri-services must not come at the cost of eroding individual strengths. "If the directions are from there (a central planning and coordination hub), things will flow out. We don't really need another structure at the moment. We can start with this, implement it, and see how it works. If other structures are required, we can think about them later," he said. Citing lessons from Operation Sindoor, the May 10 strikes on Pakistani air bases in response to the Pahalgam terror attack, AP Singh underlined the primacy of air power in modern warfare. "That night we were on song. We could have continued to strike, but that was not our aim. We had achieved our objectives," Singh said. Furthermore, the Air Force chief added that the military had conveyed to the political leadership that Pakistan was seeking to cease hostilities, and escalation was avoided to prevent prolonging the conflict.



Protesters disrupt traffic, urge cabinet to approve hostage deal with Hamas

Thousands protested across Israel demanding a hostage deal, blocking highways and demonstrating outside ministers' homes to demand that the government secure the release of 50 hostages still held by terrorist groups in Gaza.

Thousands of protesters took to the streets early Tuesday as part of a coordinated day of action, blocking highways and demonstrating outside cabinet ministers' homes to demand that the government secure the release of 50 hostages still held by terrorist groups in Gaza.

The day of action was organised by the Hostages and Missing Families Forum and began at 6:29 a.m., marking the exact time Hamas launched its attack on October 7, 2023. Protesters began by displaying Israeli flags outside the US Embassy in Tel Aviv. "For 690 days, the government has been waging a war without a clear objective," said Einav Zangauker, the mother of Israeli hostage Matan Zangauker, in a statement issued with other families of hostages. "How will the hostages, the living and the fallen, be returned? Who will govern Gaza the day after? How do we rebuild our country?" she



asked. By 7 a.m., demonstrators moved to block major intersections across Israel, halting traffic with signs calling for the return of all hostages. In some locations, protesters set tires ablaze on highways. Among the roads blocked for several hours were Tel Aviv's Ayalon Highway, Route 1

connecting Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and the Route 2 coastal highway. The disruptions caused widespread traffic congestion before police confirmed that all roads had reopened and traffic was flowing again. Police issued a statement reaffirming the right to protest but emphasising limits. "Freedom of

protest and expression is not freedom to harm many others' freedom of movement," the statement read. It added that blocking roads without permission or in a way that endangers road users or citizens' mobility "will not be allowed." Later in the day, relatives of the hostages assembled in Hostages

Square in Tel Aviv to deliver a press statement. Einav Zangauker again spoke, claiming that after 690 days of war "without a clear goal," it had become evident that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is "afraid of one thing — public pressure." Last week, Hamas claimed it had accepted a hostage deal that would involve releasing half of the captives, alongside negotiations to end the conflict and free the remaining hostages. Netanyahu has rejected this proposal, insisting that Israel will only accept a deal that results in the release of all hostages at once. He has instead advanced plans for a military operation to capture Gaza City. As part of the demonstrations, protesters also gathered outside the homes of cabinet ministers, urging them to back the proposed hostage deal ahead of a cabinet meeting on the issue scheduled for later in the day.

Putin, Kim Jong Un to attend China military parade in united front against West

No Western leaders will be amongst the 26 foreign heads of state attending the parade next week except for Robert Fico, prime minister of Slovakia.



Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korea's Kim Jong-un will attend a military parade in Beijing, marking the first public appearance of the two leaders alongside President Xi Jinping in a show of collective defiance amidst Western pressure. No Western leaders will be amongst the 26 foreign heads of state and government attending the parade next week except for Robert Fico, prime minister of Slovakia, a European Union member state, according to the Chinese foreign ministry on Thursday. Against the backdrop of China's growing military might during the "Victory Day" parade on September 3, the three leaders will

project a major show of solidarity not just between China and the Global South, but also with sanctions-hit Russia and North Korea. Russia, which Beijing counts as a strategic partner, has been battered by multiple rounds of Western sanctions imposed after its invasion of Ukraine in 2022, with its economy on the brink of slipping into recession. Putin, wanted by the International Criminal Court, last travelled in China in 2024. North Korea, a formal treaty ally of China's, has been under United Nations Security Council sanctions since 2006 over its development of nuclear weapons and ballistic

missiles. Kim last visited China in January 2019. Those attending the parade marking the formal surrender of Japan during World War II will include Belarus President Aleksandr Lukashenko, Iran's President Masoud Pezashkian, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto and South Korea's National Assembly Speaker Woo Won-shik, said Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Hong Lei at a news conference. Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic will also attend the parade. The United Nations will be represented by Under-Secretary-General Li Junhua, who previously served in various capacities at the Chinese foreign ministry, including time as the Chinese ambassador to Italy, San Marino and Myanmar. On the day, President Xi Jinping will survey tens of thousands of troops at Tiananmen Square alongside foreign dignitaries and senior Chinese leaders. The highly choreographed parade, to be one of China's largest in years, will showcase cutting-edge equipment like fighter jets, missile defence systems and hypersonic weapons.

Brazilian Judge orders 24-Hour patrol at Bolsonaro's home over flight risk concerns



Brazilian Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes on Tuesday ordered increased police security around the residence of former President Jair Bolsonaro, including 24-hour patrols, citing a heightened risk of flight ahead of final arguments in his coup plot trial. Bolsonaro was placed under house arrest earlier this month in a gated community in Brasilia after the court determined he had violated restraining orders designed to prevent interference in the legal process. He is facing charges of orchestrating a coup attempt to overturn the results of the 2022 election, which he lost. Bolsonaro has denied any wrongdoing. Final

arguments in the case are set to begin early next month. Moraes wrote in his decision that reinforcing police presence is "appropriate and necessary" given the approaching trial phase. He also referenced a recent police report that raised new concerns Bolsonaro might attempt to flee. The report cited a 2024 draft letter in which Bolsonaro requested asylum in Argentina and accused both him and his son, Eduardo Bolsonaro, of attempting to interfere with the legal proceedings. Eduardo, a sitting Brazilian congressman, is currently residing in the US and has been lobbying in Washington on behalf of his father.

Putin won't meet Zelenskyy 'because he doesn't like him', says Trump

US President Donald Trump said on Monday that Russian President Vladimir Putin is reluctant to meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy 'because he doesn't like him.'

"Why is Putin so reluctant to meet with Zelenskyy?" Trump was asked in the Oval Office, to which he responded: "Because he doesn't like him." Trump confirmed that he spoke again with Putin following their phone call last week, when he tried to line up direct talks between Moscow and Kyiv. But despite what Trump described as a "good conversation," no breakthrough emerged. "Every conversation I have with him is a good conversation," Trump said. "And then, unfortunately, a bomb is loaded up into Kyiv or someplace, and then I get very angry about it. I think we're going to get the war done. It's tough."

TRUMP UNSURE ABOUT

Brazil to buy local products hit by US tariffs, excludes coffee and beef

Brazil's government said on Monday it will buy several domestic products hit by the 50% higher US tariffs, such as acai, coconut water, mangoes and Brazilian nuts—and that it will pay an "adequate" price for them. Coffee and beef did not make the cut, though they are also affected by the measures imposed by US President Donald Trump, who has linked the tariffs on Brazil with the trial of his personal and political ally, former President Jair Bolsonaro. The development is the latest chapter in the tariff conflict between the Trump administration and Brazil. Most of the domestic products that the Brazilian government intends to buy, which also include honey and fish, will be used in state schools or in stock building nationwide. Brazil's Agrarian Development Minister Paulo Teixeira told reporters in Brasilia, the country's capital, that products like coffee and beef that didn't make the government's list are of interest to other markets and will presumably have other buyers. Teixeira, a close ally of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, added that Brazil's government "can't pay the price paid by exporters, which are set in dollars," but will find an adequate one for all of these items. "There's other markets interested in

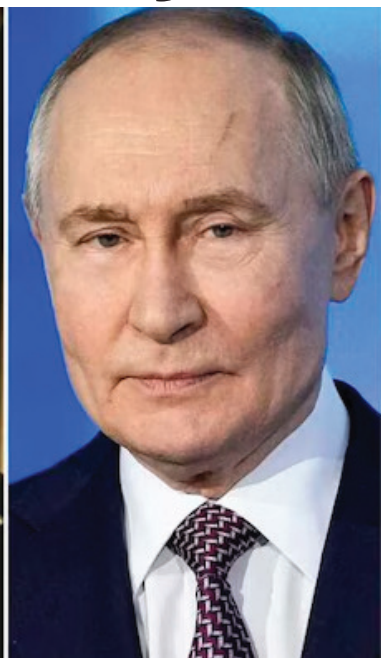


PUTIN-ZELENSKYY FACE-TO-FACE MEETING

The US President added he is uncertain about whether the two wartime leaders will sit down face-to-face. "I don't know that they'll meet," he admitted. "Maybe they will. Maybe they



won't." Last week, Trump hosted Zelenskyy and European leaders for talks in Washington while also phoning Putin. He said his aim was to arrange direct negotiations between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents, potentially followed by a three-way summit



including himself.

TRUMP WARNS OF CONSEQUENCES IF PUTIN-ZELENSKYY DO NOT MEET

Trump also warned that there could be consequences if Putin and Zelenskyy do not meet. He said that the two leaders "should

meet" and he would see what happens "over the next week or two" before stepping in. Ahead of any potential talks, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Friday that Putin will not meet Zelenskyy until Ukraine accepts certain long-standing Russian conditions. Lavrov also cast doubt on Zelenskyy's legitimacy, alleging his presidential term had expired under Ukraine's constitution. "When we come to a stage where you have to sign documents, we'd need a clear understanding that the person who's signing is legitimate," Lavrov said. "According to the Ukrainian constitution, Zelensky is not." Trump, still insisting that progress can be made, offered his own metaphor: "It takes two to tango. I always say. And they should meet, I think, before I have a meeting and probably close the deal."

Australia expels Iranian envoy, PM says Tehran directed anti-semitic attacks

Australia on Tuesday announced the expulsion of Iran's ambassador, accusing Tehran of orchestrating two attacks on the Jewish community in Sydney and Melbourne. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he had received "credible intelligence" linking the Iranian government to the attacks on the Lewis Continental Kitchen in Sydney on October 20 last year, and the Adass Israel Synagogue in Melbourne on December 6. The Australian Security Intelligence Organisation said it was likely that Iran had directed further attacks, he added. "ASIO has gathered enough credible intelligence to reach a deeply disturbing conclusion. The Iranian government directed at least two of these attacks. Iran has sought to disguise its involvement but

ASIO assesses it was behind the attacks," Albanese told reporters, referring to the main domestic spy agency. "These were extraordinary and dangerous acts of aggression orchestrated by a foreign nation on Australian soil," Prime Minister Albanese said, addressing the press. "They were attempts to undermine social cohesion and sow discord in our community," he added. Since the onset of the Israel-Gaza war in October 2023, Australia has witnessed a sharp rise in antisemitic attacks targeting schools, homes, synagogues, and vehicles, Reuters reported. The most recent incident occurred in July, when a man was charged with carrying out an arson attack on a Melbourne synagogue while worshippers were inside.

Harvard Faces Backlash as It Adapts to Trump Administration Demands

Harvard University is restructuring its leadership and campus programs in response to demands from the Trump administration, with billions of dollars in federal research funding hanging in the balance. While university officials call some of the federal directives unconstitutional and intrusive, they have already implemented significant changes to keep negotiations moving. Among the most controversial steps, Harvard eliminated certain diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs, renaming its Office of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging to the Office for Community and Campus Life. Several student support offices, including those for LGBTQ+ and women students, were

consolidated into a single center. Critics argue these changes could weaken academic freedom and expression, with some faculty describing the situation as a "capitulation" to federal pressure. The university has also seen leadership changes in sensitive departments. At the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, two senior figures, including Turkish scholar Cemal Kafadar, were removed amid allegations of antisemitic programming. Harvard has suspended its partnership with Birzeit University in the West Bank and strengthened ties with Israeli institutions as part of its response. Students and faculty have voiced growing unease over the shifts.

The Devastating Floods in India: A Man-Made Calamity Amplified by Global Warming

India has once again been battered by catastrophic floods, with torrential rains submerging villages, destroying infrastructure, and claiming countless lives. From Assam to Kerala, the deluge has left millions displaced, their homes and livelihoods washed away in a matter of hours. As the nation grapples with these recurring disasters, a pressing question looms: Are these floods merely natural phenomena, or are they a man-made calamity exacerbated by global warming? The answer, unfortunately, lies in a complex interplay of human negligence and the undeniable impact of climate change.

A Pattern of Devastation

In recent years, India has faced increasingly severe flooding events. In 2025 alone, states like Assam, Bihar, and Himachal Pradesh have reported unprecedented rainfall, with rivers breaching their banks and landslides burying entire communities. The 2013 Uttarakhand floods, the 2018 Kerala deluge, and now the recurring crises in the Northeast highlight a disturbing trend: floods are becoming more frequent, more intense, and more destructive. While India's monsoon season has always been a force of nature, the scale of these disasters suggests something more sinister at play.

The Man-Made Roots of the Crisis

To label these floods as purely natural disasters would be a gross oversimplification. Human activities have significantly contributed to their severity. Unchecked urbanization, deforestation, and poor infrastructure planning have left India vulnerable to the whims of nature. Encroachment on riverbanks and wetlands, driven by population growth and lax regulations, has choked natural drainage systems. Cities like Chennai and Mumbai, with their concretized landscapes, are practically designed to flood, as water has nowhere to go but into homes and streets.

Deforestation, particularly in ecologically sensitive regions like the Western Ghats and the Himalayas, has destabilized soil and increased the risk of landslides during heavy rains. The rampant construction of dams and hydropower projects, often without adequate environmental assessments, has disrupted river ecosystems, leading to unpredictable water flows. For instance, the 2013 Uttarakhand disaster was worsened by poorly planned infrastructure that amplified the impact of heavy rainfall.

Moreover, inadequate waste management has turned urban centers into ticking time bombs during monsoons. Clogged drains, choked with plastic and debris, prevent water from receding, transforming even moderate rainfall into catastrophic floods. These are not acts of God but failures of governance, planning, and collective responsibility.

The Shadow of Global Warming

While human negligence sets the stage, global warming is the catalyst that

turns these vulnerabilities into full-blown disasters. The science is clear: a warming planet intensifies weather patterns, making extreme events like heavy rainfall more frequent and severe. India, with its vast coastline and dependence on monsoons, is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Rising global temperatures have supercharged the Indian monsoon, leading to erratic and concentrated bursts of rainfall rather than the steady showers of the past.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that South Asia faces increased risks of extreme precipitation due to global warming. Warmer air holds more moisture, resulting in torrential downpours that overwhelm infrastructure and ecosystems. In 2025, parts of India received rainfall equivalent to months' worth in mere days, a phenomenon scientists attribute to climate change. Rising sea levels and melting Himalayan glaciers further compound the problem, increasing the volume of water in rivers and threatening coastal cities.

India's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions, while significant, pales in comparison to that of industrialized nations. Yet, it bears a disproportionate burden of climate impacts. This injustice underscores the need for global cooperation to curb emissions and fund climate adaptation in vulnerable nations. However, domestic action is equally critical. India must prioritize sustainable development, reforestation, and climate-resilient infrastructure to mitigate future disasters.

A Call for Accountability and Action

The floods ravaging India are a wake-up call—a reminder that nature's wrath is amplified by human folly. To break this cycle, we must address both the man-made and climate-driven aspects of the crisis. First, governments at all levels must enforce stricter regulations on land use and urban planning. Wetlands and forests must be protected, not sacrificed for short-term economic gains. Second, investment in climate-resilient infrastructure—such as better drainage systems, flood barriers, and early warning systems—can save lives and reduce economic losses.

On the global stage, India must advocate for stronger climate action from high-emission countries while accelerating its own transition to renewable energy. Community-level initiatives, such as restoring local water bodies and promoting sustainable agriculture, can also build resilience against floods.

The devastating floods in India are not just natural disasters; they are a mirror reflecting our failures in environmental stewardship and our reluctance to confront the realities of global warming. If we continue to ignore the warnings, the waters will keep rising, and the human cost will only grow. It's time to act—before the next deluge sweeps away more than we can afford to lose.

After New Tariffs, Trust Between US And India Is Running Low

A US-India trade agreement is about more than commerce. It is about security. In an effort to push India to cross unreasonable thresholds on agriculture market access, the Trump administration is depleting the reservoir of trust that both nations have painstakingly built over a generation. Notably, the administration's August 6 executive order adds an additional 25% tariff on India in response to India's purchases of Russian oil. Despite the "doom and gloom" and memories of 1998 and 2013, ties can still be largely repaired if the United States chooses. But this requires a deeper appreciation for India's true "redlines" on agriculture market access and a consistent approach to Russia. The US-India wider strategic relationship is at serious risk.

I have the fortune of working in a role that balances US-India commercial ties and US-India military ties. The first Trump administration was refreshingly direct in understanding the many linkages between economic and security matters, which typically reside in very different, and largely unconnected, silos within the Washington policy community.

India And US Complement Each Other

The commercial promise of a trade agreement with India stands on its own merits. India is on the verge of passing both Germany and Japan to become the world's third-largest economy. It has the largest consumer market in the world - a title it will likely hold in perpetuity. And there are natural complementarities driven by the relative strengths of the United States and India, most notably with India's dynamic technology services sector.

But this commercial promise of bilateral economic integration is only part of the reason for getting a good deal done fast. If China plans to continue an export-oriented growth strategy well into the future, exporting products to India must be considered a vital goal for the reasons outlined in the preceding paragraph. The

related surpluses provide China with the resources required for military modernisation and for bankrolling regional infrastructure programmes. They also allow Chinese manufacturers to further scale up and drive down production costs - including in sectors with dual-use capabilities such as computers, drones, rare earth magnets, quantum computers, navigation systems, marine vessels, communications infrastructure, robotics, and more. China is already the largest source of India's imports by a significant margin and, despite measures to slow imports by the Indian government, its share continues to grow, as indicated by Table 1.

India has also been deepening cooperation with the United States in a wider set of strategic undertakings, notably, defence cooperation. Beyond joint exercises and growing US sales of military equipment to India, the relationship is breaking important new ground in other ways; for example, India is joining the US Navy-led Combined Forces Maritime Bahrain, there are agreements for Indian shipyards to repair U.S. Navy vessels, and there have been hints of operational coordination during India's confrontations with China.

Of course, India is not sitting still and is actively working on trade agreements with other countries. Even before President Trump took office, India signed tariff-focused agreements with the United Arab Emirates (February 2022), Australia (April 2022), and the Swiss-led European Free Trade Association (March 2024). More recently, India signed a free trade agreement with the United Kingdom (May 2025). On average, these agreements will allow zero-duty access to the Indian market for over 90% of tariff lines. Other negotiations are ongoing. These agreements will provide a boost to manufacturers and help each of these countries reduce trade dependencies on China.



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MORNING GLORY: Are President Trump's tariffs actually working?

A new report released Friday from the Congressional Budget Office is surprising, even stunning. The "CBO" is not thought to be a friend of Republican presidents and Congresses. Questions always arise from "supply-siders" about whether CBO rejects serious "dynamic scoring" of developments in the law and in major regulatory actions. Whatever the agency's methodology, it issued a report on the Trump tariffs at the close of last week. "We project that increases in tariffs implemented during the period from January 6, 2025, to August 19, 2025 will decrease primary deficits (which exclude net outlays for interest) by \$3.3 trillion if the higher tariffs persist for the 2025-2035 period," Phillip Swagel, CBO's director wrote. "By reducing the need for federal borrowing, those tariff collections will also reduce federal outlays for interest by an additional \$0.7 trillion. As a result, the changes in tariffs will reduce total deficits by \$4.0 trillion altogether." Free traders should be scratching their heads as they review all the data, including that in this CBO "Update." Inflation has not spiked. Growth has not plummeted. The revenue from tariffs is enormous. An international trade war has not broken out. One of these things just doesn't belong here, one of these things just isn't the same," goes the old "Sesame Street" song's refrain.

So maybe, just maybe, we free marketeers ought to consider that perhaps, just perhaps, President Trump has been right about tariffs, America's strength relative to that of our trading partners, and the impact of non-tariff barriers-to-trade?

I checked in with an old friend and free-market economist, Dr. Richard McKenzie, Gerken Professor of Economics, Emeritus at the University of California, Irvine's The Paul Merage School of Business. He is following the data, but is unconvinced. For the moment, however, he does "agree that Trump could make world trade freer by his threats."

"On your broader question about general acceptance of tariffs," Professor McKenzie replied to my query on whether free market economists might blink at the CBO's numbers? "No, tariffs (and minimum wages) have long been used as a litmus test for market economists, but their commitment has always been conditioned on the strategy President Trump has employed: The threat of the imposition of tariffs can be used to lower the tariffs of other,"

McKenzie continued.

"But the argument I think Trump has used, that somehow 'my tariffs will offset your tariffs' to make a level playing field, doesn't play broadly, at least not in Friedman types: they compound the damage done."

"The tariffs," McKenzie continued, "if they end up being consequential, will diminish domestic (and world) incomes from what they would otherwise be—further reducing IRS revenues from what they would be."

Then Professor McKenzie pulled out the Thor's Hammer of "Friedman types": "A tariff is a tax, is a tax, is a tax! The CBO's estimates of trillions in additional federal revenues and reductions in budget deficits are testimony to that fact of accounting. President Trump seems to believe that he can wear the mantle of a tax cutter while raising tax revenues on the sly. His threats to impose heavy tariffs on countries that don't lower their tariffs on U.S. goods is also testimony that he understands the damage that can be done by tariffs. Such threats could work to promote freer world trade (Canada just lowered tariffs in response to Trump's threat), but don't count on that to be the case across the board, after the policy dust settles." No doubt President Trump's senior advisor on trade and manufacturing, Peter Navarro, would differ. Navarro and McKenzie were colleagues for decades on the same graduate school faculty at UCI. I have no idea when they last spoke—probably before 2016?—but Navarro has always been a man of the political left and McKenzie of the political (and economics) right. Navarro has embraced tariffs, at least against China, since his 2011 book "Death By China."

Their very different views are part of a long-running debate among economists, and those whose views about tariffs are informed by economists. I've reflexively been against tariffs since first absorbing the long-standing conventional wisdom about the 1930 Hawley-Smoot tariffs, something I first was taught over 50 years ago in "Economics 10," and then subsequently inhaling free markets/free minds arguments from the era of President Reagan forward.

If you search the terms "CBO and tariffs" and limit your timeframe to the past week, you will find a Reuters story about the report as well as stories in Axios, the Financial Times, the Washington

Examiner and Fox News. Perhaps coverage will increase this week, along with explainers from both left and right, some of which will note that the CBO "update" is preliminary to a forthcoming report on the entire economic picture.

What strikes me as odd is that the "Update About CBO's Projections of the Budgetary Effects of Tariffs" is very much a man-bites-dog story but wasn't treated that way after President Trump underscored the news in his Friday Oval Office press availability.

The big question is whether free market folk will reconsider their rejection of the president's trade policies. Doubtful, that. I am still very leery of any president's authority to even impose such sweeping edicts outside of clear national security arenas, such as China. This question of the limits of "executive authority" is presented in a case before the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals now underway. This controversy over presidential power is almost certainly headed to the Supreme Court as the Constitution explicitly grants tariff authority to Congress, and the Congressional delegation of that authority to the president in the International Emergency Economic Powers Act ("IEEPA") is broad, but is it broad enough to support President Trump's vast impositions and frequent resets? It's a case of first impression. If the IEEPA does indeed grant the power, it may be enough to resurrect the "non-delegation doctrine" abandoned by the Supreme Court 90 years ago and trigger the Court's rejection of all or some of the Trump tariffs. I don't know the answer to that question and neither does anyone else. A single, federal district court judge said the president does not have the power to do what he did, and that ruling's effect was stayed. That's all we know. These days, a ruling from a single federal district court on the actions of President Trump is the nearly the thinnest of reeds on which to rely. The federal district courts have had more reversals in the last six months than the Cleveland Browns since their return to the Lake in 1999. Numbers are numbers, however, and \$4 trillion in deficit reduction means \$4 trillion less in national debt. For the debt hawks out there who are also free traders, the CBO "Update" deserves your attention, regardless of whether legacy media notes it.

Trump's Got It Wrong, Discovering Oil Will Be The Ruin Of Pakistan

U.S. President Donald Trump has declared that Pakistan is sitting on a massive bed of black gold. How does he know this? Because none other than General Asim Munir apparently revealed this to him over lunch at the White House a few weeks ago.

Much to the wheeling-dealing Donald's delight, General Munir also promised that American oil majors, some of whom bankrolled the Republican's campaign, would get first dibs on drilling rights. Trump even quipped Pakistan might one day sell oil to India. Entertaining as the story is, reality paints a different picture. Unlike Saudi Arabia or Iraq, Pakistan has no history of oil wealth. It remains dependent on imports, its exploration record is uninspiring, its reserves are inconclusive. Global majors have long avoided exploring in Pakistan because they don't think there's much there. And it stands to reason. If oil were a salvation, Islamabad



would have tapped it decades ago. After all, why wouldn't a fragile economy that spends millions of dollars every year on importing oil not look to save itself substantial money? But suppose a windfall were real. Would it

rescue Pakistan's failing state? Hardly. What has oil wealth done to make Gulf states in Pakistan's neighbourhood the meccas of good governance? The Gulf's glitzy skylines mask closed political systems, migrant exploitation, moral policing, and elites enriched by authoritarianism. Even without oil, Pakistan already shares these features with its Gulf neighbours. It's built not on independent democratic institutions or the brilliance of individual enterprise but tribal patronage networks, military dominance, religious obscurantism. The discovery of hydrocarbons would only deepen the rot. Petro-dollars would fuel corruption, embolden the army, suppress dissent, and bankroll adventurism abroad. Instead of reform, Pakistan would descend further into dysfunction. Possibly even into dissolution. Far from a lifeline, oil as a primary resource could push the state closer to the brink of implosion.



Two Years After October 7, Why Can't Israel Defeat Hamas?

A mere two months away from the second anniversary of Hamas's brutal terror strike against Israel, in which hundreds died while many others were taken hostage - and who continue to remain in captivity - Tel Aviv has used this war as an opportunity to reshape its strategic architecture for the long term. Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has called it his country's "seven-front war" and has mobilised militarily to reshape and re-stack the country's long-standing border infractions with not just the likes of Hamas and Hezbollah, but beyond as well, as highlighted by the joint US-Israeli airstrikes against Iran's nuclear facilities.

The Three Main Fronts

Amongst these seven fronts, three are arguably more critical than the others. First, unsurprisingly, is Gaza, where Israel continues to be embroiled in a war against Hamas with a stated aim to eliminate the group. The second is Israel's northern border with Lebanon and a long-standing feud with Iran-backed Hezbollah. And, the third is the country's border with Syria, where the collapse of Bashar al-Assad's regime last year led to a suspension of the 1974 Agreement of Disengagement, followed by a military expansion beyond the contested Golan Heights to create an expanded buffer zone as an additional layer of security.

These three fronts have seen a variety of strategies being employed simultaneously, with varied levels of success and failures alike. Gaza remains a tinderbox strategically, politically, and militarily for Netanyahu. The stated aim of the elimination of Hamas has been backed by a ferocious military campaign that has left much of the strip in rubble and caused civilian casualties. As of today, Hamas continues to hold fort. But amidst this campaign, another reality persists - that of around 50 hostages remaining in Hamas captivity. The war against Hamas and the ensuing crisis in Gaza have also split Israeli society on what the best way

forward is for the country. The fact that almost two years later, Hamas persists despite the elimination of leaders such as Ismail Haniyeh and Yahya Sinwar, is a sore point. The lack of a negotiated truce or a deal to allow a follow-up exchange of prisoners has led to a widening disparity of public opinion on the path forward. Humanitarian aid has also become a victim of politics and the global narrative war taking shape over the plight of the Palestinians vis-à-vis the Israeli hostages.

Divisions Within

There are further splits. The civil and military institutions of the state have at times publicly disagreed on the trajectory this conflict should take. This is a rare event in a heavily securitised state such as Israel, but it comes with reasonable scepticism. Israel is a small country, and mandatory military service means that almost all households know someone or the other today who was either directly impacted by the October 7 terror attack or has since been deployed in the military at one or more of the seven fronts. Over 890 Israeli soldiers have been killed since October 2023. While national security is a binding factor for Israelis, the viability of the Gaza war and the fact that Hamas continues to hold people hostage have, to an extent, bifurcated public support for the conflict's ultimate objectives. Netanyahu's own politics is also featured starkly in these conversations as regular public protests continue to take place.

When The 'Opportunity' Came

However, as contested as the Gaza war is domestically, regionally and internationally for Israeli perceptions, other theatres have fared much better tactically for Israel. Its actions against Hezbollah in Lebanon, much like other theatres, were offensive in nature. This included creating buffer zones inside Lebanese territories to push back Hezbollah rocket fire into the northern parts of the country. These actions were

followed by the audacious pager attacks that targeted the group's rank and file and their communication methods. Additional aerial strikes then killed Hassan Nasrallah, the founding chief of Hezbollah. Israel clearly had planned these strategies long ago, but did not utilise them due to political restraints. The October 7 attack did away with these shackles for Netanyahu, who saw opportunities much beyond Hamas and Gaza to reshape how Israel has gamed regional risk assessments. Many of these operations conducted by the Israeli military and the country's infamous external intelligence arm, the Mossad, were clearly planned and kept on file over the years in preparation to be used if an opportunity was to present itself.

The Shift In Syria

Much like Hamas and Hezbollah, the collapse of Assad's rule in Damascus also pushed Israel to see it as an opportunity, rather than just a threat. Immediately after Assad's government dissolved, Israeli forces conducted a gamut of airstrikes across Syria, taking out a wide range of military equipment belonging to the erstwhile Syrian armed forces, such as Surface to Air Missile (SAM) systems, tanks, and fighter aircraft, including Soviet-era Su-22 and Su-24s. Over 320 targets were hit in a 48-hour period, destroying around 80% of the state's military capability. According to some reports, this included storage facilities housing chemical weapons.

The flip side of the above actions has been that Israel is forced to deal with a new power broker in Damascus: Ahmed Al Sharaa, the founder of Hay'at Tahrir Al Sham (HTS) and self-declared lapsed jihadist who has previously spent time in Al Qaeda and the ecosystem that eventually became the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or 'Daesh' in Arabic). Propped up by regional Arab powers, the US, Turkey, and European capitals alike (largely with an aim to keep Iran and

Russia at bay), Al Sharaa went from carrying Kalashnikovs to brandishing Cavalli suits. Wanting to save its already strenuous relations with Arab neighbours and the US from fracturing further, Israel has decided to conduct negotiations with Al Sharaa's government even though it continues to use force as a tool of messaging.

A Global Conflict

Finally, from Gaza to Lebanon to Syria, Israel, over the past two years, has mobilised to establish itself as the core military power in the region, a strategic feat for what is a small country. However, long-term outcomes of these manoeuvres remain debatable. While many Arab states, such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), have normalised diplomatic ties with Israel as part of the 2020 Abraham Accords, both the return of the Palestinian crisis and now Israel's position as a primary military and sole regional nuclear power (although an unofficial one as Israel has never made its nuclear weapons public) is a source of unease in states that were mulling cooperation. And this is even when the weakening of the likes of Hamas and Hezbollah works for their Arab neighbours' own strategic interests.

For Israel, and more specifically Netanyahu, the situation is expected to remain difficult in the time to come. While Lebanon and Syria are points of regional and not necessarily international concern, Gaza is and remains a globalised conflict. The war against Hamas and the civilian casualties that have come with it have caused tremendous setbacks to Israel's global perception as it struggles to control a slide in narrative against its actions. The larger problem still is that even two years after the October 7 attack, Hamas continues to exist, and the probability of Israel being dragged into a long war of attrition remains palpable. For now, political brinkmanship is not a choice for Israel and Hamas.

As Trump Shuts US Doors, Here Are 3 Places That Can Save India's Exports

Finally, the 50% tariffs that US President Donald Trump had been threatening India with took effect on Wednesday. While 25% of these tariffs were reciprocal, the additional 25% has been slapped on for India's purchase of Russian oil, which Washington alleges is feeding Russia's war in Ukraine. This move threatens over half of India's exports to its biggest market.

India has hinted at possible retaliation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been calling for and reiterating the "Make in India" initiative. Analysts have warned that these tariffs may put two million jobs at risk as they apply mostly to labour-intensive sectors - textiles, gems, jewellery, and so on, though pharmaceuticals and electronics have been spared. The tariffs will not only make Indian goods less competitive but will also give an edge to other exporters like Vietnam, Bangladesh, or China. Yet others have warned of slower growth as additional costs, such as shipping, will push the actual effect of the tariffs to more than 50%.

The Opportunities In Eurasia
Industry bodies have called for diversification of India's exports. This has galvanised India to look to other markets, including those not traditionally focused on or widely considered. Prime amongst them is, ironically, the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). This bloc includes Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and powerhouse Kazakhstan. India has been negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA) with the bloc for a while. Last week, India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, visited Moscow, where he co-chaired the 26th round of India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC). In his opening remarks, he said, "Today, as we meet, allow me to lay out some of the salient features of the agenda before us. Addressing tariff and non-tariff trade barriers, removing bottlenecks in logistics, promoting connectivity through the International North-South Transport Corridor, the Northern Sea Route and the Chennai-Vladivostok Corridor."

During his visit, India and the EAEU signed the Terms of Reference (ToR) to formally launch negotiations for an FTA. The bloc, created in 2015 as Moscow's response to the European Union, has a combined GDP of \$6.8 tril-



lion and represents 180 million people. Trade between India and the bloc reached \$69 billion in 2024 - a 7% rise over the previous year.

The Changed Market In Russia
India's primary economic partner in the EAEU is Russia, which is currently India's fourth-largest trading partner. Last year, trade between the two countries crossed \$60 billion, primarily due to New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil. Imports from Russia accounted for \$56 billion. As India seeks to address this huge trade imbalance, opportunities have opened up. Under sanctions for the last three years because of its war in Ukraine, Russia has been compelled to become self-reliant. India can export a wide range of goods, from machinery to crockery, which the Russian market seeks, according to Gaurav Gupta, Founder, Global Trade and Technology Council of India. Moreover, the billions of rupees that have been accruing to Russia in India also create imperatives for the latter to stimulate exports to that country. This will help promote the Indian rupee while saving India's foreign exchange. An FTA with the bloc will further help diversify India's export market, as goods to Russia can find their way to other member-states of the bloc.

Kazakhstan, a member of the EAEU, for instance, wants Indian investments and production lines in the country. An extremely resource-rich country, it is India's largest supplier of uranium and is rich in rare earth metals, which can help alleviate India's search for them. However, the country has a weak manufacturing base. By setting up manufacturing there, India could not only cater

to the Kazakh market but also to other markets in the bloc. This would also create a market for Indian labour there.

With traditional labour markets, like in the Gulf countries, already saturated, the EAEU also represents a new migration corridor for Indian labour. Russia, for instance, has been recruiting Indian labour, and this is not to send them to the war front but to its factories and plants. India also has an agreement with Armenia for the recruitment of around 50,000 personnel per year. Thus, by focusing on this bloc, India can reap a rich harvest.

The GCC's Importance

While India is focusing on 40 other markets, two other blocs that hold great significance are the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) and the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations). With GCC, the focus has traditionally been on labour migration and energy security. The bloc, which includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, has wealth funds that now manage between an estimated \$4.9 trillion and \$5 trillion in assets that are expected to surpass \$7 trillion by 2030, and 30% of global oil reserves. It is also a major exporter of natural gas.

The GCC is a top trading bloc for India. Bilateral trade with it exceeded \$161 billion in 2023-24, with the top trading partners being the UAE and Saudi Arabia. The GCC is critical to India's energy needs as it meets over 60% of its crude oil demands. This share may have dipped over the last couple of years when India turned to discounted Russian oil, but the GCC still is a major

source of India's energy supplies. India also imports 70% of its natural gas requirements from here. Besides, almost 9 million Indians live across GCC states and are a major source of foreign remittances, estimated to be over \$50 billion annually.

Conclude That FTA

An FTA with the GCC would enable greater economic integration, reduce trade barriers, address asymmetrical tariffs, and allow for greater cross-border movement of labour and capital. India already has a Framework Agreement on Economic Cooperation with the GCC, which began the negotiations for an FTA. Formal negotiations for the FTA were resumed in 2022. In January this year, the GCC again expressed intentions to initiate formal discussions within the year. India must now push in earnest for an early conclusion of the talks.

India also already has a CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) with the UAE in place, which has doubled the trade between the two countries and reduced tariff barriers on 80% of goods traded between them. India is negotiating similar agreements with Oman and Qatar and is also seeking digital and financial integration with the bloc. For instance, India's UPI and RuPay card systems are functional in the UAE and are being integrated with Oman's digital payment platforms. This increases the ease of travel and tourism, as well as retail, as this writer experienced last year in the UAE.

Ultimately, an FTA with India will enable the GCC to diversify their economies too, looking beyond oil, driving both oil and non-oil growth.

The ASEAN Game

Similarly, ASEAN is another powerhouse that India is looking to revise its FTA with. The bloc has a combined GDP of approximately \$3.6 trillion in 2022, making it the fifth-largest in the world. It represents approximately 700 million people. ASEAN's GDP has more than doubled since 2009, and its growth forecast remains strong.

The bloc is India's fourth-largest trading partner. The total bilateral trade between India and the ASEAN bloc reached approximately \$123.12 billion in 2024-25, accounting for almost 11% of India's overall global trade. The FTA India had entered into with the bloc in 2010 is thought to have driven this. However, some structural shortcomings with regard to market access for Indian goods, cumbersome rules of origin clauses, and, in particular, concerns about Chinese goods entering India via the bloc, are thought to have prevented both sides from exploiting the actual potential of bilateral trade.

What is important is that bilateral trade between India and individual ASEAN countries, such as Singapore and Malaysia - also two of the leading economies in the bloc - has soared. While with Singapore, India's trade totalled about \$35 billion in 2023-24, with Malaysia, it reached approximately \$20 billion.

India is now seeking to revise the FTA with the bloc to remove structural weaknesses and harness the full potential of the relationship. With ASEAN countries also feeling the heat of Trump's tariffs, it becomes imperative for both sides to conclude an early revision of the agreement.

Look Beyond Uncle Sam

The key lesson here is to look beyond Western markets. The world is changing rapidly, and India must be prescient enough to take advantage of the shifting global economic landscape. Along with all this, India must also restructure its internal trade and manufacturing policies. With all the above-mentioned blocs, India has a negative balance of trade. Therefore, New Delhi must in earnest undertake measures and reforms to strengthen its manufacturing base. With an abundance of labour and resources required, it is a miracle that India still lags in this sector. Hopefully, Trump's tariffs will be a new awakening and a new beginning for India.

How Did the World's Most Sophisticated Military Fall So Far Behind With Drone Warfare?

The U.S. military is just getting started on transforming the way it conducts war.

When the Pentagon announced a “joint interagency task force” in July to bring the U.S. military up to speed on drone warfare, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. James Mingus compared drones to the threat of improvised explosive devices two decades earlier in Iraq.

The drone, said Mingus, “is our IED of today” — a war-transforming technology that smaller powers could use to put big powers at a disadvantage. Ukraine has demonstrated this brilliantly over the last few years through its innovative use of drones to stymie the invading Russians. And 20-odd years ago, another nation that once saw itself as all-powerful on the battlefield — the United States — found itself flummoxed in the streets of Iraq and Afghanistan as insurgents deployed IEDs to kill or maim thousands of young Americans in a new kind of “asymmetric” warfare.

“We cannot move fast enough in this space,” Mingus said last month. What he neglected to say, however, was that the Pentagon took tragically long to combat the IED. Many within the military and Congress — among them, notably, then-Sen. Joe Biden — were outraged over nearly two years of delays in deploying the MRAP, or “Mine Resistant Ambush Protected” vehicle, to address the IED threat. The issue wasn’t resolved until a new defense secretary, Robert Gates, took over for Donald Rumsfeld in 2006. Appalled by what he called daily “funeral pyres for our troops,” Gates imposed his will over bureaucratic resistance from the Pentagon — “Hurry up! Troops are dying,” he’d tell reluctant officials over and over — and launched a crash program to send thousands of MRAPs to Iraq and Afghanistan. Critics say the Defense Department is having similar problems now with drones. In that earlier era, as Gates wrote in his 2014 memoir, *Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War*, the long delays in deploying the MRAP occurred because “no one at a senior level wanted to spend the money to buy them” and officials in the Pentagon’s



“hidebound and unresponsive bureaucratic structure ... were wed to their old plans, programs and thinking.” Today, some military experts say that, for many of the same bureaucratic reasons, the Pentagon has been far too slow to adapt to the latest evolution in asymmetric warfare: drones. Indeed, much of the catch-up has occurred only in the last month or so. Shortly after the task force was announced in July, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth unveiled a major initiative called “Unleashing U.S. Military Drone Dominance,” and declared at a news conference that “drones are the biggest battlefield innovation in a generation.” However, Hegseth noted offhandedly, to date “U.S. units are not outfitted with the lethal small drones the modern battlefield requires.” He mostly blamed the Biden administration for the delays, saying it only “deployed red tape” while “our adversaries collectively produce millions of cheap drones each year.” (The Pentagon did not respond to requests for comment.)

Most significantly, after watching Ukrainians destroy Russian tanks and strategic aircraft with armed drones, Hegseth said drones should now be treated like munitions — cheap, expendable and mass produceable — and not like a new, expensive aircraft, development of which can take years longer to get through

Pentagon red tape. The DoD’s new drone policy also seeks to expedite drone use by giving lower-level commanders — basically colonels in the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, and the U.S. Air Force, and captains in the U.S. Navy — authority to purchase and deploy so-called Group 1 and 2 drones, or smaller vehicles like tiny FPV (for “first person view”) quadcopters that can be used at the unit level and have been so effective on the front lines of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. All of that amounts to a good start, critics say. But that is also the problem: The Defense Department is just getting started, as even Mingus has admitted. By the accounts of many experts, the U.S. military is not close to developing, much less deploying, the dizzying array of sophisticated drones mastered by the Ukrainians and Russians — including “kamikaze” drones used to destroy enemy tanks and vehicles; ground drones that can lay mines and deliver ammunition and medicine; larger drones that can ferry smaller ones behind enemy lines, among others.

“There’s a lot of talky-talky and not a lot of showy-showy,” says Benjamin Jensen, a reserve U.S. Army officer and professor of strategic studies at the Marine Corps University School of Advanced Warfighting. “How many memos does it take before we just start firing people who are standing in the way?”

Jensen is among those who worry that what’s happening now resembles the “horribly inefficient” way the Pentagon went about combating IEDs.

“I’m nervous that we have leaders who are trying to do the right thing,” he said, “but we haven’t sufficiently reformed the bureaucracy to let them enact their vision.”

“We are really, really behind,” says Stacie Pettyjohn, director of the defense program of the Center for a New American Security. “The problem with the fielding of drones here is that we do not have options that are really very cheap or good. Every single drone here is inferior in quality and costs more than DJI drones [made by China’s Shenzhen-based Da-Jiang Innovations Co and deployed by Ukraine]. ... We don’t have the industrial base that can produce those right now.”

Trent Emeneker, a Defense Department contractor who has run one of the Pentagon’s few drone research programs over the last five years at the Defense Innovation Unit — called the Blue UAS [unmanned aerial systems] program — mostly agrees with this assessment. The problem is so acute, he says, that the U.S. is still largely dependent on Chinese-made components.

“Blue was an attempt to create a way to say, ‘Here are options that are not Chinese,’” Emeneker says, but with almost no money allocated it

“really hasn’t worked,” yielding only a “miniscule” number of U.S.-made drones. “The biggest gaps are things like batteries, motors and magnets,” he adds, the market for which remains nearly 100 percent Chinese-controlled.

Why is the U.S. military — long considered the global gold standard in defense innovation — so far behind in this new and dangerous trend? According to a former senior adviser to Hegseth, Marine Corps veteran Dan Caldwell, the main reason harks back to an age-old problem: Generals and commanders are always fighting the last war. “They’re not just fighting the last war, they’re fighting the last two or three wars,” says Caldwell, who was fired in April along with others in Hegseth’s inner circle. “I think you still have a class of officers and career civilians in the DoD whose formative experience was in Desert Storm or Iraq and Afghanistan, and they still look at those conflicts as the framework for analysis going forward.” That, in addition to traditional wargaming in the Pacific, means that most of the Pentagon’s attention and resources is still on “major prestige acquisition programs” like the F-35 jet, the Sentinel missile program, more Navy ships and expensive precision munitions, he said.

President Trump and the Posse Comitatus Act

The president's deployment of the National Guard in roles usually reserved for local police summons up a thousand references to a nearly 150-year old statute

The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, as amended, provides that "Whoever, except in cases and under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or an Act of Congress, willfully uses any part of the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps, the Air Force, or the Space Force as a posse comitatus or otherwise to execute the laws shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both."

No one has ever been prosecuted under the act, and it has rarely been the subject of comment by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Brennan Center for Justice, a non-partisan, but decidedly liberal law and policy center, noted that the law has "ignominious origins" in the collapse of Reconstruction.

The return to power of white Southern Democrats in federal and state offices after Reconstruction ended in 1877-1878 led to the rapid introduction and enforcement of Jim Crow laws over the shattered Confederacy as Union troops were withdrawn over the defeated areas of rebellion. (The last federal troops of the Reconstruction Era were

withdrawn on April 24, 1877, on orders from President Rutherford B. Hayes from the state house in Louisiana — the last federally defended state house in the South.) The presence and power of the Union troops were reviled by the defeated partisans of the Confederacy and the military governments whose will they enforced proved ineffective in reforming the law and practices of the Old South. Following the Compromise of 1876, some Republicans of that era joined Democrats to pass the statute to assure that military government would not return to the South.

The original law has been amended several times, most recently in 1981 and 2021. Some scholars spend considerable time on its actual reach, with one, R.H. Moore providing this summary for the Department of Justice's Journal of Criminal Justice in 1987: The most recent amendment to the Act came in the 2022 National Defense Authorization Act which broadened the law to explicitly cover all branches of the military. The limits and effectiveness of the statute are not subjects of either settled law or study. As President Donald Trump deploys the National Guard and the military in

new and sometimes novel circumstances, be alert that commentators invoking the Posse Comitatus Act are almost certainly relying on the talking points of whatever political party to which they belong. Bottom line: As of now, nothing Trump has done with the National Guard in Washington, D.C. is remotely close to illegal. If Trump dispatches the Guard to any city other than the federal enclave, expect attempts to challenge the scope of presidential powers in federal court. If the Supreme Court eventually reviews such a deployment and issues a ruling on the merits, only then will there be a conclusive interpretation of the law's reach and limits.

Hugh Hewitt is a Fox News contributor, and host of "The Hugh Hewitt Show," heard weekdays from 3 pm to 6 pm ET on the Salem Radio Network, and simulcast on Salem News Channel. Hugh drives America home on the East Coast and to lunch on the West Coast on over 400 affiliates nationwide, and on all the streaming platforms where SNC can be seen. He is a frequent guest on the Fox News Channel's news roundtable hosted by

Bret Baier weekdays at 6pm ET. A son of Ohio and a graduate of Harvard College and the University of Michigan Law School, Hewitt has been a Professor of Law at Chapman University's Fowler School of Law since 1996 where he teaches Constitutional Law. Hewitt launched his eponymous radio show from Los Angeles in 1990. Hewitt has frequently appeared on every major national news television network, hosted television shows for PBS and MSNBC, written for every major American paper, has authored a dozen books and moderated a score of Republican candidate debates, most recently the November 2023 Republican presidential debate in Miami and four Republican presidential debates in the 2015-16 cycle. Hewitt focuses his radio show and his column on the Constitution, national security, American politics and the Cleveland Browns and Guardians. Hewitt has interviewed tens of thousands of guests from Democrats Hillary Clinton and John Kerry to Republican Presidents George W. Bush and Donald Trump over his 40 years in broadcast, and this column previews the lead story that will drive his radio/ TV show today.

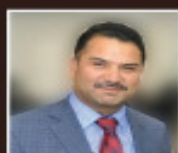
The Beginning

MAD MEN

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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.



The Beginning

MAD MEN OF NU WAY ADVERTISING

Sharanjit Thind Singh

The Beginning

A True Story of the iconic rise of an Indian American Advertising Agency in Manhattan, New York in early 2000

Sharanjit Thind Singh

MAD MEN
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NU WAY ADVERTISING

Indian rivers in peril as climate change triggers hidden biodiversity crisis

The overflowing waters of the Ganga river have caused severe flooding across large parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, displacing hundreds of thousands of people and devastating villages and agricultural land. Torrential monsoon rains swelled the river, breaching embankments and inundating vast regions, intensifying the flood crisis that now grips these states.

According to data from the Central Water Commission and the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), water levels at key stations such as Bhagalpur in Bihar and Varanasi, Prayagraj, and Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh have crossed the danger marks, leading to massive submergence of residential areas, roads, and farmland. In Bihar, over 17 lakh people across 10 districts have been affected, with places like Bhagalpur seeing floodwaters engulf entire villages. Uttar Pradesh has reported floods disrupting

life in 17 districts, affecting more than 84,000 people and damaging thousands of homes and croplands. Relief camps and rescue operations are underway across both states.

In northern India's mountainous regions, the situation is compounded by glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) that have destroyed villages in Uttarakhand and blocked roads in Himachal Pradesh. The IMD has also issued warnings for severe weather events, including flash floods and landslides in Jammu and Kashmir.

HOW CLIMATE CHANGE IS WORSENING THE SITUATION?

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) has released a report stating that rivers in the eastern part of India will see a rapid rise in streamflow, which will eventually be followed by water scarcity.

evaporation. Cloudbursts in

Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Pakistan are linked to rising temperatures.

When clouds reach their threshold level, they release heavy rainfall in a specific region within a short period of time, causing flash floods.

For every one-degree rise in temperature, there is a 2.3 per cent decline in dissolved oxygen in river water bodies, according to research published in the journal Scientific Reports.

HOW DOES IT AFFECT BIODIVERSITY?

Rising atmospheric temperatures contribute to higher water temperatures, which in turn decrease dissolved oxygen levels in rivers and lakes. Aquatic animals need dissolved oxygen to survive; its decline could lead to major devastation in aquatic ecosystems. The study was conducted on seven Indian rivers—Ganga, Narmada, Cauvery, Sabarmati,

Tungabhadra, Musi, and Godavari—and recorded rising water temperatures. It also predicted a decline in dissolved oxygen levels in these rivers by 2 to 12 per cent between 2071 and 2100. Another study by the Indian Institute of Science revealed the role of rising temperatures in the decline of groundwater levels. Reduced groundwater recharge is disrupting the Earth's interior balance. Beyond climate change, land use patterns also determine the rate of water flow in a region. Improper land management can increase runoff and worsen water scarcity. Increased pollution in Indian rivers further contributes to rising temperatures and ecological stress. Climate change is reshaping India's river systems. Glacial lake outbursts, heavy floods, rising water temperatures, polluted rivers, and degrading ecological health are endangering biodiversity, livelihoods, and water security.

'Never Said I Or Someone Should Retire At 75': RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat To News18

Dismissing all speculation that "anyone should retire at the age of 75", RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat said on Thursday that he had never said that he would or someone should quit at that age. Both Bhagwat and Prime Minister Narendra Modi turn 75 next month. News18 had asked Bhagwat if the RSS believed that those on constitutional posts should retire at the age of 75. This correspondent had cited Bhagwat's comment in July in Nagpur at a function when he had recounted an anecdote to say that if someone puts a shawl on your shoulder at the age of 75, it is a sign that one has grown old and should move aside to make place for others. The Congress had picked up Bhagwat's comment to say that the RSS chief had reminded Narendra Modi that the PM would turn 75 this September. Hence, News18 asked Bhagwat for his comments on the interpretation some had made that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should also retire as the PM when he turns 75 next month.

"I never said I should retire or someone should retire," Bhagwat said on Tuesday, when this correspondent's question was read out to him

at a function in Vigyan Bhawan in Delhi.

"In Sangh, we swayamsewaks, we are given a job. Whether we want it or not. So if I am 80 years old and the Sangh will tell me to go run a shakha, I will have to go. I can't say I have completed 75 years, I want to enjoy retirement benefits. Now, there are no benefits. Even if I am 35 and Sangh will say you sit in the office, we do whatever Sangh tells us. We don't say I will do this, I want this, I want that, that is not allowed. We are not here to accomplish anything," Bhagwat replied. He went on to ask that did anyone think he could be the sarsanghchalak of RSS? "There are at least 10 people sitting here in this hall who could anytime take this mantle and carry on. But they are very busy in their contribution...they cannot be spared. I was the one who could be spared," Bhagwat said. He again said that his comments were "not for the retirement of anybody or myself. We are ready to retire anytime in life, and we are ready to work as long as the Sangh wants us to work. That is the thing."

"Nuke India", "Kill Trump": Minneapolis Shooter's Chilling Messages On Guns



The shooter who opened fire on Wednesday on school children attending a church service in the US city of Minneapolis, killing two students, had "kill Donald Trump" and "nuke India" written on his guns, a video on his now-deleted YouTube channel showed. The shooter, identified as Robin Westman, 23, used all three weapons - a rifle, a shotgun and a pistol - and fired dozens of rounds at the church at the Annunciation Catholic School. Westman was later found dead in the parking lot from what officials believe was a self-inflicted gunshot. Court records show Westman's name was changed from Robert in 2020 because Westman identified as female. On a YouTube channel titled "Robin W", there were at least two videos posted before site administrators took the channel down.

One of the videos, which was about 10 minutes long and shot on a mobile phone, showed a cache of weapons, ammunition and loaded magazines. "Kill Donald Trump", "kill Trump now", "Israel must fall", and "Burn Israel" were written on the magazines. "Nuke India" was also written on one of the weapons. "Where is

your God?" and "for the children" were also written on the magazines. Names of previous school shooters were also scrawled on a magazine and some of the messages were written in Cyrillic. At one point, the person also held up a smaller firearm from the cache and said, "This one is for me. In case I need it." The video also showed a letter written to the person's family, apologising for what the shooting will mean for them. The Minneapolis Catholic school shooter was Robin Westman. He was a biological male who identified as a transgender "woman." The second video on the channel, which is almost 20 minutes long, featured two different journals. The first was over 150 pages, all written in what appears to be the Cyrillic alphabet. The second journal had a last entry dated 8-21-25 and was more than 60 pages, and was also written entirely in Cyrillic. US Homeland Secretary Kristi Noem confirmed the authenticity of the video, saying the "deeply sick murderer scrawled" the words 'For the Children' and 'Where is your God?' and 'Kill Donald Trump' on the rifle magazine. "This level of violence is unthinkable," she wrote on X.

'If Indians Don't Budge...': Trump Adviser's New Trade Warning To New Delhi

Linking India-US trade negotiations to a marathon, Hassett said talks require a long-term outlook and acceptance of "ebbs and flows" before New Delhi and Washington reach the final position.

Donald Trump's top economic adviser has warned that if India fails to curb its Russian crude trade, the US President will not ease his stance on Washington's punitive tariffs on Indian imports. US National Economic Council Director Kevin Hassett called trade negotiations with New Delhi "complicated", as he accused India of "intransigence" in opening its markets to American products.

"If the Indians don't budge, I don't think President Trump will," he said. The United States on Wednesday doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a staggering 50 per cent, the highest for any country other than Brazil. This includes a 25 per cent additional duty for India's purchase of Russian crude oil. Hassett said trade

negotiations with India were "complicated", claiming part of it "has been tied to the pressure we've been trying to put on Russia in order to secure a peace deal and save millions of lives. And then there's the Indian intransigence about opening their markets to our products."

Linking India-US trade negotiations to a marathon, Hassett said talks require a long-term outlook and acceptance of "ebbs and flows" before New Delhi and Washington reach the final position.

"When you look at trade negotiations, one lesson we've all learnt is that you need to keep your eyes on the horizon and recognise that there are going to be ebbs and flows before we reach the final

position," he said.

Team Trump's Tariff Outlook

he Trump adviser's remarks echoed US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent's earlier comments, where he said high tariffs on India are "not just over India's purchase of Russian oil" but also due to the protracted nature of the ongoing trade deal talks. "I'd thought we'd have a deal in May or June; that India could be one of the earliest deals. But they, kind of, tapped us along," Bessent told Fox Business on Wednesday. He claimed New Delhi had been "a bit uncooperative" during negotiations and said, "This is a very complicated relationship." "I do think India is the world's largest democracy, and the US is the world's largest

economy. I think at the end of the day we will come together," he added.

India's Stand

India has asserted that it is prepared to stand firm against US pressure, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi vowing he would "never compromise" the interests of the country's farmers. The government estimates the tariffs will impact \$48.2 billion worth of Indian exports to the US. Officials have warned that, though the immediate impact of new duties appears limited, the ripple effects on the economy pose challenges that must be addressed. The new duties could make shipments to the US commercially unviable, triggering job losses and slower economic growth, they said.

'Naples is dead': How overtourism is hollowing out Italian cities

Rising numbers of visitors are swamping the locals, making housing scarce, increasing pollution and even emptying churches.

NAPLES, Italy — Via dei Tribunali is one of Naples' busiest arteries, filled with restaurants and shops. Down one of its side alleys stands a bronze statue of Pulcinella, the trickster who has long symbolized the city. In high season, the queue to rub his nose can stretch half a kilometer as tourists chase an ancient Neapolitan good-luck ritual.

But locals know that tradition is fake.

The statue was erected only in the 2010s, and was largely ignored by Neapolitans. Only in recent years influencers discovered it, fabricated a folkloric backstory, and suddenly no tourist felt their trip to Naples was complete without it. The result is a paradoxical "local" tradition without any locals — and a good example of what overtourism is doing to Italian cities. "The historic center of Naples is dead," said sociologist and activist Francesco Calicchia, who lives and works in the working-class Sanità neighborhood. "Those streets aren't neighborhoods anymore. There are no Neapolitans left, no real life left. They've become playgrounds, open-air shopping malls."

Sipping a coffee on Via Foria, just outside the tourist grid, he noticed a shirtless man ambling past, dragging a suitcase down the middle of the street. "The problem," Calicchia said, eying the man cutting across the street, "is that this kind of tourism isn't being managed or controlled."

Many cities across Italy are wrestling with the same pressures. But Naples —

with its tangled history and outspoken residents — offers a particularly vivid case study.

Activists, workers, experts and local politicians all argue that overtourism is hollowing out the fabric of the city — and while it's often touted as a source of money and jobs, they say it mostly enriches the wealthy instead.

Housing scarcity

One of the main ways tourism is reshaping Naples is through its impact on housing.

"Short-term rentals have grown exponentially in Naples, just like in other Italian cities," said Chiara Capretti, a municipal councilor and member of Resta Abitante — an association defending the right to housing — as she hunted for a free table in the tourist-clogged San Domenico Square.

AdvertisementIn some working-class districts, there's one B&B for every three homes. "If this were happening in wealthier neighborhoods, locals might absorb higher rents and rising costs," said Ivan Avella, a local urban planning graduate. "But in poorer districts, the impact is much harsher. The area stays poor — but now it's also touristy."

The result is that residents are being displaced. "There's been a noticeable increase in evictions," Capretti said.

Giuseppe Giglio, a humanitarian worker who also moonlights as a tour guide in Naples, is one of many pushed out by the B&B boom. In 2023, his landlord told him he was converting the

apartment into a business project backed by state funds to spur investment in southern Italy. For the landlord it seemed easier — and more profitable — to evict Giglio and turn the apartment into a short-term rental.

Before his notice period was even up, Giglio woke one morning to find workers already tearing out gas pipes in the next room.

"I lost everything and ended up crashing with friends, my cat in tow, until I could move into another place. For a while, I was literally on the street," he recounted over the phone before his work shift. But what shocked him most was how quickly the whole building was transformed. "That building is still home to families who've lived there for generations ... but many of them don't have the tools — financial or cultural — to fight situations like this," he said. "Four floors, two apartments per floor, all the apartments on my side — first, second, and fourth floors — have been converted into short-term rentals, bed and breakfasts, or student housing."

"So gradually, one by one, long-term residents have been pushed out to make room for tourists and temporary renters."

"I once heard about an elderly Neapolitan woman who lived in the city center and couldn't get home because the streets were too crowded," said Gaia Portolano, who works at a tourist infopoint, explaining what it's like to coexist with overtourism. "A tourist overheard her complaining and told her

that she was the one living in the wrong place."

The pressure on Naples' housing is so intense that local urban planning discussions now revolve around investing in the eastern part of the city, Capretti said, which is full of neglected and abandoned areas. The idea is to "recover lost livability in the historic center by building it in the eastern zone" — supposedly by moving residents out of the city center to make room for tourists.

Supporters of the tourism boom argue that platforms like Airbnb can benefit small landlords.

However, in 2023 Avella noted that almost two-thirds of Airbnb hosts owned more than one property, and the top five hosts controlled roughly 500 listings. He suggested that means the largest landlords are companies, not people. And even when owners are individuals, they are often from wealthier cities like Rome or Milan, he added. "There's no redistribution of money locally," Calicchia said, adding that Naples is being used as a postcard for Italy while the profits flow north or abroad.

One striking example, he added, is an ancient residential building in the central square of Rione Sanità. The Turin-based coffee giant Lavazza painted a mural on the façade, blending Neapolitan slang with a street art style popularized in town by football fan murals — and even added a QR code linking to the company's website.

How a 30-year-old frozen embryo became the world's oldest baby

A medical feat has made headlines around the world as a healthy baby boy was born in the US, using an embryo that had been frozen for over three decades. Believed to be the longest-known interval between embryo freezing and birth, this event not only showcases the advances in fertility science but also opens up fresh possibilities for couples struggling with infertility. The embryo, originally frozen in 1992, along with three others, by Linda Archerd, had remained in deep freeze. The original donors undergoing in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) in 1994, didn't use all of them, and instead of discarding the remaining embryos, they chose to donate them for use by other families. For many years, those embryos stayed in frozen storage.



Then, in 2023, a different couple, Lindsey and Tim Pierce, who had difficulty conceiving on their own, chose to receive one of those donated embryos. Doctors carefully thawed the embryo and transferred it into the new mother's uterus, at Rejoice Fertility, a Christian non-profit IVF centre based in Tennessee

that facilitates embryo adoption. The embryo was implanted successfully, and months later, a healthy baby, Thaddeus Daniel Pierce, was born - now being called the world's oldest baby.

The story raises an important question: can an embryo that's been frozen for so

long truly result in a healthy child? We spoke to IVF specialists to understand the procedure and how this medical advancement takes place.

According to experts, yes. The key lies in how well the embryo was preserved over the years and the integrity of the storage conditions. "An embryo frozen 30 years ago can still result in a healthy pregnancy, thanks to advancements in cryopreservation—especially vitrification.

At this ultra-low temperature, all cellular activity comes to a standstill, which prevents any degradation or ageing," Dr. Jyoti Tripathi, Fertility Specialist at Nova IVF Fertility, Indore, explains.

There is no biological "expiry date" for embryos as

long as they are kept under ideal conditions. "Medically, embryos can be preserved for decades without risk. What matters is maintaining consistent storage conditions. In India, however, the ART (Assisted Reproductive Technology) law allows storage for up to 10 years, after which renewed consent is required," Dr. Tripathi adds.

The successful birth proves that time doesn't necessarily diminish the viability of a frozen embryo, as long as all scientific protocols are carefully followed.

Unlike egg or sperm donation, embryo donation allows the receiving mother to carry the pregnancy herself, creating a powerful emotional connection. It also presents a more affordable path for many families.



Lung cancer, mostly caused by smoking tobacco, has become the top reason for cancer-related deaths around the world, and even in India. What makes it more dangerous is that it often goes unnoticed until it reaches a serious stage. Symptoms like a long-lasting cough or chest pain usually appear late, which means treatment options become limited. In India, one in nine people

is expected to get cancer during their lifetime, and lung cancer is becoming more common every year. The number of lung cancer cases in India is rising, from about 63,700 cases in 2015 to a projected 81,200 cases in 2025. Around 100 million adults in the country smoke, which puts a huge population at risk. Every year, nearly 60,000 people in India die because of lung cancer.

India's lung cancer burden in numbers

Globally, in 2020, lung cancer was the second most common cancer and the leading cause of cancer deaths. These numbers highlight the urgent need for awareness, early detection, and strong efforts to reduce tobacco use. According to the Population Based Cancer Registries Report 2016, lung cancer cases are highest in India's northeastern states.

Data from the National Cancer Registry Programme shows that lung cancer rates among men range from 4.6 per 100,000 in Wardha to 38.8 in Aizawl. Among women, the rates range from 1 in Barshi to 37.9 in Aizawl. In comparison, the western and central parts of

India have fewer lung cancer cases. This difference may be due to the varying smoking habits in different regions. Overall, about 18.9% of India's population smokes, but the numbers differ widely — from 16.2% in Kerala to as high as 72% in Mizoram. Lung-cancer patterns in India look a lot like those in other Asian countries such as China. Fewer people here get the disease than in Western nations, yet they tend to be diagnosed about ten years earlier.

Sadly, more of them die from it: many discover the cancer only after it has spread, arrive at clinics or hospitals in poorer health, and often cannot access the newest treatments.

Smoking is a main driver. The latest Global Adult Tobacco Survey shows that 28.6% of Indians aged 15-24 smoke regularly, and the country has about 253 million tobacco users overall - one of the highest totals in the world. In India, lung cancer is more common in males than in females. In 2020, an estimated 71,788 men and 26,490 women were diagnosed with the disease. By 2025, the number of cases is expected to rise, with projections showing 81,219 cases in men and 30,109 in women.

This growing trend highlights the need for stronger prevention, early detection, and awareness efforts, especially among high-risk groups.

That 'stress' cigarette is a gamble your lungs will lose. Here's why

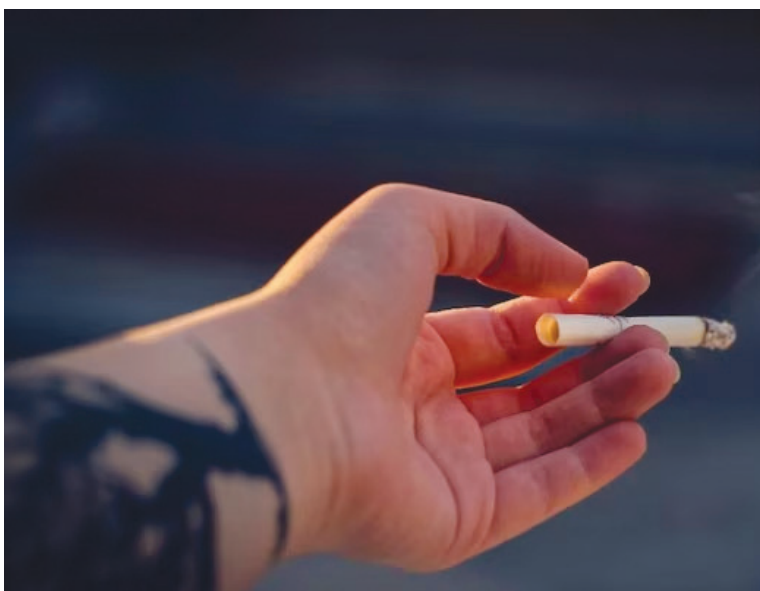
It's a scene nearly everyone has seen, or lived. A terrible day at work, tension at home, or even a mounting to-do list.

Shoulders tighten, thoughts race, and you hear it in your mind: "Just one cigarette, it'll calm me down." You step outside, light it up, and breathe in.

For a moment it feels like relief. But here's the truth: that cigarette isn't helping. It's a trap.

THE ILLUSION: SMOKING HIJACKS STRESS

Despite being marketed as



stress-busters, cigarettes exploit the brain's chemistry

and keep you in a damaging loop. First comes the nicotine rush, a puff that floods your brain with dopamine, creating brief pleasure.

Then there is the withdrawal phase wherein your body quickly returns to a nicotine-deprived state, triggering irritability, restlessness, and anxiety. And thus kicks off the cycle of stress.

You feel compelled to light up again. But be mindful, the stress relief you feel is only temporary and self-generated by the previous cigarette. It's not your job or

bills causing the stress — it's nicotine withdrawal.

SMOKING MAY END UP INCREASING STRESS

"The apparent relaxant effect of smoking only reflects the reversal of the tension and irritability that generally develops during nicotine depletion," notes.

American Psychologist, highlighting findings that smokers experience higher average stress levels than non-smokers and feel notably calmer only because each cigarette immediately relieves the withdrawal it caused.

India's alarming animal bite cases highlight urgent need for rabies control

India has seen a worrying surge in animal bite cases, especially those caused by stray dogs. Experts and authorities are raising alarms about the link between these bites and rabies, a deadly disease that can almost always be prevented with timely action.

The Rise in Animal Bite Cases

In 2024 alone, India recorded over 22 lakh (2.2 million) dog bite cases and more than 5 lakh cases involving other animals like monkeys. Reports indicate that nearly 20% of bite victims are children under the age of 15, making this a serious public health concern. The trend is especially visible in urban areas, but rural regions are also heavily affected. Some cities and states have seen dramatic



jumps in reported bites. For example, Noida witnessed a 31% increase in cases in a single year, and Ludhiana's numbers have more than doubled since 2021. Across the nation, cases have jumped by nearly 70% from 2022 to 2024. With millions of reported bites each year and the numbers still climbing, the risk of rabies exposure has sharply increased.

Why Is This Happening?

The main culprits behind human rabies are stray dogs, which account for about 96% of cases in India. Several challenges make the problem worse: Unchecked stray animal population, especially dogs. Inadequate animal birth control and vaccination pro-

grams. Lack of public awareness of how to prevent bites and seek help after exposure. Poor access in some areas to anti-rabies clinics and life-saving treatments.

The Danger of Rabies

Rabies is nearly always fatal once symptoms set in, but it is entirely preventable if treated immediately after an animal bite. On average, dozens of people die from rabies every year in India, with children and the elderly at higher risk. The real number could be higher, as not all cases get reported.

What Can Be Done?

Experts and health authorities are calling for urgent, coordinated measures: Mass dog vaccination: This is the most effective way to control rabies at its source. States like Goa have shown that targeting dog

vaccination and population management can lead to a sharp drop in human rabies cases. Stray animal population control: Animal Birth Control (ABC) programs are being expanded and are essential for long-term solutions. Better public awareness: People need to know that washing animal bite wounds with soap and seeking medical help immediately can save lives. Free and accessible anti-rabies treatment: More anti-rabies clinics are being set up, and vaccination and immune globulin are provided free through national programs like the National Rabies Control Programme (NRCP). Rapid response for bite cases: Prompt administration of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) and, in some cases, rabies immunoglobulin.

What is hepatitis D, the deadly viral disease now given a cancer tag by WHO?



dominal discomfort, dark urine or yellowing of the skin. Many people ignore these signs or confuse them with other illnesses. There isn't a separate vaccine for hepatitis D. The only way to stop it is by getting the hepatitis B vaccine, which protects against both viruses. WHO says 147 countries now offer newborn vaccinations, but testing and treatment for existing cases still lag far behind.

When it comes to the treatment of hepatitis D, medications are still evolving. However, the full benefit of reducing liver cirrhosis and cancer deaths can only be realised through urgent action to scale up and integrate hepatitis services – including vaccination, testing, harm reduction, and treatment – into national health systems.

Health experts say better awareness, early screening and wider access to treatment could save millions of lives by 2030.

For now, the key advice is simple: get vaccinated, get tested, and don't ignore liver health.

Hepatitis D is now tagged as a cancer-causing infection by the World Health Organisation. The health agency's cancer arm, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, called hepatitis D a carcinogen as the little-known virus can silently raise the risk of liver cancer, just like hepatitis B and C.

Hepatitis is a viral infection that inflames the liver. Of the five main types – A, B, C, D and E – the B, C and D strains are the most dangerous because they can stick around for years, damaging the liver slowly. WHO estimates that over 300 million people live with chronic hepa-

titis B, C, or D infections, and 1.3 million die each year from related diseases. Most don't even know they're infected until the damage is already done.

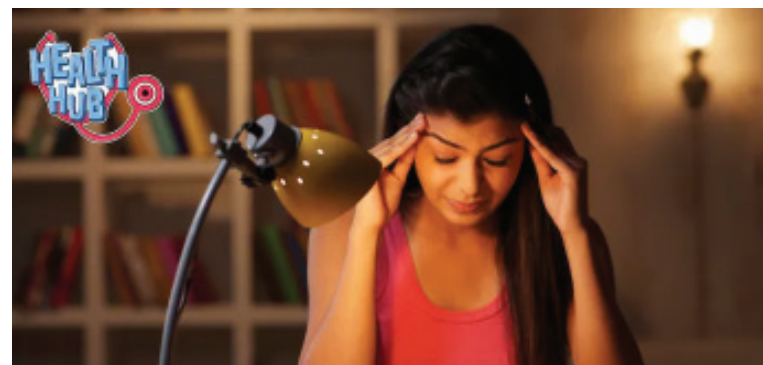
Hepatitis D is different from the others. It only infects people who already have hepatitis B, but together, the two viruses are far more harmful.

According to WHO, having both increases the risk of liver cancer two to six times compared to hepatitis B alone.

The virus spreads through infected blood, unprotected sex, unsafe injections, or occasionally from mother to child during birth.

Symptoms, if they appear, are usually vague and include fatigue, nausea, ab-

Are women more prone to headaches, and why are their symptoms often dismissed?



It often starts as a dull ache behind the eyes or a sudden throb on one side of the head. For many women, this is not just another headache, it is the onset of a migraine that may last for hours, even days, often accompanied by nausea, blinding light sensitivity, and an all-consuming fatigue. Despite the intensity of these symptoms, their complaints are frequently brushed off in clinics. Their pain, even in modern medical settings, is too often deemed "stress-related" or "emotional." Yet the science is clear: women suffer more from headaches than men. A study in The Lancet revealed that women are two to three times more likely to suffer from migraines than men after puberty. And the reason is far more complex and deeply

physiological than we've been led to believe.

HORMONES: THE SILENT AGITATORS

Neurologists have long noted a stark difference in migraine prevalence between the sexes. "Most doctors, if not all, have come to accept that estrogen, and especially its withdrawal before menstruation, is a significant factor in migraine causation," says Dr. Girish Soni, neurologist at Lilavati Hospital in Mumbai. "Migraines are infrequent in girls before puberty but become common after menarche, which strengthens this hormonal hypothesis." Dr. Bhaskar Shukla, consultant neurologist at PSRI Hospital, agrees, pointing to estrogen fluctuations as one of the strongest triggers.

Experience the World Digital Premiere of Tehran on ZEE5 Global – A Maddock Films Production starring John Abraham, streaming this Indian Independence Day weekend

Premiering on 14th August exclusively on ZEE5 Global, Tehran is a gripping geo-political spy thriller about one man who is hunted by Iran, abandoned by Israel and deserted by India

(By our staff reporter) ZEE5 Global, the world's leading streaming platform for South Asian content available globally across 190+ countries, brings viewers Maddock Films' Tehran — a taut geo-political spy thriller starring John Abraham, Manushi Chhillar, Neeru Bajwa, and Madhurima Tuli this 14th August 2025. The film is a fictionalized version inspired by true events and unfolds against the simmering global tension between Israel and Iran. Directed by Arun Gopalan, Tehran dives into the shadowy world of international espionage where one man's allegiance could tip the balance between loyalty and betrayal.

As seen in the trailer, the story draws inspiration from the 2012 bomb explosion near the Israeli Embassy in Delhi, a real-life incident that spiraled into complex diplomatic ripples. As ACP Rajeev Kumar (John Abraham) is pulled into a covert operation that spans continents, ideologies, and fractured alliances, the lines between right and wrong begin to blur. Is Rajeev India's ultimate patriot, silently shaping the nation's future from the shadows—or a rouge officer playing by his own rules?

Also featuring Neeru Bajwa,

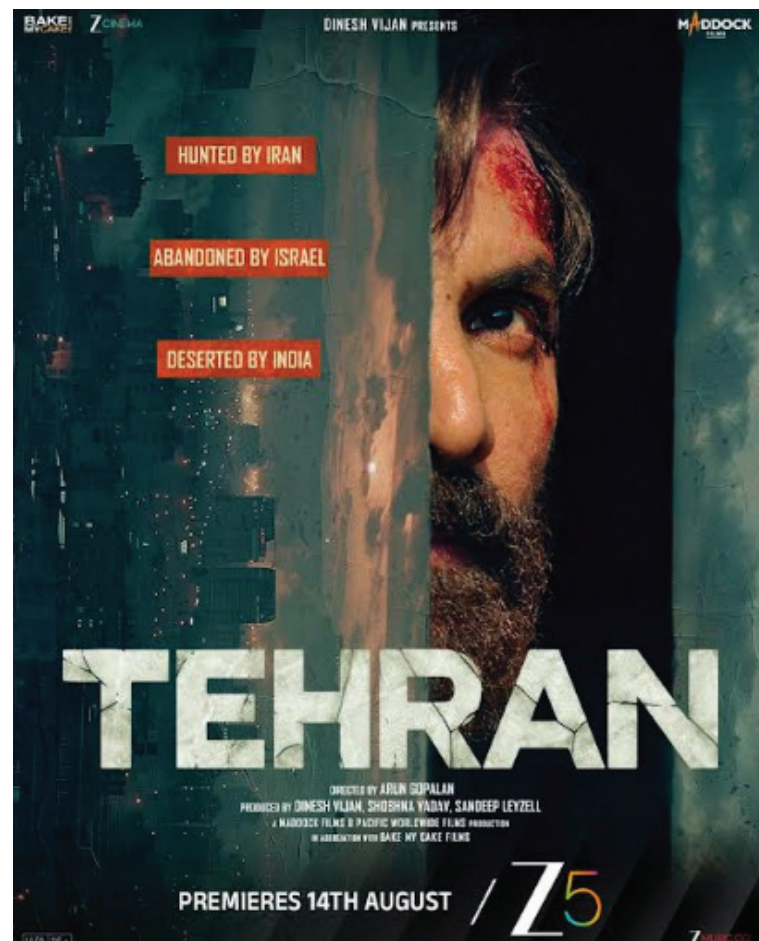
Manushi Chhillar, and Madhurima Tuli, Tehran is far more than a globe-spanning thriller—it's a psychological and political minefield. The film doesn't just trace espionage operations — it dissects international politics, deception, and mind games.

Kaveri Das, Business Head – Hindi ZEE5, said, "At ZEE5 Global, we believe in telling stories that don't just entertain but provoke thought and reflect the pulse of our times. This Indian Independence Day, we're proud to bring viewers Tehran — a high-stakes geo-political thriller that dives deep into the murky world of espionage, patriotism, and moral conflict. It's a gripping narrative about the unsung heroes who serve from the shadows, and one man whose mission raises a powerful question: is he defending the nation — or betraying it? In partnership with Maddock Films, we're excited to present a story that challenges black-and-white definitions of loyalty and sacrifice."

Producer Dinesh Vijan adds, "Tehran focuses on what's at stake behind the headlines - the people. The film is about a man's conscience, about how even a single human life can change the

course of international relations. It's a genre we rarely do in India. But, at Maddock Films, we have always focused on storytelling with a heart and soul. And Tehran is such a story that we are sure viewers worldwide will enjoy." Director Arun Gopalan said, "Tehran, to me, is a mirror held up to a fractured world. A story about shifting loyalties, blurred identities, and the human cost hidden in the shadows of global politics. We approached it with honesty and restraint because the truth it draws from is far from fiction. Every decision these characters make carries weight; every silence, every betrayal leaves a mark. I'm thankful to John, Manushi, and the cast for stepping into this world with such courage and authenticity. More than a spy thriller, Tehran is a tense, adrenaline-charged ride that forces you to ask: whose truth do you believe?"

John Abraham said, "Tehran is a truly global film—rooted in real events but resonating far beyond borders. Playing ACP Rajeev Kumar in Tehran has been one of the most intense and layered roles of my career as he is not your conventional patriot. He's a man constantly torn between duty and conscience, and that



moral conflict is what makes this story so compelling. This film isn't about good versus evil—it's about navigating the grey. I'm proud to be part of a project that dares to explore these complexities, and I can't wait for audiences to experience it this Indian Independence Day on ZEE5. I am also thankful to ZEE5 Global for giving a platform to this film because in all honesty, Tehran is India's first international film".

Neeru Bajwa said, "Tehran is unlike anything I've done before—a gripping narrative that's as emotionally charged as it is politically complex. What drew me to this story was the strength and clarity of my character. She's someone who holds her ground and chooses integrity, even when the world around her is falling apart. It's a proud moment for me to represent a woman who is morally grounded and unafraid to stand up for what she believes in, in a story as intense and far-reaching as this. Tehran is a story that doesn't just entertain—it provokes thought, and I'm proud to

be part of a film that's bold, timely, and unapologetically real". **Tehran will premiere exclusively on ZEE5 Global on 14th August**

ZEE5 is India's largest home-grown video streaming platform and the global destination for South Asian content, reaching viewers across 190+ countries. As the streaming platform of ZEE Entertainment Enterprises Ltd., a leading content and technology powerhouse, With a focus on 'Apni Bhasha, Apni Kahaniyan' (multiple languages, infinite stories), ZEE5 drives a language-first platform approach, delivering hyper-local content, language specific packs and deeply personalized experiences in seven languages, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, Malayalam, Kannada, and Marathi. With a vast library spanning Originals, Indian and international films, TV shows, kids' content, news, live TV, and bite-sized micro dramas, ZEE5 is the destination for diverse, multilingual content for Indians everywhere.



Triptii Dimri's emotional scene from Dhadak 2 goes viral, fans say she's back



A scene of actor Triptii Dimri from her latest film 'Dhadak' went viral on Wednesday. The scene featured her character Vidhi responding to a casteist remark when a man accused her of dishonouring her family. Several social media users praised Dimri's strong performance. Vidhi responded to the comment by saying, "Mujh par kyun hain ghar ki izzat? Mujhse poocha kisi ne?... Baal khule theek hain, ki baandh du? Izzat nahi jaani chahiye naa aap logo ki (Why does the honour of the house depend on me? Did anyone ask me? Is it okay if my hair is open, or should I tie it? Your honour should not be lost, right?)" When another character tries to calm her, she responds, "Agar aapne kabhi thodi himmat dikha ke baat ki hoti naa, toh aaj mere baat karne ki naubat nahi aati (If you had shown some courage and spoken up, then it wouldn't have been necessary for me to talk)."

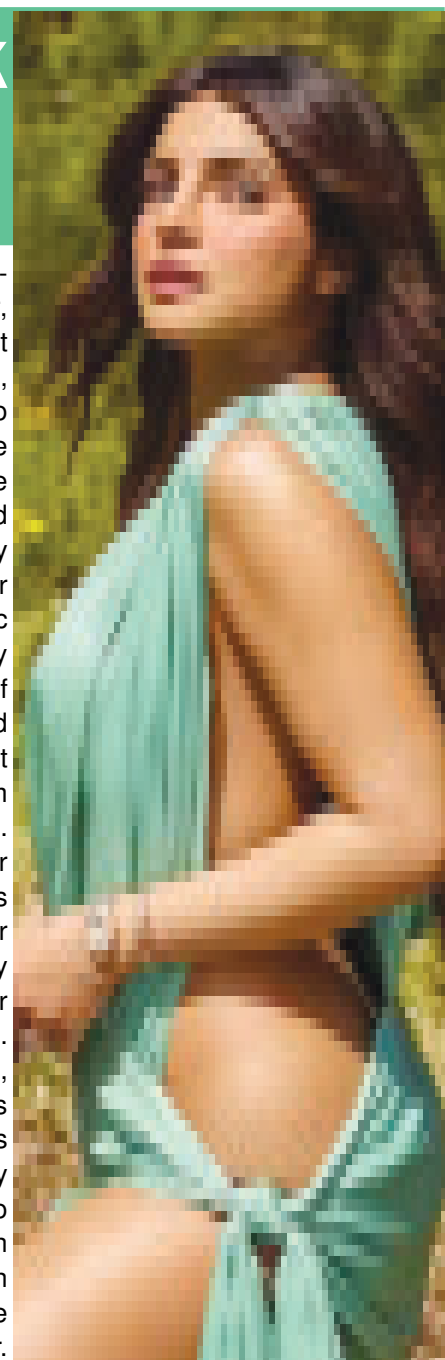
One fan commented on Instagram, "She is a good actor, finally she's got a good script to deliver (sic)". A second user wrote, "Finally she is back. I loved her in qala, Bulbul, and Laila Majnu. She is always so good (sic)." A third user commented, "The last scream said everything (sic)." Featuring Triptii Dimri and Siddhant Chaturvedi in the lead roles, 'Dhadak 2' is a socially relevant love story. It is directed by Shazia Iqbal and backed by Dharma Productions. India Today gave a 3-star rating to 'Dhadak 2'. "The Shazia Iqbal-directed film attempts to tackle caste-based atrocities with courage, but not conviction. Unlike the original 'Pariyerum Perumal', it holds back from making the kind of sharp, fearless commentary the subject demands. What could have been a powerful political statement became a diluted narrative, seemingly softened to dodge censorship or controversy. The re-dubbed climax dialogues only add to the unease," read the review. The film clashed with Ajay Devgn's 'Son of Sardaar 2' in theatres on August 1.

Priyanka Chopra Eyes Bollywood Comeback with Bhansali's Love & War, Says Insider

Priyanka Chopra may be gearing up for a fiery return to Bollywood, and if reports are to be believed, it could be with none other than Sanjay Leela Bhansali. The global star, who has stayed away from Hindi cinema since her last appearance in *The Sky Is Pink* (2019), might be planning a grand re-entry—possibly with a dazzling dance number in Bhansali's upcoming period epic *Love & War*. On Friday, fans were quick to take notice when Priyanka shared a nostalgic Instagram post dedicated to her iconic

performance in *Ram Chahe Leela* from *Goliyon Ki Raas Leela Ram-Leela*. With a lengthy caption praising Bhansali's creative brilliance and the unforgettable choreography by Vishnu Deva, the post set off a wave of speculation. Many questioned whether the tribute was simply sentimental or a subtle hint at something brewing behind the scenes. Now, according to a source speaking to *Hindustan Times*, the speculation may hold weight. While nothing has been officially confirmed, insiders suggest

Priyanka is indeed in talks for a high-voltage appearance in *Love & War*, potentially recreating the magic of her past collaborations with Bhansali. If finalized, it would mark her long-awaited return to Hindi cinema and potentially one of the biggest Bollywood moments of 2026. *Love & War* is currently under production and stars Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, and Vicky Kaushal. Described as a lavish period war drama, the film is being crafted on an epic scale, with Bhansali reportedly choreographing a massive face-off between Ranbir and Vicky that could be one of Indian cinema's most elaborate action sequences. The film is set for release on March 20, 2026. While Bhansali's film could mark her return to Bollywood, Priyanka is already attached to another major Indian project: *SSMB29*, a highly anticipated collaboration with director SS Rajamouli and actor Mahesh Babu. Also featuring Prithviraj Sukumaran, the film is still in early stages and is expected to release in 2027. Whether it's through an explosive item number or a key role, Priyanka Chopra's homecoming to Bollywood seems closer than ever. With *Love & War* on the horizon, fans may soon see the desi girl reclaim her place on the big screen in signature Bhansali grandeur.



Parineeta trailer: Vidya Balan-starrer restored in 8K ahead of re-release

The makers of the film 'Parineeta' surprised fans by re-releasing a new trailer for the film. This time, it has been restored in 8K to elevate its cinematic appeal. The new trailer came ahead of the film's re-release in theatres after 20 years since it first hit theatres. 'Parineeta' marked actor Vidya Balan's debut in the Indian film industry. It also featured Saif Ali Khan and Sanjay Dutt in pivotal roles. Even after two decades, the trailer retains the original charm of the film with its music, powerful performances and strong narrative. In a statement, Balan earlier spoke about

the film's hit song, 'Piyu Bole'. She said, "I remember listening to 'Piyu Bole' for the first time; even then, I knew it was something special. There was a softness to it, a kind of innocence that I guess mirrored how I was feeling at the time - new, unsure, and quietly hopeful." The actor shared her thoughts on the trailer and said, "Watching the trailer now, that melody brought back memories...shooting the scenes with (Dada) Pradeep Da, screaming instructions from behind the monitor and how he'd act out moments and expect us to follow."



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