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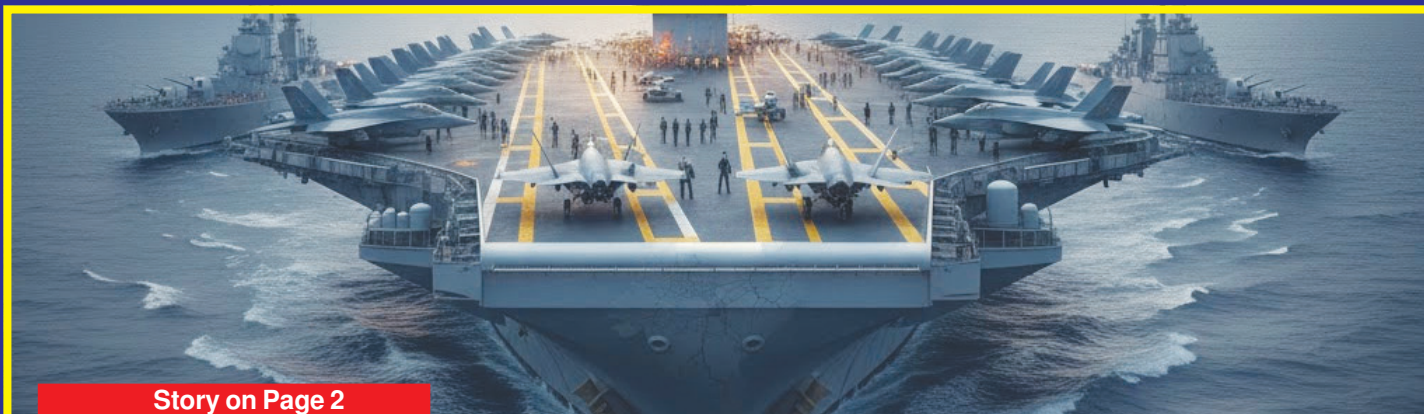
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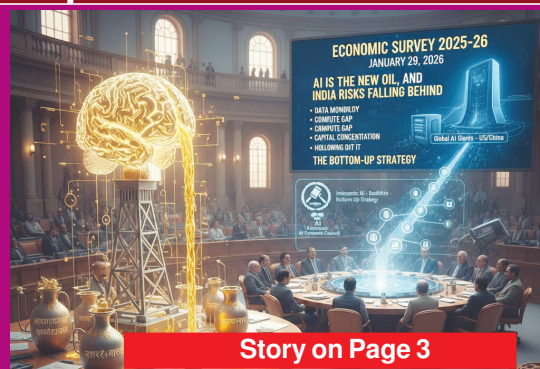
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What Comes After The Bombs? Possible Futures Of Iran If US Strikes

US President Donald Trump has issued a stark warning to Tehran, saying that failure to reach an agreement on nuclear weapons would invite consequences far more severe than anything seen before. Iranian officials have responded by reiterating their openness to negotiations, but only on what they describe as "mutually beneficial, fair and equitable" terms.

At the same time, Iran's foreign minister struck a sharply defiant tone, declaring that the country's armed forces have their "fingers on the trigger" and stand ready to "powerfully respond" to any aggression.

With tensions rising, a BBC analysis outlines a range of scenarios that could unfold if the standoff tips into open conflict.

Regime Falls, Democracy Emerges

In the most optimistic reading, US military action could weaken Iran's ruling establishment enough to trigger its collapse. American air and naval power could focus on key assets of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the Basij paramilitary force, missile depots, launch facilities, and components of Iran's nuclear programme.

Already strained by economic sanctions and persistent public unrest, the regime could buckle under the pressure, potentially opening the door to a democratic transition. History, however, offers caution. While the 2003 invasion of Iraq sought regime change, and Libya's intervention removed Muammar Gaddafi, neither resulted in a stable democracy.

Survival With Strings Attached

Another possibility mirrors the Venezuelan experience under Nicolas Maduro. In this scenario, US pressure stops short of dismantling the system entirely, instead forcing policy concessions while leaving the Islamic Republic intact.

Iran could be compelled to rein in its backing of violent militias across the region, curb or abandon parts of its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, and loosen its grip on domestic protests. Yet after 47 years of resistance to external pressure, Iran's leadership has shown little inclination toward compromise, making this path unlikely.

Regime Replaced By Military State

A more plausible outcome may be the emergence of an even harder regime. US strikes could further weaken civilian authority, allowing a military-dominated government that is heavily influenced or outright controlled by the IRGC, to take over.

Iran Strikes Back

Iran may choose retaliation. While it cannot match the US Navy and Air Force head-on, it has a sizeable arsenal of ballistic missiles and drones, many hidden in underground facilities or remote

mountainsides.

US military bases line the Gulf, including Bahrain and Qatar. Iran could also target infrastructure in countries it views as allies, such as Jordan. The 2019 missile and drone strike on Saudi Aramco's facilities, attributed to an Iranian-backed militia, exposed just how vulnerable regional energy infrastructure can be.

Gulf states allied with Washington are deeply concerned that any US action against Iran could quickly spill over onto their territory.

Iran Lays Mines In The Gulf

Another response would see Iran laying mines in the Gulf. This tactic dates back to the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88, when shipping lanes were mined and the Royal Navy was deployed to clear them.

The narrow passage between Iran and Oman, known as the Strait of Hormuz, is one of the world's most critical energy corridors. Roughly 20 per cent of global LNG exports and around 20-25 per cent of oil and petroleum products pass through it annually. Iran has repeatedly rehearsed rapid mine-deployment drills, and any attempt to block the strait would likely jolt oil markets and disrupt global trade.

A US Warship Is Hit

One of the gravest risks would be the loss of an American naval vessel. A US Navy captain once described a key concern as a potential "swarm attack", in which Iran deploys waves of explosive drones and fast attack boats in

The Return Of The Brink

The Middle East is once again slipping into a dangerous familiar pattern — a rapid exchange of warnings, counter-warnings, and symbolic shows of force that are sending regional tensions sharply upward. A war of words between Tehran and Washington has pushed the mercury soaring. Statements meant to deter have instead hardened positions, narrowing diplomatic space and amplifying the risk of misinterpretation. Each declaration is now met with a counter-signal, each warning answered with another — creating an escalation dynamic driven as much by rhetoric as by troop movements.

Against this backdrop, senior Iranian officials issued stark cautions on January 28, warning that any attack on Iran would trigger retaliation not only against US forces but also against Israel. Ali Shamkhani, a senior adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, spoke of an "immediate, unprecedented" response that could reach "the heart of Tel Aviv."

Iran's leadership is engaged in a familiar strategy: projecting readiness and resolve in order to prevent attack.

Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi framed Iran's military posture in blunt terms, saying the country's armed forces had their "fingers on the trigger" and would respond "immediately and powerfully" to any aggression.

overwhelming numbers.

The IRGC Navy, which has largely supplanted Iran's conventional naval force in the Gulf, specialises in asymmetric warfare designed to offset US technological superiority.

The sinking of a US warship, particularly if crew members were captured, would be a profound humiliation for Washington. Though unlikely, precedent exists. The USS Cole was crippled by an Al-Qaeda suicide attack in 2000, killing 17 sailors, and in 1987 the USS Stark was mistakenly struck by Iraqi missiles, killing 37. **Regime Falls, Chaos**

Ensues Neighbouring states such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia fear that the breakdown of authority in Iran could unleash civil war, similar to the devastation seen in Syria, Yemen, and Libya.

In such chaos, ethnic tensions could erupt as Kurds, Baluchis, and other minorities move to protect themselves amid a national power vacuum. While many in the region, especially Israel, would welcome the end of the Islamic Republic, no one wants to see a country of roughly 93 million people spiral into disorder, triggering mass displacement and a humanitarian catastrophe.

Trump eyes Cuba and Iran after Venezuela raid: Can they survive his pressure campaign?

(News Agency) Donald Trump has tasted blood, and now he wants more. After orchestrating the capture of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in a covert raid, Trump is openly pursuing regime change in Cuba and Iran. His message is brutally simple: resist Washington and you can be removed.

The pattern is unmistakable. Trump boasts that Cuba will be "failing pretty soon." He threatens to cut all oil and money flowing to Havana. A "beautiful armada" of aircraft carriers and guided missile destroyers floats towards Iran. Sanctions tighten. Protests simmer. Military assets surge across the Middle East. Trump smells weakness and opportunity.

But the critical question shaking global capitals is whether Cuba and Iran can actually defend themselves against a president who believes momentum equals destiny.

Cuba in the crosshairs

Cuba sits squarely in Trump's sights because he believes the island is already suffocating. For decades, Venezuela supplied Cuba with oil and cash. That pipeline is now severed. Trump's second term has revived the harshest measures: Cuba back on the state sponsors of terrorism list, remittances restricted, military entities targeted. Reports suggest his team wants the government toppled by year's end through economic strangulation.

Just 90 miles from Florida, Cuba has terrified American strategists since the 1962 Missile Crisis. Today, Russian intelligence facilities monitor US naval activity from Cuban soil,

whilst China invests in ports.

To Trump, hostile powers are setting up shop in America's front garden. US firms also eye Cuba's offshore oil reserves, nickel mines and tourism potential. Post-regime change, Cuba represents a massive economic prize.

Iran's nuclear shadow

The stakes explode when focus shifts to Iran. US carriers, fighter jets and air defence systems flood the Middle East. Trump ties this military buildup to Iran's crackdown on protesters, publicly encouraging demonstrators to seize institutions.

Extraordinarily, Saudi Arabia publicly states it will not allow its airspace to be used for attacks on Iran. One of Washington's closest partners has drawn a red line.

Iran warns any neighbouring country whose territory is used against Tehran will be considered hostile.

Why does Trump want Iran? Because Iran sits astride the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 to 30 per cent of the world's seaborne oil flows. Iran also holds around 10 per cent of global oil reserves. A collapsed Iran cannot threaten energy flows.

The resistance playbook

Can Cuba defend itself? Not in conventional war. But Cuba maintains 50,000 active troops and over a million paramilitary reserves. Its doctrine, "War of All the People," relies on underground command networks, harbour mining, swarm boats and making occupation unbearably costly. Cuba's objective would not be victory but endurance.

AI Is the New Oil, and India Risks Falling Behind, Economic Survey Warns

India is running out of time to reposition itself in a global economy increasingly defined by artificial intelligence, computing power and technological control, the Economic Survey 2025-26 has warned, arguing that the country must urgently move beyond its role as a back-office IT services hub and emerge as a frontline player in the AI ecosystem.

Drawing a direct parallel with oil and steel in the 20th century, the Survey states that the 21st century will be driven by "compute"—a broad term encompassing high-performance processors, graphics chips, energy systems and the critical

minerals that sustain them. Control over these assets, it notes, is rapidly becoming a decisive factor in shaping economic hierarchies, global alliances and geopolitical influence.

The warning comes amid intensifying rivalry between the United States and China, where technology leadership—rather than military power alone—is increasingly determining strategic leverage. The Survey cautions that resilience by itself is no longer sufficient for countries like India. Instead, it calls for the pursuit of "strategic indispensability," a position where India becomes so deeply embedded in global value chains that it cannot be easily

bypassed, substituted or coerced.

According to the Survey, Washington is actively reshaping the global technology landscape through selective partnerships, tighter export controls, licensing regimes and bilateral trade arrangements. Initiatives such as the US-led effort to build a trusted AI ecosystem—covering energy, advanced manufacturing, chips, data centres and critical minerals—are already influencing how capital and innovation flow across borders.

It also flags potential spillover risks for emerging economies from recent global financial and regulatory shifts, including changes in digital finance

frameworks that could alter cross-border capital movements at a time when AI-led investment is becoming more concentrated in a few technology-dominant regions.

Against this backdrop, the Survey outlines two sharply divergent models shaping the global AI race. Western economies have largely adopted a top-down approach dominated by frontier models, hyperscale technology firms, massive private capital and highly concentrated intellectual property. This model, while powerful, is also capital-intensive and increasingly closed.

In contrast, much of the rest of the world is moving toward a bottom-up AI strategy—built

around distributed innovation, strong state coordination, sector-specific applications and public digital infrastructure. The Survey argues that given India's constraints and comparative strengths, attempting to replicate the US or Chinese model would be neither feasible nor desirable.

Instead, it calls a bottom-up approach "strategically necessary" for India. This would involve prioritising applied AI in areas such as healthcare, agriculture, education, finance, logistics and governance, while leveraging open-source tools, public datasets and domestic innovation ecosystems rather than betting solely on large proprietary models.

"Gone Full Retard": Musk Abuses Indian-Origin Billionaire Over Racism Claims

(News Agency) Elon Musk has hit back at Indian-origin billionaire Vinod Khosla, calling him a "pompous a**hole." The Tesla CEO's outburst came in response to the venture capitalist's accusation that Musk was making racism "desirable" again.

The exchange was triggered by a 2025 post from Musk, who, at the time, said that "white people are a rapidly diminishing minority of the global population."

Responding on Tuesday,

Khosla alleged that Musk supports "WAGA" - "White America Great Again", rather than MAGA, and called on employees at Tesla, SpaceX, and X to resign.

"[Elon Musk] doesn't want MAGA, he wants WAGA or 'white America great again' as racism is a great and desirable paradigm," Khosla wrote on X. "All non-whites in [Tesla], [SpaceX], [X] etc and all decent whites should quit and join our portfolio. Email us your LinkedIn."

US Immigration Agents Detain

5-Year-Old, School Claims He Wa

US Withdraws Board Of Peace Invite As Tensions Grow Between How Bangladesh

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Gandhi, To Skip Key Congres Trump Says "Big Force" Heading Toward Iran, US "Watching Clo.

Why You Can Buy A House In Greenland But Not The Land It Is Built On

(News Agency) "Greenland is not for sale" is a slogan that Greenlanders, including protesters, politicians, and lawmakers, continue to rally behind amid US President Donald Trump's repeated threats of annexation.

On Truth Social, President Trump recently shared a revised map of the United States that

included both Canada and Greenland as part of its territory.

While the US continues to express interest in acquiring the autonomous region, which is part of the Kingdom of Denmark, Greenland has its own unique property ownership laws. Even local Greenlanders are not allowed to buy land. Under the laws of the

world's largest island, individuals can own a house or other real estate, but the land on which their properties stand remains off-limits to private ownership.

Why You Can Buy A House In Greenland, But Owning The Land Is Off-Limits

In Greenland, all land belongs to the people and is managed by

the public authorities, preventing private land ownership.

Housing companies administer properties, including public housing and buildings. For private ownership, you or your employer can initiate contact with the housing company, depending on the length of time you have stayed on the island.

"Citizens, private individuals, co-operative housing

associations, and companies can be granted the right of use to a site if, for example, they wish to build a house. You must apply for site allocation to obtain the right of use to the desired site," reads an excerpt on Nordic Co-operation.

Why the red sky over Ladakh's Hanle is a warning India can't ignore

(News Agency) The night sky over Hanle, Ladakh, is usually a canvas of deep sapphire, punctuated only by the piercing light of distant galaxies. However, on the nights of January 19 and 20, this darkness was shattered by an eerie, blood-red glow.

While social media is flooded with mesmerising images of these Northern Lights over India, the scientific reality is far more

sobering. These sights are not just pretty pictures; they are the visible signatures of a Sun that is becoming increasingly volatile.

HOW DOES A SOLAR TEMPEST REACH INDIA?

The red auroras witnessed from the Hanle Dark Sky Reserve were caused by the most intense solar radiation storm since 2003.

On January 18, an X-class solar flare erupted, unleashing a

massive cloud of magnetised plasma known as a Coronal Mass Ejection. This is a giant bubble of solar gas and magnetic fields that the Sun burps into space at high speeds.

The cloud of plasma raced towards Earth at a staggering 1,700 kilometres per second, reaching our atmosphere in just 25 hours.

When these particles

slammed into the magnetic field of our planet, they triggered a G4-level geomagnetic storm.

A geomagnetic storm is a major disturbance of the magnetic shield of Earth that occurs when the solar wind interacts with the space environment surrounding our planet.

The red colour specifically comes from high-altitude oxygen

atoms being excited by solar particles at heights of over 300 kilometres.

At lower latitudes like Ladakh, we see the tops of these curtains, which appear red rather than the green typically seen in polar regions. According to recent Isro reports, these events are becoming more frequent as we approach the solar maximum.

Frisco Councilman Burt Thakur denies H-1B donor allegations

(Staff Reporter) Frisco's first-ever Indian-American on the City Council, Burt Thakur, has denied the allegations against him of immigration fraud and/or demographic manipulation during a City

There's A LOT of H-1B companies registered to their donors.

Every Texan should want answers to these questions because this impacts all of us.

YouTube Link in Reply <https://t.co/bSfRT0o0bW> pic.twitter.com/BAlgiC53un — Marc Palasciano (@marc_palasciano) January 21, 2026



Council meeting on Jan. 20, which went viral.

During the City Council meeting, resident and activist Marc Palasciano alleged abuse of the H-1B visa program and suggested the demographic shifts in Frisco are due to organized manipulation.

Videos from the meeting were widely circulated online, where Palasciano questioned the mayor and council members about why they have donors with Indian surnames who do not reside in Frisco.

I asked the Frisco Mayor and Frisco's First Indian City Council Member about their Indian Donors.

Palasciano further went on to ask why several Indians with their addresses elsewhere donated to their campaigns without possibly receiving something in return.

Following Palasciano's remarks, Thakur has broken his silence on the allegations in a telephone interview with The Dallas Express, mentioning that he has no authority over federal immigration policy or visa enforcement.

He also rejected the implications that local officials are orchestrating demographic change.

Thakur, a U.S. Navy veteran, further added that he would be open to scrutiny if wrongdoing exists, mentioning that he would welcome any federal agency doing an audit. According to the USCIS database, the Frisco council does not directly employ any H-1B workers.

New Indian Consular Centre opens in Seattle

(Staff Reporter) Indian authorities have announced the opening of a new Indian Consular Application Centre in Seattle to improve access to consular services for the Indian diaspora in the Pacific Northwest.

Officials stated the move is aimed at making services easier to access for Indian nationals and other applicants in the region.

The visa application centre was inaugurated in the presence of government and non-government dignitaries. More than 300 members of the Indian American community from Seattle and nearby states attended the event. The Seattle centre will operate as a single location for a wide range of services. These include applications for Indian visas, passports, Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI), renunciation of Indian citizenship, Police Clearance Certificates, the Global Entry Programme (GEP), and Miscellaneous and Attestation services.

The Indian Consulate in Seattle said the newly co-located offices of the Indian Consular Application Centre with the Consulate in the Federal Reserve Building are "expected to enhance operational efficiency and provide consular applicants with a one-stop

facility for submitting applications and resolving queries." India Independence Day merchandise

VFS Global, which provides outsourced consular services for India in the United States, said the new centre is part of a broader effort to streamline the application process and improve service delivery.

Several applicant-focused changes have been introduced under the expanded network. The centres will now remain open on Saturdays. Return courier services are included in standard service fees. Services such as photographs, photocopies, and form-filling are available at no extra cost within the centre. The Seattle facility is equipped with modern infrastructure designed to deliver a secure, efficient application experience, with a focus on customer convenience, the company said.

Speaking at the launch, Amit Kumar Sharma, Head – North America and Caribbean at VFS Global, said: "Seattle and the wider Pacific Northwest region are home to a vibrant and growing Indian diaspora. The launch of this Indian Consular Application Centre reflects the Government of India's vision to make consular services more accessible and citizen-centric."

H-1B limbo in India could stretch to 2027



(Staff Reporter) H-1B visa holders stranded in India are struggling to get back to their regular lives with no new H-1B visa stamping dates available before 2027.

The cascading delays started off in December 2025 when US consulates postponed visa interviews to March 2026. However, these were then rescheduled to October 2026 and now many applicants have experienced their interview dates being further delayed into 2027.

Texas based immigration attorney Emily Neumann confirmed that new slots for H-1B Visa stamping were unavailable, she cautioned on X, "They are not in any hurry to give you a visa. They are trying to deny visas whenever they can. It is a completely different world from what we saw during the Biden administration. This administration does not want to give you

visa (sic)." Neumann also warned H-1B visa holders presently in the U.S. against travelling to India for stamping, noting that she has not observed any new visa interview slots opening for India in the last 50 days.

No U.S. Visa Appointments in India Until 2027 – What Is Happening? <https://t.co/47i7mr3Hff>

— Emily Neumann (@immigrationgirl) January 27, 2026

Reacting to the news, Indian American Advocacy Council (IAAC) President Rajeev Sharma said, "This is 100% targeting Indian Americans who have already been vetted and done the work of coming here legally to contribute to the US economy."

He added, "These constantly moving goal posts will ensure job losses for many Indian Americans who trusted this government."

Harvard India Conference to spotlight PV Sindhu, Shashi Tharoor

(Staff Reporter) The 23rd India Conference at Harvard, a major student-led global forum examining India's rise across business, policy and culture, will bring together leading voices from sport, politics and the creative industries in Boston next month, with Olympic champion P.V. Sindhu, parliamentarian Shashi Tharoor and designer Manish Malhotra among its headline speakers.

Scheduled for February 14 and 15, 2026, the annual conference will be held jointly at Harvard Business School and Harvard Kennedy School, continuing a tradition of more than two decades of student-driven engagement on India's evolving global role, a media release said. [Activewear](#)

Olympic medalist and world champion badminton player P.V. Sindhu will take part in a moderated panel exploring the evolution of India's sports ecosystem and the link between elite performance, leadership and national identity.

ALSO READ: JGU launches World University Leaders Forum at Davos, a global platform for university-led solutions

The session will align with the conference theme, "The India We Imagine," highlighting how sporting

excellence and professional management shape India's international sporting image.

Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medalist and the first Indian to win gold at the Badminton World Championships, has emerged as one of the country's most recognisable sporting figures.



Her appearance will include a discussion alongside Satyam Trivedi, chief executive of GMR Sports, focusing on how athletes and sports leaders together project India's cultural confidence and global ambition. India Independence Day merchandise

The conference will also feature a keynote address by Shashi Tharoor, Member of Parliament and chairman of India's Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs.

"No Conspiracy In This": Sharad Pawar's First Reaction On Ajit Pawar's Death

"No Conspiracy In This": Sharad Pawar's First Reaction On Ajit Pawar's Death

(Staff Reporter) It was purely an accident, said an emotional Sharad Pawar, ruling out any conspiracy in the plane crash that killed his nephew Ajit Pawar on Wednesday morning.

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's aircraft, a Bombardier Learjet 45 operated by private firm VSR Aviation, was en route from Mumbai to his home city, Baramati, in Pune district when it crash-landed and burst into flames in an open field near the runway around 8:48 am. Witnesses said the plane was barely 100 metres from the runway when it crashed.

He was on his way to Baramati to campaign for the Zilla Panchayat elections.

The 66-year-old's personal security officer and an assistant as well as two crew members were also on board at the time of the crash, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation said in a statement.

"There's no conspiracy



involved; it's purely an accident. Maharashtra has suffered a huge loss with the passing of Ajit Pawar. A capable leader has left us today. Maharashtra has lost a great personality today. This loss can never be compensated," Sharad Pawar, Ajit's uncle, said in his first comments on the tragedy.

Ajit Pawar broke away from his uncle to join hands with the BJP in 2023. It led to a split in the Nationalist Congress Party.

But the two NCP factions

recently came together to contest the municipal corporation elections in Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad.

"Everything is not in our hands. I feel helpless. Crying may seem shameful. Some incidents have no politics behind them, and I have clearly stated my stance on this. There's no conspiracy involved; it's purely an accident. Maharashtra and all of us will have to bear the pain of this forever," the 85-year-old leader added.

As the news of Ajit Pawar's death broke, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee called for a Supreme Court-monitored probe into the death, alleging that "all other agencies" have been "completely compromised", with several opposition leaders including Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge backing her demand.

Sharad Pawar dismissed that charge.

"A stand was floated from Kolkata that there is some politics involved in this incident. But there is nothing like this. There is no politics in it. It was an accident. I request not to bring politics into it," the Senior Pawar added.

VSR Aviation owner VK Singh said the aircraft was "very well maintained", ruling out any technical failure.

"There was absolutely no problem in the aircraft. There was no technical failure as far as we know," he told reporters. The

government released a statement detailing the sequence of events that led to the crash and Pawar's death.

The aircraft was cleared for landing in Baramati on Wednesday morning after a go-around due to poor visibility, but having finally received a clearance it did not give any read-back to the ATC, and moments later burst into flames on the edge of the runway.

In aviation parlance, a go-around is a standard procedure where a pilot discontinues a landing attempt and initiates a climb to fly another approach. It is used when a landing cannot be completed safely due to factors like poor weather, an unstable approach, or traffic on the runway. It is a proactive safety measure rather than an emergency.

In aviation, a readback is a crucial safety procedure where a pilot repeats back the essential parts of a message or instruction received from Air Traffic Control (ATC).

3 days cannot define airline's 20 years: IndiGo CEO on Dec flight disruptions



(Staff Reporter) IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers on Wednesday acknowledged that the airline had let customers down during last month's massive operational disruptions, admitting the lapse hurt the airline's reputation. However, he stressed that three days of disruptions cannot define IndiGo's 20-year journey and said the airline would use the experience to return stronger.

Elbers was speaking to the media on the sidelines of the aviation summit Wings India 2026. This marked his first in-

person press interaction in India since the disruptions.

"We have let down our customers for three days," he said, adding that the airline would learn from the incident and work to improve.

In early December, IndiGo — India's largest airline, which began operations in 2006 — faced severe operational challenges. Between December 3 and 5, the airline cancelled 2,507 flights and delayed 1,852 flights, affecting more than three lakh passengers across the country. The disruptions were

attributed to the airline's inadequate preparedness to implement revised Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms for pilots.

Following the incident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) reduced IndiGo's winter schedule by 10 percent until February 10. On

January 17, the regulator imposed penalties exceeding Rs 22 crore and issued warnings to CEO Pieter Elbers and two other senior executives.

Building castles in air: Supreme Court raps states over street dog rule failures

(Staff Reporter) The Supreme Court on Wednesday expressed strong displeasure over the failure of several states to take necessary steps to sterilise street dogs, set up dog pounds, and remove dogs from the campuses of educational and other institutions.

"They are all building castles in the air," bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and NV Anjaria stated.

While hearing the states' submissions on compliance with its earlier directives, the Supreme Court expressed dissatisfaction, saying they appeared to be indulging in "storytelling."

The court expressed shock over data from Assam, noting that the state reported 1.66 lakh dog-bite cases in 2024 while questioning why it had only one dog centre. It further pointed out that in January 2025 alone, 20,900 people were bitten by

dogs, calling the figure alarming. Amicus curiae Gaurav Agrawal informed the court that Andhra Pradesh has 39 Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres, with the capacity to sterilise 1,619 dogs every day. He said the state should conduct an audit of existing facilities to assess whether they are being fully utilised, and a timeline should be set for establishing new ABC centres. He also said the state should take assistance from relevant stakeholders to identify street dogs. The amicus further told the court that Assam has three municipal corporations, from where efforts should begin. He said ABC centres in Assam are inadequate and stressed the need for a detailed action plan to expand such facilities, urging the state to take effective measures. Referring to Kerala and Goa, the amicus said street dogs are present on beaches in both states and cannot be released back there, as it would impact tourism.

Drug smuggler who fled Nepal prison during Gen Z protests arrested in Gujarat

Dharmesh Chunara was arrested in Kathmandu airport last year while he was trying to smuggle 13 kg of hybrid ganja, valued at nearly Rs 13 crore. However, during the Gen Z protests, as local youths stormed the jail, Chunara managed to escape.

(Staff Reporter) An Indian drug smuggler who escaped from a Nepal prison during the violent Gen Z protests last year was arrested in Gujarat's Ahmedabad on Tuesday. Dharmesh Chunara was found hiding at the house of his bootlegger mother-in-law in Ahmedabad's Kagadapith area.

Chunara was arrested in Nepal's Kathmandu airport last year while he was trying to smuggle 13 kg of hybrid ganja, valued at nearly Rs 13 crore, from Bangkok.

He was subsequently sent to prison. However, during the Gen Z protests, as local youths stormed the jail, Chunara managed to escape and made his way back to Ahmedabad.

The protests, which began over the government's move to



ban social media platforms, soon snowballed into a broader agitation against corruption, forcing then Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli to resign. Over 75

people died in the unrest.

Following the agitation, Nepalese authorities shared details of several Indian nationals who escaped from their prisons

with New Delhi.

HOW DRUG SMUGGLER WAS NABBED?

On Tuesday, Chunara's luck ran out. Acting on specific

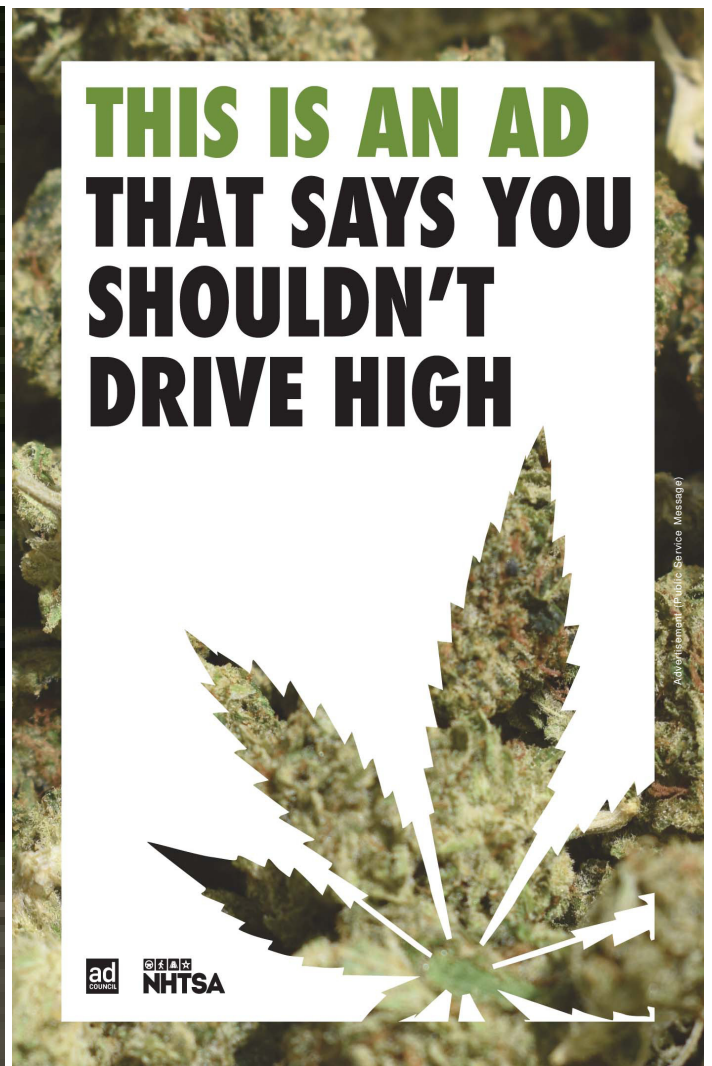
intelligence and after months of searches, the Ahmedabad Crime Branch tracked him down to Kagadapith and arrested him.

Investigators have found that Chunara was earlier involved in smuggling ganja into India through Nepal.

Police are probing whether he was attempting a similar operation in Ahmedabad. Police said he turned to drug addiction due to mounting debts and financial troubles.

Crime Branch Joint Commissioner Sharad Singhal confirmed the arrest, but said that one more accused from Surat, linked to the same case, was still absconding.

Chunara will now be handed over to a central agency, which will eventually extradite him to Nepal.



Trump's National Guard deployments could cost over \$1 billion this year, CBO projects



(Staff Reporter) President Trump's unprecedented use of the National Guard could cost \$1.1 billion this year if domestic deployments remain in place, according to data released by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

During his second term, Trump sent troops to six Democratic-led cities in an effort to suppress protests, tackle crime or protect federal buildings and personnel. Half of those mobilizations ended this month, namely in Los Angeles, Chicago and Portland, Ore. But the continued military presence in Washington, D.C., Memphis and New Orleans, along with 200 members of the Texas National Guard still on standby, is expected to carry a steep cost.

On Wednesday, the CBO said that at current levels, these deployments will require an additional \$93 million per month. The operation in D.C. alone, which currently includes over 2,690 Guard members, is projected to reach upwards of \$660 million this year if it runs through December as expected by the CBO.

The CBO's findings were issued in response to 11 U.S. senators — led by Democratic Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon — who, back in October, urged the budget office to conduct an independent probe into deployment costs.

"It's a massive use of national treasure that should be going into healthcare, housing and education," Merkley told NPR on Wednesday.

In a statement, White House spokesperson Abigail Jackson did not directly comment on the CBO's findings but asserted that the deployments have been effective.

"Thanks to the Trump Administration's highly successful efforts to drive down violent crime, cities like Memphis and D.C. are much safer for residents and visitors — with crime dropping across all major categories," she said. For

months, the Trump administration has offered little information about the price tag associated with the Guard operations. The CBO's findings on Wednesday come as Trump's use of National Guard troops has already faced legal scrutiny in the courts and sparked serious conversations about soldiers' morale.

In 2025, \$496 million spent on domestic deployments

Trump first deployed the

Guard in June to Los Angeles in response to protests over immigration raids. In the months that followed, the president ordered troops to D.C. and Memphis, arguing that they were needed to crack down on crime.

But Gabe Murphy, a policy analyst from the nonpartisan budget watchdog Taxpayers for Common Sense, said the deployments' multimillion-dollar price tag shouldn't be overlooked.

At large, the nation's defense budget will surpass \$1 trillion for the first time in U.S. history as a result of Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act. But Gabe Murphy, a policy analyst from the nonpartisan budget watchdog Taxpayers for Common Sense, said the deployments' multimillion-dollar price tag shouldn't be overlooked.

"No one wants to see their tax dollars wasted," he said.

Murphy argued that using federalized Guard members to tackle crime, like in D.C. and Memphis, is not cost-effective since they are not allowed to conduct actual law enforcement duties, such as performing arrests or searches. He added that deploying the Guard is not a long-term solution to reducing crime.

"It would be far more cost effective to invest in local law enforcement," he said.

Trump has repeatedly defended the use of troops, asserting that cities with a Guard presence have become safer.

According to the CBO, these mobilizations cost about \$496 million in 2025. That total includes:

- \$193 million in Los Angeles
- \$223 million in D.C.
- \$33 million in Memphis
- \$26 million in Portland, Ore.
- \$21 million in Chicago

The cost for a single service member — which includes pay, health care, lodging, food and transportation — ranges from

JFK to Midtown for only \$800: NYC taxi hustlers running wild at airport terminals

(Staff Reporter) As Tabitha Abed and her husband cleared customs at JFK Airport after 14 hours of travel from Kenya, the excitement of visiting New York City for the first time cut through their exhaustion.

But they quickly received a type of Big Apple welcome that authorities have been unable to stop for decades. A man approached the couple in the international arrivals area after they left baggage claim, posing as a cabbie, and offered to give them a ride to their hotel in Times Square.

Abed said the driver stopped a block away from their hotel, locked the car's doors and demanded they settle up. Soon, they were out \$800, which included a \$180 "fee" to drive across the Queensboro Bridge, the couple said in an interview. The trip should have cost around \$70 in a licensed yellow taxi.

"We are scared to ask him because his voice, he was getting agitated," Abed, 35, told Gothamist at her Midtown hotel a few days later. "He was very aggressive."

Abed and her husband, Abed Mulee, 49, said they had enough cash on hand to pay the astronomical fare, but it cratered their budget for their trip. "We were so frustrated,"

said Abed. "At a point I told my husband, 'Why don't we just cancel everything and go back?'"

The man who ripped off Abed and her husband is known as a "hustler," part of a scene of drivers who aren't licensed by the city's Taxi and Limousine Commission but broker illegal rides at the city's major transportation hubs. The practice squeezes legal yellow cab drivers who are already losing money in an ailing industry now dominated by Uber and Lyft.

The Port Authority Police Department is responsible for cracking down on the schemers, but Gothamist observed dozens of the drivers operating in plain view at all of JFK's terminals over several days this month. Airport workers, legal yellow cab drivers and even several hustlers interviewed by Gothamist said scammer activity has increased in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and estimated hundreds of hustlers prowl the terminals' arrival areas.

"They used to tie them up and carry them away and take the car ... before the pandemic," said Michael Carey, a Port Authority customer service specialist. "After the pandemic is a

free for all. It's like a job now."

Port Authority data shows the agency's police force issued more than 2,400 summonses for illegal solicitation of rides at JFK Airport between January and November of last year, compared to just 1,400 summonses during the entirety of 2024.

An underground economy

In all of JFK's terminals, a steady stream of tourists are forced to navigate a confusing transportation system that can be vexing to even native New Yorkers. Signs pointing to the JFK AirTrain or the yellow taxi stands are not always easy to find.

How to tell if a taxi is legal

"The most important tip: No matter where you are in NYC, if someone is asking you if you need a ride, it's illegal," said city Taxi and Limousine Commission spokesperson Jason Kersten. Here are four more tips to avoid scam rides. It's at this point where hustlers prey on tourists who might look lost, and coax them into giving them rides that scam them out of hundreds of dollars. No driver in New York City, including those who are licensed by the Taxi and Limousine Commission, is allowed to directly solicit cab fares.

"I'll Be Chief Minister, You'll See": The Many Dreams Of Ajit Pawar

(Staff Reporter) "Swati, you will see I will be the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, and then I will call you to Varsha and celebrate with your favourite wine." That was Ajit Pawar, who, unlike most other politicians who piously cloak their dreams of power in claims of public service, wore his ambition on his sleeve.

The Meeting At Heathrow

I had a complicated relationship with Ajit Pawar. I was introduced to him by his uncle and mentor Sharad Pawar, whom I have known and admired for decades, awed by his political skills and his gamesmanship. Years ago, I was at the Heathrow airport in London when I heard a familiar voice behind me. There, at a huge confectionery shop, stood Pawar Senior, nattily dressed in a fancy suit, with his wife Pratibha and Ajit Pawar. I saw them buying bagfuls of chocolates, and Ajit Pawar, as usual, couldn't conceal his trademark impatience. That it

made no difference to the doughty British lady behind the counter was a different thing. Pawar Senior laughed and told Ajit in Marathi, "Stop your fighting and meet this young and bright journalist. She is as aggressive as you, so be careful."

Ajit said "Hello" quickly and went back to the counter to get the bill. Then, just as I was walking away, he called out, "Why are you rushing away? Take my number and give me yours, I will save it. Saheb has said na".

And that's how it always was. If 'Saheb' said it, the junior Pawar would do it.

'Kuch Zyada Bol Gaya'

Ajit was very different from his uncle - quick to lose his cool, given to intemperate statements in public, rough and ready with his politics, but with big plans for Maharashtra and himself. Once,

after a particularly controversial remark made by him, I posted a very strong condemnation online.



Two hours later, my phone rang, and the angry voice on the other end - without even a "Hello" - declared, "Kuch zyada bol gaya (I said too much) ... Sometimes I have no control. But, you stop attacking me in public. Phone utha ke bol do na (why don't you tell me directly over phone?)."

Ajit Pawar was quick-tempered, and, in my view, not really cut out for public life, thanks to his frequent and rash outbursts. At the same time, he was a doer -

an excellent manager who could dream big and had both the capacity and the drive to make his dreams come true. You only have to visit Baramati to see how the Pawar family has transformed it. From oranges to grapes for the wine industry to high-quality dairy products that Nestle buys in bulk for their chocolates, Baramati's progress has been incredible. In fact, Ajit was so proud of the wine industry in Nashik that he even got a grape variety to be named "Sharad" as a tribute to his uncle - something he personally told me about over a call.

'Never A Maratha CM'

The Pawar family is inseparable. Even their very public family differences could never completely tear them apart.

The celebrations for Sharad Pawar's 85th birthday reflected those iron bonds amply.

There was also Supriya Sule's wedding, where Ajit Pawar had cried like a baby.

Even after parting politically, Ajit Pawar always spoke very fondly of his aunt, uncle and niece. The first time around, he even returned to the original NCP on Pawar's command. Pawar was his hero, and he learned his politics by being around 'Saheb', as he himself once told me. "I wanted to be CM because I saw for myself what a great CM he [Sharad Pawar] was," Ajit Pawar once said to me when I asked him why he didn't want to enter national politics. "I don't like your Delhi, they will never let a Maratha rule. I want to be a King in my own kingdom." In an eerie coincidence, in fact, Sharad Pawar echoed the same view in a TV interview with me once when I asked him about his prime ministerial ambitions, which, at one point, he had nursed as tenderly as Ajit did his chief ministerial dreams: "Delhi would never let a Maratha be PM."

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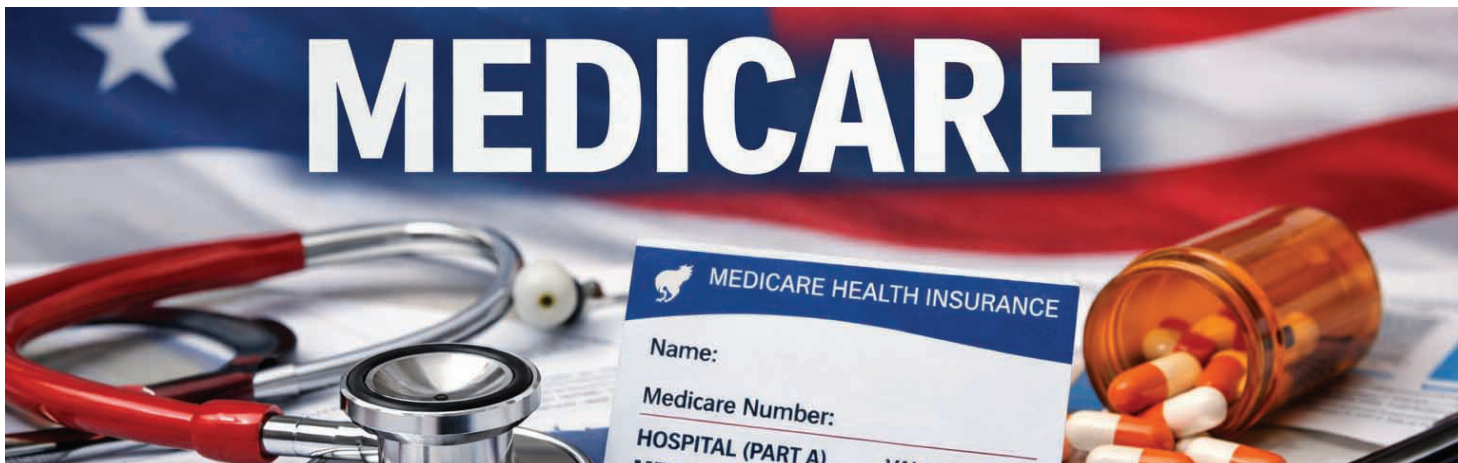
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Is It Too Late to Enroll in Medicare or Change Your Plan?



Many people don't realize that Medicare offers early-year enrollment periods, the General Enrollment Period (GEP) and the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (MA OEP). The GEP is for people enrolling in Medicare for the first time after missing their initial deadline, while the MA OEP is only for those who already have a Medicare Advantage plan and need to fix or change their plan.

<Q1> I missed my Initial Enrollment Period and was told I couldn't sign up during Fall Medicare Open Enrollment. Can I still enroll, and will I be penalized?

Yes, you can still enroll in Medicare, but the timing and penalties depend on your situation.

Fall Medicare Open Enrollment Period (October 15–December 7) is often misunderstood. It's only for people who already have Medicare and want to change plans. It is not a sign-up period for people who are new to Medicare, which is why you weren't able to enroll then.

If you missed your Initial Enrollment Period, there are two main paths to enroll:

If you delayed Medicare because you were covered under a current employer health plan (yours or your spouse's), you may qualify for a Special Enrollment Period. This allows you to enroll in Part A and Part B outside the normal windows and usually avoids late penalties.

2. If you don't qualify for a Special Enrollment Period, you must wait for the General Enrollment Period, which runs from January 1 through March 31 each year. During this time, you can sign up for Medicare Part A and/or Part B, and your coverage will begin the month after you enroll. However, you may have to pay a late enrollment penalty for Part B (and possibly Part D when you enroll in drug coverage).

The most important next step is to check whether you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period, since that determines whether you can enroll right away and whether penalties apply.

<Q2> After the new year, I realized my Medicare Advantage plan no longer covers my doctor and medications. Am I stuck with this plan until next Fall Medicare Open Enrollment Period, or can I still change it? If you're already enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, you may still have another chance to make a change early in the year.

From January 1 through March 31, Medicare has a special window called the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period. This period is only for people who are currently enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan.

During the MAOEP, you are allowed to make one of the following changes:

- Switch from one Medicare Advantage plan to another Medicare Advantage plan, or
- Drop your Medicare Advantage plan and return to Original Medicare (and join a

Part D drug plan if needed).

This period is often used by people who discover after January 1 that their doctors are no longer in-network, their medications are no longer covered, or their out-of-pocket

costs are higher than expected. However, MA OEP has important limits. You can only make one change, and you generally cannot switch from Original Medicare into a Medicare Advantage plan during this time. If you miss this window, you usually must wait until the Fall Medicare Open Enrollment Period (October 15–December 7) unless you qualify for a Special Enrollment Period.



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Why Trump sending Tom Homan to Minnesota is a stroke of absolute genius

This week, President Trump's decision to deploy former U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Director and current border czar Tom Homan to Minnesota signals a deliberate and strategic approach to public safety — one grounded in accountability and a deep understanding of how law enforcement operates.

Minnesota has become a flash point in the national immigration debate. Already in focus for widespread fraud, Minneapolis is ground zero for violent protests, ICE operations and two fatal officer-involved shootings. State and local officials have responded by demanding limits on federal enforcement activity, with some openly calling for ICE to withdraw from the state altogether. At the same time, progressives in Congress are outright calling for the abolishment of ICE.

That reaction may satisfy political activists and agitators, but it ignores a far more dangerous question: what would actually happen if ICE were removed from Minnesota?

One of ICE's primary missions is to identify, detain and remove anyone who has violated immigration law, particularly those with violent criminal histories. In Minnesota, where state and local authorities are prohibited from working with federal law enforcement due to sanctuary policies, ICE is the only agency capable of preventing repeat illegal alien offenders from returning to the community after arrest or incarceration.

Eliminate that role, and the consequences are predictable. Illegal aliens with records of violent assault, sexual offenses, gang activity or homicide are more likely to be released — not because they pose no threat, but because there is no lawful mechanism to remove them. That is not compassion. It is negligence.

In Minnesota, over 1,300 criminal illegal aliens currently sit in taxpayer-funded jails that ICE has been unable to access. Just last year, nearly 500 criminal illegal aliens were released back into communities. These are the results of dangerous sanctuary city policies under Mayor Jacob Frey and Governor Tim Walz.

This is where Tom Homan matters — and why his new role is a stroke of genius by President Donald Trump.

Homan is not a political firebrand looking for headlines. He is a career law enforcement professional, with over 30 years of experience at ICE and U.S. Border Patrol, who understands the operational realities of immigration enforcement. Sending him to Minnesota is not about provocation; it is about restoring coherence to a situation that has grown dangerously fragmented.

Law and order is not a slogan. It is

the foundation of our national sovereignty and public safety. When enforcement disappears, laws become suggestions, and communities bear the cost of repeated crimes and preventable tragedies.

That reality comes into sharp focus this week with the one-year anniversary of President Trump signing the Laken Riley Act into law. Riley was killed by an illegal alien who should never have had the opportunity to harm again. Her death is a painful reminder that policy failures are not abstract. They fall hardest on victims and families who had no voice in the decisions that failed them.

Victim advocacy groups and law enforcement leaders have long warned that limiting ICE cooperation increases the likelihood that violent offenders will reoffend. When federal immigration enforcement is curtailed, local police are left holding the bag — expected to protect the public without the authority to fully do so.

This reckoning is unfolding as Washington barrels toward a partial government shutdown. With Department of Homeland Security funding set to expire on January 30, Senate Democrats have pledged to block funding unless sweeping restrictions are placed on ICE.

Supporters frame this standoff as a moral fight. But morality without responsibility is hollow.

Even if DHS funding lapses, ICE and Border Patrol agents will continue working. They are mission-critical and will remain on the job, many without pay, supported in part by funding from last year's One Big Beautiful Bill Act. But there will be consequences: eroding morale, delayed operations and increasing pressure on officers. This budget fight may fit the political leanings of some, but the consequences will be measured in innocent victims.

Americans want immigration enforcement and violent agitators prosecuted. But they also want accountability from law enforcement once all the facts are analyzed. Trust must be rebuilt.

But accountability does not mean abandonment.

Weakening ICE does not make communities safer. It leaves violent offenders in place and guarantees future victims will pay the price for political symbolism. It also increases the burden on local police, some of whom have been instructed not to cooperate with federal law enforcement.

President Trump's decision to send Tom Homan to Minnesota reflects a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths rather than evade them. This represents genuine presidential leadership. Public safety cannot be governed by protest slogans or political optics.

Big Tech's tobacco moment is here — and the truth about harming kids is out

For over a decade, child victims and their parents have been denied the chance to get justice for the harms they have suffered from social media's products—ranging from anxiety, depression, eating disorders, substance use disorders, suicide, sextortion, and, in the starkest cases, death. Starting this week, they will finally have their day in court.

On Tuesday, the first bellwether trial against social media companies began in Los Angeles, serving as the initial test case for many more pending lawsuits. Meta, TikTok, Snap and YouTube face more than 3,000 lawsuits in California alone, along with more than 2,000 additional cases in federal court.

Startling evidence is already coming to light. One internal Meta employee message exchange compares Instagram to drugs and slot machines. "Oh my gosh yall IG is a drug," "LoL, I mean, all social media. We're basically pushers."

This is a landmark case. Never before have we been able to see this evidence, to reach this stage of litigation with social media where courts, and the public, can finally see for themselves the choices these companies have made when it comes to minors.

For years, any lawsuits brought against social media companies were dismissed outright because of a law from 1996 called Section 230 that gives internet platforms immunity for harm caused by third-party content they host. But this new wave of cases takes a novel approach: Rather than alleging that harm to the victims was caused by the content victims were exposed to, they argue that harm was caused by the product design features of the companies themselves.

These lawsuits do not blame bad content or "too much screen time," dismantling the idea that parents are to blame for allowing kids to be online too much. Instead, they claim the defendants engineered their platforms to be addictive and

failed to warn users about their addictive potential.

The features designed to foster addiction that are at issue include infinite scroll, autoplay, recommendation algorithms that send minors down rabbit holes, push notifications and "likes," all of which create addictive dopamine-driven feedback loops to keep a user engaged for as long as possible.

As with the massive litigation against tobacco companies in the late 1990s and opioid manufacturers more recently, the key question for the jury to decide in this social media trial is straightforward: Did these companies negligently design and market a highly addictive product to children and did they know — and fail to warn users—that their products cause harms to minors?

Critics of the social media lawsuits argue that these cases don't belong in court — claiming that it is too difficult for victims to prove causation of their harms from social media, given the complex interplay of personal experience, personality and online exposure.

Similar arguments, however, were also made in the past against bringing lawsuits against Big Tobacco or opioid producers. Critics argued that people fall into addiction for all kinds of reasons, and therefore companies weren't to blame. But we know how those massive litigations turned out: multibillion-dollar settlements from Big Tobacco and the pharma companies to hundreds of thousands of plaintiffs who were harmed by their products. These social media suits appear to be on that same path.

The evidence speaks for itself. Newly unsealed documents provide smoking-gun evidence that Meta, Google, Snap and TikTok all purposefully designed their social media products to addict children and teens and that youth addiction was an intentional part of their business models.

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Why America Needs To Target Guns, Not People

The shooting of registered ICU nurse Alex Pretti by ICE agents in Minneapolis on January 24 captured on multiple cameras leaves little doubt about what happened. He had moved forward to challenge ICE agents and help another protester who had been pepper-sprayed but was wrestled to the ground and shot 10 times, the last five when he was already inert on the ground. His holstered registered handgun had already been seized by ICE before he was shot.

For anyone living in a country like India where most police personnel—let alone civilians—do not carry arms, the inescapable conclusion is that the US simply has too many guns. Why should immigration agents carry handguns? Why should registered nurses carry handguns? Why should anyone except those in regular conflict with either armed criminals or armed terrorists carry handguns? Why should ordinary people possess not one but multiple rifles and handguns?

According to a 2023 Pew Research Center survey, about 32 per cent of civilian Americans own handguns, or about 80-100 million people. And cumulatively they own 393 million firearms which, terrifyingly, works out to more than one gun for each American man, woman and child. According to a 2018 report by the Switzerland-based Small Arms Survey, the US has less than 5 per cent of the world's population, but a whopping 40 per cent of the world's civilian-owned firearms.

The main reason cited by Americans for owning them is "protection" not sport; most of them (77 per cent according to a 2025 YouGov survey) say they feel "safer" with a gun around. In the mid-20th century, however, the most cited reason for gun ownership was hunting or sport. Some 73 per cent of Americans also think it is too easy to buy arms. And amazingly for a country with the highest gun prevalence in the world, the US still does not have a national registry for firearms.



Just to compare, only about 3.5 million of 1.4 billion Indians have licenced firearms—about 10 million legal guns in all—and there are about 70 million illegal weapons too.

India inherited its low civilian firearm owning practice from its time as a British colony—though the US was also a British colony once. Today about half a million (5 lakh) people in England and Wales have licenced firearms, totalling 2.37 million legal guns, mainly in rural and agricultural areas.

Only 5 per cent of police officers carry firearms in England and Wales and 2.7 per cent in Scotland, although all those serving in Northern Ireland do so. More British police officers now want to be armed given the changing security scenario there but so far there has been no move to increase the number. In contrast, all US police officers are authorised to carry guns and are encouraged to do so even off duty. Most federal law enforcement officials—like ICE—are also armed.

While the US Constitution (written in 1787) no doubt enshrines the right to bear arms via its Second Amendment

passed in 1791, every country evolves and the situation when it was passed is not the same as what prevails in America now. Because 230 years ago, the US map was still expanding—by force—beyond the initial western border marked by the Mississippi River. So it made sense for Americans back then to have the means and right to protect themselves.

It should have been amended out of the Constitution once the current international border—and therefore the present extent of the US—was finalised by the 1846 Oregon Treaty which fixed the 49th parallel as the border with Canada, the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo which made the Rio Grande the border with Mexico and the 1853 Gadsden Purchase which set the southern border in Arizona and New Mexico. Instead, the right to bear arms has become a US shibboleth.

Strangely, though, the rise in private ownership of handguns is not a continuation of the heady days of westward expansion when pioneers needed to fend off supposedly deadly native American ("Red Indian") tribes. The

actual spike in gun ownership in the US began in the post-World War II era when there was a surfeit of pistols and other handguns available after soldiers were demobbed. And guns were also imported cheaply from Europe and even sold via mail order.

Every single egregious violent event in the US in recent decades can inevitably be traced back to the presence of arms in the hands of civilian individuals who need not have them.

School shooting investigations invariably find that young people took guns that belonged to their parents; other mass shootings are traced to unsuitable people being able to legally buy arms. They are not allowed to possess automatic weapons, but handguns can be sold to almost anyone.

In the recent killing of an unarmed woman, Renee Good, by ICE officials also in Minneapolis, it is now clear that she was shot while trying to drive away. Even if she had been doing something illegal, like impeding their work or trying to ram them with her car, shooting her through the windscreen should never have been the first option to stop her. They could have even shot

her car tyres instead. Alex Pretti could also have been forcibly restrained rather than shot 10 times.

There are said to be about 2.4 to 2.5 sworn law enforcement officers per 1,000 residents in the US—which is double the percentage in India, for instance. That density of armed personnel, coupled with high tech surveillance and crime prevention measures should obviate the need for "protection" through individual possession of arms. But the opposite seems to be happening in the US, with more people buying guns since 2020, especially women and ethnic minorities.

The US celebrates its 250th year of Independence in 2026. Surely it should now be secure enough about its borders, police, judiciary and other institutions not to believe that Americans still need to retain the right to bear arms, supposedly to protect themselves? Donald Trump has already shattered many shibboleths in the first year of his second presidency and is the only one actually solipsistic enough to end the gun run too and save America from itself. Sadly, he won't.

Reshmi Dasgupta

Minnesota tragedies aren't instant replay calls you make from the couch

An officer-involved shooting is not a disputed call in an NFL game, where the announcers offer opinions on the call made on the field as various angles are played for the audience at home and the network's in-house referee expert weighs in on what he thinks might happen while filling airtime. The officials on the field know instant replay angles have to be studied on a very constrained timeline and that the play in question is being discussed and debated by millions as they talk among themselves. The stakes aren't life and death, but they do involve vast sums of money and the careers of the officials, players and coaches. Sports officials are grateful for multiple angles and for input from league headquarters.

NFL camera shots are numerous and precise. That makes them very different from the collection of iPhone videos, Ring camera recordings and limited body-camera footage that circulated online after two officer-involved shootings in the Twin Cities.

Those videos were most definitely not taken by professionals. They may in fact distort the actual events that occurred. In any event, in this era of AI manipulation and selective editing, they cannot be trusted simply because you saw them in slow motion on your X feed.

The two shootings in Minnesota occurred within seconds. Neither was planned. Unlike professional sports, the cameras were not pre-positioned. And the public has not seen everything law enforcement investigators have.

All of it is a tragedy, two tragedies in fact, neither of which is close to being definitively adjudicated under the legal standard of "reasonable force." The available video is simply not dispositive because it does not include the sworn testimony from the officers involved or the near-by pedestrians. The justice system will evaluate those actions, as it always does. It will be some time before a determination is reached and



we know the decision.

The point of this column is in a country addicted to instant replay and decisions made within minutes, the patience required for serious deliberation and adjudication has eroded. It's been worn away. We almost all watch sports.

We almost all "call" pass interference when it benefits our team. Most fans think "targeting," to name just one particularly difficult to define infraction, occurred or didn't occur based on their allegiances. And we are passionate about it. Sometimes for decades.

That is not this. That is a habit of judgment to which we have become accustomed and indeed expect, but it is a habit that does not belong here.

No matter how many angles of either or both shootings you have studied, and no matter how many times you have watched each of them, you do not know what happened in full.

If you have an opinion on either shooting that presumes to declare one or both unlawful or unjustified, you are not telling your audience of family and friends anything other than the reality that your judgment is not to be trusted. Because you are uttering conclusions based on incomplete evidence.

There's a reason — actually dozens of them — why our criminal justice system functions methodically. It exists to protect the rights of the accused. Shootings involving suspected criminals are naturally upsetting for all of us. Snap judgments about the reasonableness of force — including officer-involved shootings — are always irresponsible.

These are not games to be watched, cheered or mourned like sporting events. Two officer-involved shootings that leave grief and sadness in their wake cannot be made better by online inquisitions or mob judgments by

mobs from the left or the right.

Just wait. We will know in due course.

Hugh Hewitt is a Fox News contributor and host of "The Hugh Hewitt Show" heard weekday afternoons from 3 PM to 6 PM ET on the Salem Radio Network, and simulcast on Salem News Channel. Hugh drives Americans 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 broadcasting. This column previews the lead story that will drive his radio/TV show today.

By Hugh Hewitt ,

Not coming to America: The 60-year immigration bubble finally bursts

The U.S. has experienced various industry bubbles and bursts over the past six decades, including the 1990s dot.com bubble, and the housing bubble of the 2000s. A third bubble finally just burst in 2025, after growing for 60 years – immigration to America.

Multiple reports show that the U.S. experienced negative net migration in 2025 for the first time since the 1970s. This course correction is long overdue and needs to continue.

The factors that led to these bubbles and bursts in three different industries are surprisingly similar.

The tech bubble grew following the commercialization of the World Wide Web, during a period of rapid internet adoption and technology startups. It was a time of low interest rates and economic optimism. A speculative market frenzy in tech stocks caused the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index to rise from under 1,000 in 1995 to its peak of over 5,000 in March 2000.

By October 2002, the Nasdaq had fallen to just over 1,000 again, wiping out trillions in market value. The reasons for the bubble bursting were speculation of overhyped emerging technologies and unsustainable business models. This should have been a cautionary tale for the housing bubble.

In the late 1990s, housing prices started rising rapidly and accelerated in the early 2000s. Annual appreciation rates reached 15–17% in 2004 and 2005. Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve lowered interest rates from 6.5% in 2000 to 1% by 2003, which encouraged borrowing and home purchases. Banks and lenders lowered standards, offered subprime mortgages to borrowers with poor credit and often required little or no down payment.

Government policies required Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to support affordable housing loans and financial institutions bundled risky mortgages and sold them to investors.

Like the dot.com bubble, lenders and buyers speculated house prices would continue rising indefinitely. When interest rates rose in the

mid-2000s and home prices stalled, borrowers defaulted en masse, the subprime mortgage market collapsed, and the bubble burst as part of the 2008

The annual number of encounters ranged from over 300,000 to over 800,000, until the Biden administration opened the border to record

permanent ones, increased caps and uncapped categories, watered down asylum standards, and ignored fraud.

approximately 321,000 in 2026, if current trends continue. Brookings estimates net migration in 2025 ranged from negative 10,000 to negative



financial crisis and Great Recession.

Immigration to the U.S. – both legal and illegal – has become an industry since the mid-60s when Congress passed the 1965 Hart-Cellar Act. That created the family-preference system, resulting in chain migration. Spouses, parents and children (both minor and adult) of U.S. citizens, and lawful permanent residents can permanently migrate to the U.S., along with adult siblings of U.S. citizens, all who, in turn, can sponsor their family members, creating a chain. The U.S. government has annually granted lawful permanent resident status to over 1 million aliens annually (approximately 75% family-based, 20% employment-based, and humanitarian) most years since 2001.

Illegal immigration began increasing since the early 1970s. In 1970, the U.S. Border Patrol apprehended over 201,000 illegal aliens along the southwest border.

That number consistently rose each year, first reaching over 1 million in 1983 and consistently exceeded 1 million annually through 2006.

levels of illegal immigration – over 7 million Border Patrol encounters in four years.

Since the 1970s, the U.S. government generally failed to apply consequences to the many common types of illegal immigration – sneaking across the border, overstaying visas, working without authorization, and committing identity and document fraud to remain in the U.S.

Meanwhile, employers were growing addicted to the cheaper foreign labor. Unions, which used to oppose illegal immigration, changed their position to support such immigration as a source of membership and power.

Politicians on the left who used to oppose illegal immigration likewise did a 180 for political power. They increased pathways for illegal aliens to enter and remain in the U.S., including creating visas for trafficking, domestic violence, and other crime victims, special immigration benefits for unaccompanied children, and default extensions and expansions of temporary protected status.

On the "legal" side of the ledger, the left turned temporary visas into

During the Biden years, the left further inflated the bubble by weaponizing mass illegal migration for political power, votes, ballot harvesting, and Census headcount. The Biden administration annually paid tens of billions in federal grants to NGOs to facilitate mass migration to, and throughout, the U.S.

The left speculated that unlimited immigration could continue indefinitely. But the record numbers of migrants, the billions of dollars in costs for states and localities, the record crime and fentanyl deaths led to the bubble bursting. Americans voted in 2024 to secure the border and conduct mass deportations, which the Trump administration quickly did in 2025.

The clear result is the first net negative immigration rate to the U.S. since the 1960s, per multiple reports.

The U.S. Census Bureau just released its new population estimates, which show a historic decline in net international migration (NIM) to the U.S. It reports that NIM peaked at 2.7 million in 2024, declined to 1.3 million in mid-2025, and is projected to further decline to

295,000, the first time it has been negative in at least half a century. Brookings expects this trend to continue in 2026.

Pew Research reported that 53.3 million aliens lived in the U.S. in January 2025, the highest number ever recorded. By June, that number decreased to 51.9 million, the first decline since the 1960s. The Congressional Budget Office has made multiple updates to its Demographic Outlook since January 2025 due to lower immigration.

This negative trend needs to continue.

America still has millions of deportable aliens here. Resources are still going to them instead of American taxpayers.

Housing shortages and costs are still too high. American college students, graduates and employees are still struggling to be admitted to universities, interviewed, hired and retained for jobs as they compete with foreign students, graduates and employees, and now also face AI competition in the labor market.

As long as these factors continue, the immigration bubble should not be reinflated.

By Lora Ries

How Governments Either Promote or Destroy Prosperity

It's common knowledge that government policies have a great impact on whether the U.S. economy is good or bad.

These policies also play a factor in either encouraging or discouraging private sector job creation and wages that enable families to maintain a decent standard of living.

In a recent column, I noted that bad government policies ? through excessive stimulus spending during the Biden years ? were a major contributing factor to the inflation that has robbed families of purchasing power in recent years.

Stated another way, these policies led us into the affordability crisis that we now hear so much about, and it will take good policies to lead us out of this mess. Based on virtually everything I've read concerning economics, combined with over 50 years of experience in business, I firmly believe that the key to the success for the U.S. economy is a strong private sector in which business thrives.

When we have government policies in place that help to attain these thriving conditions, businesses generally pour capital back into their operations in order to expand.

This leads to more available jobs and increased competition in the job market, which results in rising wages.

These conditions also lead to more tax revenue for government, which would make you think that government would always want to promote such conditions.

Perhaps government officials do want this. If so, their policies often fail to achieve this goal. Thankfully, President Trump understands what drives business and our

economy, and he's implementing policies that foster growth.

The following are a few of the policies that his administration is promoting:

Pro-Growth Tax Reforms:

Such reforms make the U.S. more attractive for domestic and foreign investment, leading private companies to hire more workers and compete for talent through better compensation.

policies enable private firms to direct capital toward productive activities like hiring and wage increases.

Tariffs:

Tariffs from President Trump's perspective, are pre-

can do to help both businesses and every American citizen, and that is to focus on saving the main Social Security Trust Fund.

Because of the great number of baby boomers retiring, the Trust Fund ? which contains surpluses from prior years ? will be exhausted in the 2032-33 timeframe.

If that happens, the projected 80 million Social Security recipients at that time will take a cut in benefits of approximately 23%.

This would be devastating to these recipients and their families, but also to businesses and our economy.

Social Security currently accounts for about \$2.6 trillion of economic activity annually. Imagine the pain this would cause in all communities if roughly a quarter of this activity disappeared overnight.

The good news is that we Americans can play our part by making sure that Republicans hold

Reductions in corporate and business tax rates, especially, incentivize private investment and expansion. By lowering the cost of capital, these policies encourage firms to invest in new equipment, technology, and hiring, which boosts productivity and creates jobs.

President Trump was successful with tax policy in his first term, and he has already signed a bill in this term to expand and make those tax policies permanent.

Evidence from the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act shows that the permanent reduction in the corporate tax rate to 21% supported increased business investment and contributed to higher wages, with annual wages rising in subsequent years as firms expanded.

Targeted Regulatory Reform and Deregulation:

Reform and deregulation reduce compliance burdens on businesses, freeing resources for growth and employment.

Excessive regulations can raise costs and deter hiring, while thoughtful reforms (such as streamlining permitting or reducing unnecessary rules) lower entry barriers and encourage entrepreneurship.

Studies indicate that deregulation in sectors like trucking and railroads have historically led to increased employment and efficiency in those industries, with firms expanding operations and creating more jobs under reduced regulatory constraints.

By easing burdens without compromising safety or environmental standards, good

dominantly about bringing manufacturing jobs back to the United States.

One thing that became clear in the immediate aftermath of COVID-19 was our overreliance on goods and services produced elsewhere.

We all consistently heard that things we ordered, including crucial parts to repair machines, were delayed due to supply chain issues.

The real problem was that those items were not produced here.

They were produced elsewhere, and the "issues" were often transportation related.

Tariffs are a major tool to help restore American jobs and ensure that we don't face those supply chain issues again.

There is something else we

the U.S. House and U.S. Senate during the midterm election cycle.

By doing this, we can ensure that Congress will focus on fixing problems instead of investigations and impeachment.

This will also give the president the backing to appoint a bipartisan commission to make recommendations to fix Social Security, similar to what President Reagan did in the early 1980s.

This president has repeatedly vowed to protect Social Security, and he understands this means shoring up the Trust Fund. It is up to us to make sure he has a Congress that will support these efforts.

By Joe Penland, Sr.



Four Decades In, Black Communities Are Still Paying the Highest Price from HIV – And Inaction is Not an Option



Forty years ago, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) first sounded the alarm that Black and Latino communities were disproportionately impacted by HIV. Four decades later, that warning still echoes. Despite much progress in stemming the tide of the epidemic, HIV remains one of the clearest examples of how structural inequities shape health outcomes in the United States — and how Black Americans continue to pay the highest price. For Black women, youth, gay and bisexual men, and Transgender, Gender-Nonconforming, and Nonbinary (TGNC/NB) communities, these impacts have become even more pronounced.

What began as a public health crisis has become a long-running measure of our national resolve. The question before us is no longer whether we know how to prevent HIV or treat it effectively. The question is whether we are willing to confront the inequities that have allowed this epidemic to persist in Black communities for generations.

Condoms remain one of the most effective, accessible, and proven tools for preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Yet today, we also possess extraordinary medical tools that empower people to protect themselves. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) can prevent HIV with remarkable effectiveness. Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

can stop infection after potential exposure. Modern treatment allows people living with HIV to achieve viral suppression, live long and healthy lives, and eliminate the risk of transmission. Plus, long-acting injectable options for prevention and antiretroviral treatment (ART) have demonstrated benefits for patients who may struggle with adherence to daily oral medications. Ending the epidemic is scientifically possible.

Yet the benefits of these advances remain unevenly distributed.

Black people account for approximately 12 percent of the U.S. population but represent nearly 40 percent of new HIV diagnoses and people living with HIV, according to the most recent data from the CDC. Of particular concern is the disproportionate impact of HIV among Black women, youth, trans women, and gay and bisexual men, as well as the higher rate of concurrent HIV and AIDS diagnosis and a faster progression from HIV to AIDS in Black men with HIV. Overall, Black individuals represent the highest percentage of deaths from HIV and AIDS (43%) than any other group.

In addition, Black Americans are significantly less likely to have access to or use PrEP, be linked to care when diagnosed with HIV, and achieve viral suppression compared to their white counterparts. These gaps are driven not by lack of need or

awareness, but by systemic barriers and stigma. Among TGNC/NB individuals — especially transgender women of color—HIV prevalence remains alarmingly high and they face significant barriers leading to lower access and uptake of PrEP compared to other groups.

Access to PrEP and treatment is shaped by insurance coverage, provider bias, medical mistrust rooted in historical injustice, transportation challenges, and gaps in culturally responsive care. For many Black individuals, especially those in under-resourced neighborhoods or rural areas, preventive care and treatment remain difficult to access, prohibitively expensive, or inadequately promoted by healthcare systems. The result is a prevention and treatment landscape that too often fails the people most at risk.

At Amida Care, the NEW Pride Agenda, and the National Black Leadership Commission on Health, we advocate for and advance access to HIV and health services; we've seen firsthand how inequities in access to care, housing, education, income, mental health services, and social supports — the social determinants of health — perpetuate the HIV epidemic. These outcomes are not the product of individual behavior. They are the predictable consequences of policies and systems shaped by racism,

economic inequality, and chronic underinvestment in Black communities. When these structural factors are ignored, disparities deepen.

At the same time, we know that intentional investment works. When Black-led and Black-serving organizations are resourced to deliver culturally responsive, community-driven care, people get tested earlier, start treatment sooner, and remain engaged in care. When prevention tools like PrEP are made affordable, accessible, and stigma-free, uptake increases and new infections decline. Investing in high quality, culturally sensitive HIV treatment and prevention services, provided by community healthcare providers like Acacia Network are vital to meet people where they're at and break down barriers to care.

Programs such as Medicaid (which provides coverage for 40% of all nonelderly people with HIV, of which approximately 50% are Black Americans), the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, routine and rapid testing initiatives, harm reduction strategies, and the federal Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative have proven their value. A new paper published this year in *The Lancet HIV* documents the vital impact of community engagement in the success of HIV prevention and treatment programs. However, ongoing threats to funding for these programs risk reversing hard-won gains and widening existing

gaps. For Black communities already carrying a disproportionate burden, cuts to safety-net programs would be devastating.

As we commemorate National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (February 7), let's commit to addressing HIV in Black America with sustained focus and coordinated action. It requires expanding equitable access to PrEP, PEP, and HIV treatment; investing in community-based healthcare and social services; and confronting stigma and bias within healthcare systems. It also demands that Black voices — including people with lived experience — lead the design and implementation of HIV prevention and care strategies for those groups that are most vulnerable in our community. Every statistic represents a life: a parent, a sibling, a partner, a neighbor— each with unique gifts and possibility. Each missed opportunity for prevention or care compounds an injustice that has lasted far too long and we cannot ignore. We cannot afford another decade marked by the same disparities we recognized forty years ago. The science is clear. The tools exist. What remains is the will to act — intentionally, consistently, and equitably. Ending HIV in the United States is possible, but only if ending inequity is treated as essential, not optional. The time for reflection has passed. The time for deliberate, sustained action is now.

(By David Collymore)

PM Modi Has A Shot At History-Making With EU's India Visit



At Davos, Ursula von der Leyen made India the centrepiece of her declaration of European independence. The president of the European Commission said that she was travelling to New Delhi to energise the relationship. And, hopefully, to close whatever gaps remain on the mammoth free-trade agreement, decades in the making, between two of the world's largest economies.

Von der Leyen wants what she called "the mother of all deals". Prime Minister Narendra Modi should give it to her when she visits this week. Not just because New Delhi needs it or Europe wants it – but because of the effect it'll have on US President Donald Trump.

It's clear why the Europeans are pushing right now. The continent is beset on all sides: by Russian aggression, Chinese coercion, and its own many weaknesses. On top, now its anxieties about American abandonment have turned into alarm at Washington's intimidation.

India is, in contrast, a vision

of stability. It offers a market that's steadily growing. It poses no existential threat. New Delhi might not align perfectly with Europe's capitals on climate or on Ukraine, but at least it doesn't seek to coerce, expropriate or humiliate them.

When von der Leyen arrives as chief guest at Republic Day, PM Modi will of course lay out the red carpet. He should also cut through the free-trade agreement red tape.

Negotiations were supposed to conclude by the end of 2025. New Delhi, however, spent the last few months looking over its shoulder at the White House. It doesn't want its concessions to the EU to become the baseline for a new set of demands from America. First's ideologues. Objectively, it also made sense to settle relations with the more volatile partner first.

But prospects of the US coming to any sort of reliable agreement with India have faded. Trump seems to want New Delhi to abase itself and credit the president with not just deal-making nous but also thank him

for bringing peace to the subcontinent. That PM Modi simply can't do – his nationalist base won't allow it.

In any case, it was always unlikely that some magic set of concessions will get Trump to withdraw his 50 per cent tariff rate on India, drop his long-held view that the country is undeservedly getting something for nothing, and embrace the benefits of partnership and integration. Something else is needed to jolt negotiations between these two countries out of the rut.

Concern in New Delhi about how the White House will react to an India-EU deal is justified. For protectionists, every trade agreement that isn't signed with them is signed against them.

Everything we know about Trump suggests he would see this as open defiance: a continent he has just mocked and pressured ganging up against him with a country he is seeking to corner. His reaction could be, let's say, intemperate.

PM Modi should welcome that, not fear it. He should sign

not despite American pressure, but because of it.

Trump respects strength, or at least the appearance of it. Europe and Brazil get bullied; China and Russia do not. Faced with an unfriendly US, India has found it has worryingly little leverage. If it's looking for ways to demonstrate to the US that it won't back down, signing one of the biggest bilateral deals in history seems like a perfect fit.

PM Modi's voters, too, are looking for strength. They may not be interested in the minutiae of incompatible phytosanitary standards or data privacy regulation. But they know how to react when their prime minister takes a stand – like dealing with Europe at this precise moment, when it has been the focus of Trump's ire. They will see it as yet more evidence that India can manage a crowded, unfriendly world on its own terms.

What's on the table now, whatever it is, won't be perfect. The deal may be incomplete, with some agricultural products

excluded; it may not give Indian carmakers the protection they want, and European activists will probably worry about labour and environmental provisions.

But the longer the wait for an agreement, the higher the chance that this moment of possibility will pass. And the more expansive the deal, the likelier that the European Parliament will consign it to some sort of legal purgatory, as it has just done for the agreement with Latin America. In negotiations, perfectionism is the same as paralysis.

Close a deal with Europe, and the US will be forced to recognise that New Delhi has options and can act on them. And, incidentally, it will provide the Indian economy with a new direction for energy that has been frustrated by trade barriers erected by America against China.

A dozen press releases over more than a decade have declared this deal would be historic. If so, it's time to make history.

Mihir Sharma

'Another Beautiful Armada': Trump, Iran & The Dangerous Theatre Of Power

When Donald Trump told a cheering crowd that "another beautiful armada" was floating toward Iran, the remark landed with the kind of bravado that has become familiar—part spectacle, part warning, part negotiation tactic wrapped in flourish.

But behind the theatrics of that phrase lies something far more serious: a mounting military build-up in the Middle East, an increasingly volatile confrontation with Tehran, and the return of a dangerous question the world has faced before.

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Trump says "I hope they make a deal", suggesting that Tehran has reached out repeatedly. That dual message—force paired with diplomacy, escalation paired with invitation—captures the essence of this moment: power projection as persuasion, brinkmanship as policy.

IRAN'S RED LINES AND RISING FURY

Iran, unsurprisingly, has responded in kind.

Senior Iranian officials have warned that even a "limited" strike would be treated as an "all-out war." Tehran has placed its forces on high alert, issued threats to Gulf neighbours, and reminded the world that the Strait of Hormuz—a narrow maritime choke point through which a fifth of global oil passes—is never far from the battlefield in any US-Iran confrontation.

THE GULF'S QUIET PANIC

The rhetoric is sharp. The deployments are real. And the stakes are enormous.

This is not merely a bilateral dispute between Washington and Tehran. It is a regional pressure cooker, with every major actor watching for sparks.

Israel, which views Iran as an

reflecting investor anxiety that even minor clashes could disrupt shipping lanes or ignite strikes on energy infrastructure. In a fragile global economy, the Persian Gulf remains the place

but what the build-up represents.

The United States is once again relying on military concentration as diplomacy. Iran is once again relying on defiance and asymmetric threat as deterrence. The region is once again forced into a familiar posture: brace, mediate, survive.

And history offers an uncomfortable lesson. Crises like these rarely unfold according to script. Carrier strike groups do not sail into contested waters without consequence.

Leaders do not trade ultimatums without raising the risk of the misinterpretation. And once forces are positioned, the margin for error shrinks dangerously.

Trump insists he wants a deal, not war. Iran insists it will not bend under threats. Both statements may be true. But

between them lies a narrow corridor where accidents, misjudgments, or domestic political pressures can push confrontation into catastrophe.

WHAT HAPPENS IF THE ARMADA DOESN'T TURN BACK

For now, the "armada" is still moving. The rhetoric is still rising.

The diplomacy is still uncertain. What matters most is that this moment is not just about Iran, or Trump, or a single deployment.

It is about whether the world's most combustible region is drifting once more toward a familiar precipice—carried forward not only by strategy, but by pride, politics, and the perilous temptation to test resolve at sea.

Because armadas, however "beautiful" they may sound in a rally line, have never been beautiful once the shooting starts.

By : Griha Atul



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ad COUNCIL

Why Trump is the most dangerous President

When Trump entered the Oval Office, diplomacy left. Ego and whim stayed. From capturing Venezuela's President to targeting Greenland, from deporting immigrants in chains to taxing Antarctica, Trump has blurred the line between power and parody. In Trumpland, everything is possible and everything is legal.



Trump and tariffs are now synonymous. He loves imposing tariffs so much that even penguins in Antarctica weren't spared. Next, he will impose tariffs on Earth for the audacity of revolving around the Sun instead of him.

Trump is setting a dangerous precedent. He is different from all his modern-day predecessors, and not in the flattering, history-books way. Trump is the first leader to openly campaign for a Nobel Peace Prize. He is also the first to happily accept a second-hand Peace Prize. He claims to be a peacemaker who stopped eight wars, then proceeds to bomb a country, capture its president, and casually declare himself President instead. Trump wants the world to move in his direction or face tariffs, even if that world is an uninhabited island. Under Trump, anything is possible. He dismisses boos with a middle finger, brands his predecessor "Sleepy Biden," discards diplomacy entirely, and spares neither friends nor foes. Trump is whimsical. Trump is weird. Trump is out of control. Trump is dangerous.

When Trump entered the Oval Office, grace and diplomacy quietly left the room. What followed has largely been whim, ego, and tyranny taking turns at the podium.

Trump makes official announcements on social media. Which reminds us: he was the first US president to

be banned on X (then, Twitter) and yet, silence was never really an option. Months later, he launched his own platform and named it Truth Social. What he shares there is his truth; the world is free to disagree, much like his claims on the India-Pakistan truce. Trump's 'truth' is unapologetic and unfiltered. The X ban did little because you cannot silence a man who is President of the world's most powerful country. He can speak from any corner, any platform, and his words will ripple across the globe regardless.

More than statements, Trump's posts reveal a chronic attention-seeking impulse. He wants attention from everyone, everywhere. He knows his bold social media posts attract more eyeballs than formal interviews with major media houses, and he never forgets to thank people for their "kind attention." Trump may have missed the Nobel Peace Prize, but if there were a Nobel Prize for attention-seeking, he would give tough competition to Rakhi Sawant, except Rakhi is entirely harmless.

Trump doesn't use social media like other world leaders: to extend greetings, share diplomatic moments, or announce policies responsibly. His posts are almost always shocking, surprising or "What the f***?". Many tariff announcements, including the one involving Greenland, first appear on social media, with official notifications arriving

much later. Trump doesn't announce, he threatens and repeats himself endlessly, which is why "rant" remains a safe word for journalists crafting Trump-era headlines. He even shares screenshots of private chats with world leaders, much like a teen sharing screenshots with her best friend after a rejection/breakup.

Trump has left the world baffled; no one knows what will hit them next.

Speaking at a media event in New Delhi, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar noted, "President Trump's way of dealing with the world, even dealing with his own country, is a very major departure from the traditional orthodox manner of doing so..."

Trump has injected massive unpredictability into the global order. You never know what he'll do next. Venezuela came out of the syllabus when everyone was expecting some action in Iran or Greenland.

In a veiled dig at Trump, Jaishankar remarked that "a few months, weeks and tweets make a difference."

One such tweet concerned immigration. Trump promised to rid the US of illegal immigrants, and he did so by shackling them and deporting them like cattle. If a country dared to refuse accepting its deportees, it was punished with tariffs. Every disagreement is met with penalties, public humiliation, and unabashed insults.

Trump ensured deported

immigrants were made to look like criminals: hands and legs are shackled, some pinned to the ground for resisting humiliation. Over 2.5 million people were sent back. Thousands were detained, confined, and deported via flights. India remained co-operative as three flights landed in Punjab, but many countries refused to take back the deported immigrants. So, Trump used the same 'brahmastra' he claims to have used on India and Pakistan to secure a truce: "I won't do business with you".

Trump thinks business, speaks business, and does business. There are no friendships, only transactions. He can call you a "good friend" and blast you for buying Russian oil in the same sentence. There is no pretence, no sugarcoating.

The young business mogul Trump was infamous for being a womanizer who flaunted his affairs. He was heard bragging about attempting to have sex with a married woman. He was also heard saying that when you are a star, you can "grab 'em by the pussy". Age is supposed to bring maturity, but in Trump's case, his traits have merely multiplied. One might assume the President of the world's most powerful country is perpetually busy, but Trump always finds time to comment even on adult stars, and heated pop-culture debates, graciously admiring Sydney Sweeney's controversial denim ad as the "hottest out there". Not to forget he faced criminal charges over hush money paid to porn star Stormy Daniels.

Much like his boyish impulses, the real-estate mogul in Trump remains very much alive. It has always been the businessman at work, not the politician. Trump wants to sell at premium prices and buy everything for free. His latest obsession is Greenland.

Trump has offered more justifications than necessary for acquiring Greenland—national security, missile defence,

golden domes. The real reason is simpler: Greenland is enormous. If acquired, it would be the largest territorial addition in US history. On the world map, it appears larger than France, Germany, Britain, Italy, and Spain combined. The remaining territories, inconveniently, are either already taken or too small. For Trump, Greenland is a piece of real estate being wasted, so he is already visualising luxury resorts, Trump Towers, and premium golf courses nestled between glaciers. Denmark and other European leaders have firmly stated that "Greenland is not for sale", but Trump listens only to his awara dil, and its voice is louder than an opera singer's. Trump's appetite for territorial annexation marks a clear break from past presidents.

Trump is not the storm; he is the weather app: loud, inaccurate, and constantly changing. He governs like a reality show contestant who accidentally won the presidency and is now committed to keeping the cameras' focussed on him. The world is forced to negotiate with a man who believes tariffs are diplomacy, attention is governance, and volume equals authority.

Trump embodies the proverbial saam, daam, dand, bhed (by hook or crook). It is almost impressive how far a man will go for his ambitions, and that is precisely the problem.

We don't know what the world map will look like by the end of Trump's second and final term. What we do know is that his successors may feel pressured to compete with his aggression. Worse, leaders around the world, frustrated by Trump's recklessness, may already be imagining violent comebacks in their showers.

You may love animals, but when a tiger runs rampant, it must be tamed. Desperate times call for desperate measures - hope global leaders are paying attention.

Priya Pareek

The India-EU Deal Isn't Really About Tariffs

When European railways dismantled internal freight tariffs in the 1960s, prices fell but efficiency did not rise. Routing rules redirected cargo along politically convenient paths rather than economically efficient ones. Delivery times lengthened and costs increased. Liberalisation failed because it altered relative incentives, not because tariffs were cut insufficiently. That episode captures a central lesson of trade policy: prices matter less than structures.

The India-European Union free trade agreement, signed on January 27, 2026, after nearly two decades of stalled negotiations, should be read through that lens. Its significance does not lie primarily in tariff arithmetic. It lies in how US trade coercion distorted incentives so severely that two reluctant partners were pushed into strategic alignment. In that sense, American tariffs

have acted as a catalyst.

When Pressure Backfires

Trump's tariffs and the steady stream of jibes from Navarro, Bessent and Lutnick aimed at India have done something spectacularly unintended. They've turbo-charged a quiet re-wiring of India-EU economic ties. Trade diplomacy, it turns out, has a spite multiplier. Small wonder that Scott Bessent's recent TV appearances have the unmistakable air of 'FOMO' (somewhere between disbelief and regret) after hearing about the so-called "mother of all deals" being stitched together without Washington at the table.

On conventional metrics, the deal appears not very overwhelming. The EU's average applied tariff on Indian goods prior to the agreement was about 3-4%. Over 75% of Indian exports to the EU already faced tariffs below 1%. By contrast, India's applied tariffs on EU goods averaged 10-12%, with peaks of 110% on

automobiles, 150% on wines and spirits, and over 40% on machinery. Liberalisation is, therefore, asymmetric: India concedes more on paper than it receives.

A Changing Order

Yet, trade agreements cannot be evaluated on the basis of tariff lines alone. As Jacob Viner argued in his theory of customs unions, the welfare impact of preferential trade depends on whether

steel and aluminium tariffs of 25%, threats of additional levies linked to technology regulation, and explicit geopolitical pressure tied to Greenland and defence policy. Even countries with signed trade frameworks discovered that access to the US market was no longer rule-based but contingent.

The economic response was predictable. Firms reallocated trade flows away

projected to double by the early 2030s. For India, the value lies less in tariff reduction and more in regulatory certainty across a customs union of 27 countries.

The agreement's technical depth reflects that logic. Beyond goods, it binds services liberalisation across 144 EU subsectors and 102 Indian subsectors, exceeding commitments India has made

as an economic security partnership. Europe seeks to reduce dependence on China in critical technologies and raw materials. India seeks predictable access to advanced markets at a time when the US has demonstrated willingness to weaponise trade. The US Treasury secretary's public criticism of the deal (arguing that Europe was "financing war against itself" by trading

with India) only underscores the point. The agreement is a hedge against coercion, not an endorsement of any single geopolitical alignment.

Critics (outside India) argue that the deal remains incomplete. Agriculture is largely excluded. European industry remains wary of Indian standards regimes. Indian exporters remain vulnerable to EU regulatory density. All valid.

But incompleteness does not negate strategic value. The failure of the



agreements generate trade creation or trade diversion. India's pre-2020 trade architecture was a textbook case of the latter. Preferential agreements with ASEAN, Japan and Korea eliminated tariffs on 74-85% of tariff lines, far exceeding WTO requirements, while non-tariff barriers in partner markets constrained precisely those sectors where India was competitive. India's trade deficit with ASEAN widened from roughly \$5 billion at entry into force to over \$21 billion by FY2019. Market access existed formally but not functionally.

That model became untenable once global value chains destabilised. Between 2018 and 2024, US tariff coverage expanded to affect over \$500 billion of global trade annually. India faces direct duties of up to 50% on exports to the US, including on auto components, gems and jewellery, marine products and electrical machinery. The EU faced

from tariff-exposed routes. Indian export data from late 2025 illustrate this clearly. Gems and jewellery exports to the US collapsed by over 75% year-on-year in September, yet total exports declined by barely 1.5%, as shipments to the UAE rose nearly 80% and to Belgium by 8%. Auto component exports to the US fell 12%, while shipments to Germany and other European markets helped total exports grow by 8%. Marine product exports rose over 20%, driven primarily by EU demand.

Mother Of All Deals

The India-EU FTA institutionalises this re-routing. Covering economies that together account for roughly 25% of global GDP, 30% of world population, and over \$11 trillion of global trade, the agreement eliminates or reduces tariffs on 96.6% of EU exports to India and grants preferential access to over 99% of Indian exports by value. For the EU, annual tariff savings are estimated at EUR 4 billion, with goods exports

to the UK or Australia. It embeds mobility frameworks for intra-corporate transferees, contractual service suppliers and independent professionals. It introduces rapid-response mechanisms to escalate non-tariff disputes, a tacit admission that standards, quality controls and procurement rules are the binding constraints in contemporary trade.

Most tellingly, the agreement addresses future regulatory shocks. The EU's carbon border adjustment mechanism threatens to raise effective tariffs on carbon-intensive Indian exports by double-digit percentages. Rather than litigate the principle, India negotiated MFN-style assurances, verifier recognition, and technical and financial support. It may end up acting as an insurance against regulatory weaponisation in future.

A Hedge Against Coercion

Both sides frame the deal

2013 negotiations stemmed from the absence of leader-level ownership and a narrow conception of trade gains. The 2026 agreement succeeds precisely because it internalises uncertainty and embeds adaptation.

In that sense, the India-EU FTA is less about liberalisation than about resilience. US tariffs did not make India and Europe more competitive. They made dependence more expensive. They distorted incentives, which, in turn, led to forced rerouting. The agreement formalises that rerouting into a durable architecture.

History suggests this is how trade systems evolve, i.e., not smoothly, but through shocks that reveal hidden fragilities.

If so, the paradox will endure. America's attempt to reassert control over global trade flows may instead be remembered as the moment when two large, cautious economies finally chose to design routes that bypassed it.

Aditya Sinha

How Much Money You Have To Spend For A Weekend Getaway In Switzerland's

Davos is globally recognised for hosting the annual World Economic Forum, which is currently underway. While the Alpine town briefly becomes the centre of global power conversations every January (since 1971), many people don't know that it is also one of Switzerland's most popular ski and adventure destinations.

What if we told you that you could plan your next international trip to this scenic beauty? But how expensive is a quick weekend here?

Here's a breakdown of what it really costs to spend a weekend getaway in Davos.

How Much Will Travel Cost: Flights

Flights form the largest portion of your budget. Since there are no direct flights to Davos, you need to fly to Zurich and then travel to Davos by train or rental car.

According to Skyscanner estimates, a round-trip flight from Delhi to Zurich (departing Saturday and returning Monday morning) costs:

Budget option: Around Rs 42,000-45,000

(Travel time: approximately 18

hours and 45 minutes each way, with one layover in Istanbul or Dubai)

Fastest option: Around Rs 78,541 (Travel time: approximately 8 hours 25 minutes each way, with no layovers) Davos is globally recognised for hosting the annual World Economic Forum, which is currently underway. While the Alpine town briefly becomes the centre of global power conversations every January (since 1971), many people don't know that it is also one of Switzerland's most popular ski and adventure destinations.

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This translates to approximately Rs 5,600 to Rs

8,400 per person one way, or Rs 11,000 to Rs 17,000 for a return journey. Prices may be lower if booked in advance via the Swiss Federal Railways website or app.

Given the comfort, reliability, and alpine views offered, especially on the Rhaetian Railway stretch, this option remains the most value-for-money way to reach Davos from Zurich.

Route:

Zurich Airport to Zurich HB to Landquart to Davos Platz or

Davos Dorf. Total travel time: 2.5 to 3.5 hours Changes: Usually 2-3 The stretch after Landquart is particularly picturesque. Sitting by the window is highly recommended.

Car Rentals

The other viable option is to travel by car, which takes about 1 hour and 57 minutes but is significantly more expensive.

Cost: Around 424 CHF, approximately Rs 48,200 Capacity: Up to 3 people. This option only makes financial sense if costs are split.

The Beginning

MAD MEN

OF

NU WAY ADVERTISING

About the Author



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

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

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



The Beginning

MAD MEN OF NU WAY ADVERTISING

Sharanjit Thind Singh

The Beginning

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

Sharanjit Thind Singh



MAD MEN

OF

NU WAY ADVERTISING

Advertisement (Public Service Message)

Pakistan's military consolidation deepens, eroding public trust: Report

(News Agency) Islamabad: Pakistan's renewed relevance and facade of internal stability, secured through the suppression of dissent and temporary major power favour, remain fragile as the hybrid regime still struggles to secure public trust, and the illusion of order "carries the seeds of its undoing", a report said on Wednesday.

Writing for 'East Asia Forum', Imtiaz Gul, Executive Director at the Islamabad-based Centre for Research and Security Studies, said that in 2025, Pakistan had decisively consolidated military power with the hybrid system, which once placed civilian politicians in the spotlight while the army controlled the real authority -- giving way to overt military dominance.

“For many Pakistanis, 2025 marked a deeper erosion of democracy. The judiciary weakened further, parliamentary authority diminished and elected representatives were reduced to largely compliant roles. Most August Pfluger, Joe Wilson and Jack Bergman as well as a close Trump aide, Richard Grenell, for Khan’s release. But subsequent international developments brought those efforts to naught. Khan’s detention continued to

members of the National Assembly, seated after the disputed February 2024 elections, aligned closely with the military establishment. Through a series of legislative measures, they formalised a transfer of authority from civilian institutions to the armed forces, prioritising stability over democratic contestation," he stated.

According to the report, the developments in Pakistan deepened the marginalisation of former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan — detained since August 2023 on charges widely regarded as “politically motivated” — intensifying domestic unrest.

"Months ahead of Donald Trump's return to the White House, Khan's supporters had lobbied republican congressmen August Pfluger, Joe Wilson and Jack Bergman as well as a close Trump aide, Richard Grenell, for Khan's release. But subsequent international developments brought those efforts to naught. Khan's detention continued to



draw international concern. In December 2025, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Alice Jill Edwards called for urgent action over reports of inhumane conditions at Adiala Jail, including prolonged solitary confinement," it detailed.

“The warmth effectively extinguished hopes among Khan’s supporters that external pressure might secure his

release from the more than 180 cases filed against him since his removal in a no-confidence vote in April 2022,” the report stated.

The report highlighted that the events of 2025 in Pakistan reflected how easily democratic principles can be sold for strategic convenience. Amid the US's growing rivalry with China and Russia, a military-led Pakistan aligned itself with

Washington's priorities.

It further said that the global scrutiny of Pakistan's democratic practices and human rights record waned primarily due to geopolitical reasons.

The report noted, "In Pakistan, where grievances repeatedly boil over, short-term order may prove a prelude to deeper and more dangerous disorder."

China expands defence footprint in Bangladesh with UAV factory

(News Agency) NEW DELHI: Amid strained relations with India, Bangladesh has formalised a government-to-government agreement with China under which the Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) and state-owned China Electronics Technology Group Corporation (CETC) will jointly establish a UAV production and assembly facility in the country.

According to a statement on the BAF's official Facebook page on Tuesday, the deal includes a full transfer of drone design and production technology, as well as training and capacity-building for Bangladeshi engineers. In its first phase, the facility will allow the BAF to produce and assemble medium-altitude long-endurance (MALE) UAVs and vertical take-off-and-landing (VTOL) platforms.

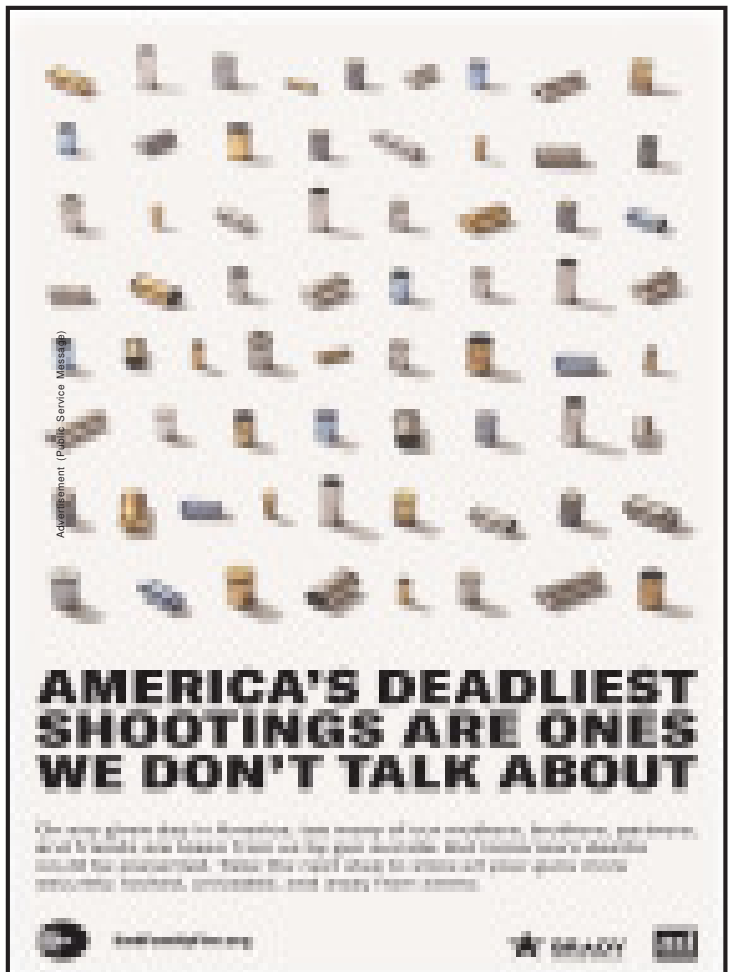
The development comes against the backdrop of deteriorating India-Bangladesh ties, compounded by concerns in New Delhi over Dhaka's growing defence engagement with China and Pakistan. Last week, Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Yao Wen visited the long-delayed Teesta River development project near the "Chicken's Neck" Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has previously described India's seven northeastern states as "landlocked" and positioned Bangladeshi ports as their "only

guardian to the ocean.”

The strategic implications of the Bangladesh-China alignment are further underlined by Lieutenant General Rahul R. Singh's comments in July last year, when he said that during Operation Sindoor, China had provided Pakistan with satellite-based intelligence on Indian deployments and operational vectors, with Pakistan acting as the "front face" of the operation.

The UAVs planned for production in Bangladesh are reported to be based on CETC's 'XY-I', a medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) drone for reconnaissance, surveillance, border patrol, electronic warfare and communications. Reportedly, the UAV is heavily inspired by the Turkish Bayraktar TB2 and claims to stay airborne for up to a day. The platform further also claims to support modular payloads, including electro-optical and infrared sensors, signals intelligence and jamming pods and weapons such as guided bombs or air-to-surface missiles. In parallel, Dhaka has also expressed interest in acquiring up to 20 Chengdu J-10CE fighters in a deal valued at around USD 2.2 billion.

Earlier this month, the air force chiefs of Pakistan and Bangladesh had also held talks on a potential sale of Sino-Pakistani JF-17 Thunder fighters.



Tens of thousands flee northwest Pakistan over fears of military operation

(News Agency) BARA, Pakistan (AP) — More than 70,000 people, mostly women and children, have fled a remote region in northwestern Pakistan bordering Afghanistan over uncertainty of a military operation against the Pakistani Taliban, residents and officials said Tuesday.

Pakistan's Defense Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif has denied the claim by residents and provincial authorities. He said no military operation was underway or planned in Tirah, a town in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Speaking at a news conference in Islamabad, he said harsh weather, rather than military action, was driving the migration. His comments came weeks after residents started fleeing Tirah over fears of a possible army operation.

The exodus began a month after mosque loudspeakers urged residents to leave Tirah by Jan. 23 to avoid potential fighting. Last August, Pakistan



launched a military operation against Pakistani Taliban in the Bajaur district in the northwest, displacing hundreds of thousands of people.

Shafi Jan, a spokesman for the provincial government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, posted on X that he held the federal government responsible for the ordeal of the displaced people, saying authorities in Islamabad were retracting their earlier position about the military operation.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Suhail Afridi, whose party is led by imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan, has criticized the military and said his government will not allow troops to launch a full-scale operation in Tirah.

The military says it will continue intelligence-based operations against Pakistani Taliban, who are known as Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, or TTP. Though a separate group, it has

been emboldened since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021. Authorities say many TTP leaders and fighters have found sanctuary in Afghanistan and that hundreds of them have crossed into Tirah, often using residents as human shields when militant hideouts are raided.

Caught in the middle are the residents of Tirah, who continued arriving in Bara.

So far, local authorities have registered roughly 10,000 families — about 70,000 people — from Tirah, which has a population of around 150,000, said Talha Rafiq Alam, a local government administrator overseeing the relief effort. He said the registration deadline, originally set for Jan. 23, has been extended to Feb. 5.

He said the displaced would be able to return once the law-and-order situation improves. Among those arriving in Bara and nearby towns was 35-year-old Zar Badshah, who said he left with his wife and four

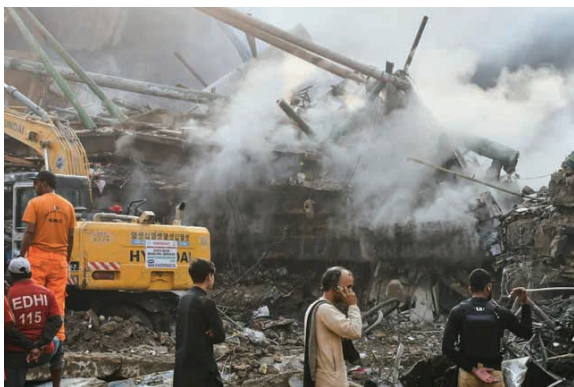
children after the authorities ordered an evacuation. He said mortar shells had exploded in villages in recent weeks, killing a woman and wounding four children in his village. "Community elders told us to leave. They instructed us to evacuate to safer places," he said.

At a government school in Bara, hundreds of displaced lined up outside registration centers, waiting to be enrolled to receive government assistance. Many complained the process was slow.

Narendra Singh, 27, said members of the minority Sikh community also fled Tirah after food shortages worsened, exacerbated by heavy snowfall and uncertain security.

"There was a severe shortage of food items in Tirah, and that forced us to leave," he said. Tirah gained national attention in September, after an explosion at a compound allegedly used to store bomb-making materials killed at least 24 people.

Hopes faded in search for dozens missing in deadly Pakistan mall fire



(News Agency) Capital of southern Sindh province, but those areas either have collapsed or been severely weakened since the blaze Saturday. The reasons remain unclear, officials said.

Police and hospital officials said rescuers have so far recovered the remains of at least 23 people, many burned beyond recognition. In several cases, only body parts were found and DNA testing is underway to identify the victims, according to police surgeon Dr. Summaiya Syed.

The sprawling shopping plaza

houses about 1,200 shops, most selling imported clothing, cosmetics and plastic household goods. Dozens of the missing were shop owners and customers.

More than 65 people were reported missing and mobile phone data showed at least 31 were inside the plaza on the night of the fire, senior police official Asad Raza said. Authorities believe others reported missing may not have been carrying cellphones, Raza said. Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab said that

some sections of the building had already been searched and heavy machinery was being used to clear rubble from a portion that collapsed Sunday.

Wahab met with families of the missing, many visibly shaken, and assured them that authorities were making every effort to locate those still unaccounted for.

"We will continue this rescue operation until all missing persons are found," he told reporters.

Local charities are providing

food, water and medical assistance to rescue workers, the Reuters news agency reported.

"We start by providing tea and cake in the morning, and we supply water 24 hours a day," charity worker Hasib Ullah Khan told Reuters.

On Monday, Sindh provincial Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said that the government would provide 10 million rupees (\$36,000) in compensation to the family of each person killed.

Rescuers were working

around the clock and there was hope some trapped victims might still be found alive, he said.

Safiya told Reuters that her 25-year-old grandson Churchill, 25 was working at the family's shop on Saturday, but never returned. "We've been here since Sunday morning. What's the point of it all? My young kid! What should we do?" the 77-year-old said told Reuters. "We haven't heard anything. We've been sitting here day and night."

"Fingers On The Trigger": Iran Warns US Against Military Operation

(News Agency) Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi warned Wednesday that its forces would respond forcefully to any US military operation -- but did not rule out a new deal on Tehran's nuclear programme.

"Our brave Armed Forces are prepared -- with their fingers on the trigger -- to immediately and powerfully respond to ANY aggression against our

beloved land, air, and sea," he posted on X.

"At the same time, Iran has always welcomed a mutually beneficial, fair and equitable NUCLEAR DEAL -- on equal footing, and free from coercion, threats, and intimidation -- which ensures Iran's rights to PEACEFUL nuclear technology, and guarantees NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS."



The Great Heist: China's Epic Campaign to Steal America's Secrets

The Story the CCP Does Not Want Revealed

THE GREAT HEIST

China's Epic

Campaign to

Steal America's

Secrets



Former Acting DIA Director • Former DIA Case Officer

DAVID R. SHEDD & ANDREW BADGER

A definitive, headline-making exposé of how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has carried out the largest-scale theft of intellectual property, technology, and data in history—reshaping the global balance of power and redrawing the geopolitical map for decades to come

Dopamine Detox : A Short Guide to Remove Distractions and Train Your Brain to Do Hard Things



DOPAMINE DETOX

A SIMPLE GUIDE TO ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS AND
TRAIN YOUR BRAIN TO DO HARD THINGS

THIBAUT MEURISSE

Do you keep procrastinating? Do you feel restless and unable to focus on your work? Do you have trouble getting excited about major goals?

Mahakumbh: A Mighty Event, A Mighty Book

Book Review by Usha Akella

"Mega events such as the Mahakumbh... bring upon us the realization that humankind has one unifying divine core," writes Yakub Mathew in his recently released coffee table book, 'Seeking the Infinite'.

3 pix attached, Pix credit: Photos courtesy: Yakub Mathew

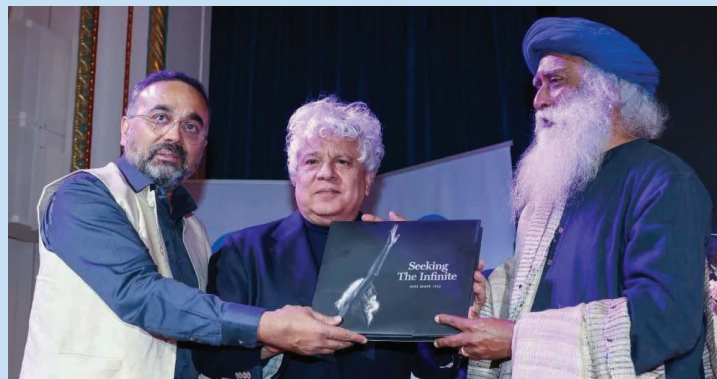
Book reviewer Usha Akella pic: Courtesy Usha Akella

In our times, wherein one feels pressured to cast her/his lot with Left or Right—and other fractured polarities—and be damned either way, a bold book arrived shining and fearless at the IAAC ((Indo-American Arts Council)) Literary Fest 2025 last November to announce the possibilities of reconciliation—and harmony. Amighty event rooted in a myth of nectar, and a mighty book exploring the infinite, no less—Seeking the Infinite redefines the Mahakumbh as one of humanity's heritages, not solely Indian or Hindu.

The book draws our attention to water as a fundamental metaphor of purification, unity, and surrender. In its pages the Mahakumbh is recognized as a clarion call from India of the truth of one ultimate religion—humanity. As a reader you can position yourself on the shore of this book, and marvel at the timeless ripples of faith ignited by hope for a healed world.

Immortalizing the Mahakumbh in a book

'Dedicated to the journey within', Yakub Mathew's book aims to capture the gravitas of the Mahakumbh—a once in 144 years



riverine confluence termed Triveni Sangam (reflected in the skies by a rare astronomical configuration of Jupiter, Sun and Moon/the orbital revolution of Jupiter around the sun) in Prayagraj that welcomed an estimated 640 million devotees in 2025. The three rivers whose waters become a single stream are read symbolically in various fashions but mostly as an emblem of unity. That one of these rivers is mythical (Saraswati) does not hamper faith. And that a gathering of such staggering numbers rolled off peacefully, across nearly two months, is a miracle. A coffee table book with stunning photographs laid across 246 pages and lit by luminous quotes and narratives, Seeking the Infinite has immortalized the Mahakumbh as never before. The very dedication states the resolution and celebration of paradoxes—the outward pilgrimage is veritably the turning within to touch an ineffable shore we carry in our souls. The book in its scope, aim and

production is a Mahakumbh of an undertaking unafraid to boldly go toward impeccable standards of production and embark on an archaeology of semantics of the event. Turning the pages of this book feels like mimicking the journey, by entering the preliminary waters of the first chapter of 'Blessings' by a mystic, Hindu yogis and a Cardinal (Sadhguru, Swami Avdeshanand Giri Maharaj, Maharaj Radhanath Swami and His Eminence Cardinal Oswald Gracias), onward to deeper waters of musings and explorations. Finally, the reader emerges refreshed by India's eternal reverberating spiritual current. And is reminded of a tenacious civilization that has neither been afraid to ask the deepest questions, nor hesitated to attempt to answer them. Answers that have buffeted along seemingly contradictory banks of form and formless, faith and agnosticism, ritual and dhyana—finally averring the human soul as the ultimate

anthem of mystery. The overlapping waters of three rivers continue to transfer to the pages of this book asking for awakening from narrow and bigoted definitions of religion.

Yakub Mathew states his vision early on casting the Mahakumbh as an inter-national heritage not constrained by geographical borders. Though he describes himself as an accidental author, Mathew is not an accidental seeker. The journey undertaken by a Syrian Christian New York-based banker with his beloved wife, and a bevy of 18 friends to celebrate his 60th birthday and life after a dire illness has spawned what will be an everlasting tribute to the Mahakumbh. That he sought such an experience to define a rite of passage in human life is an indicator of the predilections of his soul.

Yakub has straddled temporal and spiritual worlds

Raised by a mother widowed young in Delhi, his childhood is reminiscent with interactions and mentorship by Mother Teresa and His Holiness Bishop Paulos Gregorios. Perhaps the first seeds of faith were laid at this time. Also, raised by uncles (P.C. Alexander and P.M. Thomas) who were public servants brought Yakub into the ken of the political and powerful—thus the two worlds of temporal and spiritual spanned the orb of his growing years. Yakub Mathew was never to forget that a delicate balance of human and cosmic forces shapes a life. Schooled in St. Xavier's and St. Stephen's College, a typical brand of Indian Christianity contoured by an Indian world view shaped his humanist values, and global perspective.

New York county exec blasts Gov Hochul for rejecting federal storm aid over ICE enforcement concerns



(News Agency) Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman blasted New York Gov. Kathy Hochul for rejecting federal assistance over the weekend, arguing that "unhelpful" politics are interfering with public safety as snow and ice blanket the Empire State.

"We need the federal government's help when we have a major emergency event like we do now," Blakeman said Sunday, referring to the winter blast that began slamming New York over the weekend.

Hochul wrote on X Saturday that Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem had offered federal assistance to New York ahead of the major

winter blitz, noting:

"I shared that the fastest way to help is for ICE to back off so people feel safe accessing warming centers, shelters, hospitals, and houses of worship."

Blakeman criticized the move as "irresponsible" shortly after, insisting the government should be focused on "public safety, not partisan rhetoric."

When reached for comment, Hochul Campaign Spokesperson Ryan Radulovacki provided the following statement to Fox News Digital: "After blaming Renée Good for her own killing by ICE, Bruce Blakeman is showing New Yorkers yet again that there's no low he won't stoop to for Donald Trump — no matter how far he

goes to trample over Americans' rights. New Yorkers want a governor with a backbone who will protect our state from Trump's abuses of power, not a spineless coward who defends violence against Americans when it suits him politically."

Blakeman told "The Big

Weekend Show" that snowfall accumulation, freezing temperatures, freezing rain and sleet have created the perfect storm as authorities work to clear the pavement and create safer conditions for drivers and pedestrians.

"This is very problematic. It's

going to be frigid temperatures for the next week and, as I said, not only do we have 10 to 14 inches of snow, but on top of it, we have a sheet of ice from freezing rain and sleet, which makes it very difficult to plow and also to dry the pavement," he said.

American lawyer, 44, found dead on UK-bound flight after falling asleep on mom's shoulder

(News Agency) An American lawyer died after dozing off on her mother's shoulder on a UK-bound Delta flight from Minnesota, according to reports.

Minnesota attorney Rachel Green, 44, was on the flight to London to conduct research for a novel she was writing when she fell asleep on her mother's shoulder on April 30, 2025, and "never woke up," a West London Coroners Court heard this week, per the Sun.

Cabin crew attempted to wake Green and asked for a physician to help, but resuscitation attempts did not save her, the outlet reported.

Green had a cocktail of prescription drugs in her system, including several antidepressants, melatonin, cannabinoids and a low concentration of alcohol, officials revealed during the court hearing, the Daily Mail reported.

She was also found to have a pre-existing heart condition, which likely caused her death in combination with the prescription drugs.

"This lady simply died whilst on a flight. She was

coming to our country to do some research, staying for some time with her mother," Senior Coroner Lydia Brown told the courtroom, according to the Sun. "Instead, she did not even get off the plane without her mother and sister being bereaved. Poor Rachel never did [finish] that book. I wish it were different; it is not," Brown said. Pathologist Dr. Alan Bates also told the courtroom that Green's heart was "normal" other than one of her coronary arteries that was covered in myocardial tunnelling, which is a common congenital heart condition where a segment of one's coronary artery runs through heart muscle instead of over its surface. Minnesota attorney Rachel Green, 44, died after dozing off in her seat aboard a UK-bound Delta flight from Minneapolis.

Legacy.com

Green's sister, Roxanne Carney, questioned the number of prescription drugs she was on and added that her sister had an "abnormal" heart test and was never referred to another doctor.

Bitter cold grips the eastern U.S. as storm deaths rise and power outages

(News Agency) Three Texas siblings who perished in an icy pond were among several dozen deaths in U.S. states gripped by frigid cold as crews scrambled Tuesday to repair hundreds of thousands of power outages in the shivering South and forecasters warned the winter weather is expected to get worse.

Brutal cold lingered in the wake of a massive storm that dumped deep snow across more than 1,300 miles (2,100 kilometers) from Arkansas to New England and left parts of the South coated in treacherous ice.

Freezing temperatures hovered Tuesday as far south as Tennessee, Arkansas and North Carolina, and were forecast to plunge again overnight. Parts of northern Florida were expected to sink to 25 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 3.9 degrees Celsius) late Tuesday into early Wednesday.

The U.S. aviation system was returning to normal after a brutal



weekend that saw more than 17,000 commercial flights canceled. There were about 6,300 cancellations in the U.S. Monday and about 2,500 Tuesday, according to FlightAware, a flight tracking and data company. Less than 500 were anticipated to be canceled Wednesday.

More record lows predicted

The arctic misery over the eastern half of the U.S. was expected to worsen Friday and Saturday. The National Weather Service said another winter storm

could hit parts of the East Coast this weekend, and more record lows were forecast as far south as Florida.

"This could be the coldest temperature seen in several years for some places and the longest duration of cold in several decades," the agency's Weather Prediction Center warned Tuesday.

Three brothers ages 6, 8 and 9 died Monday after falling through ice on a private pond near Bonham, Texas, Fannin County Sheriff Cody Shook said Tuesday. The boys'

mother said she ran into the freezing lake and frantically tried to pull her sons from the water, but the ice kept breaking beneath them.

"They were just screaming, telling me to help them," Cheyenne Hangaman told The Associated Press. "And I watched all of them struggle, struggle to stay above the water. I watched all of them fight."

Dozens of Mississippi counties were in need of bottled water, blankets, tarps, fuel and generators, and the state's National Guard is using aircraft to deliver supplies to hard-hit communities, Gov. Tate Reeves said Tuesday evening.

Jean Kirkland used a lighter and paper Tuesday to ignite her gas stovetop. Her neighborhood in Lexington, Mississippi, lost power Sunday, and Kirkland and her daughter have been relying on the stove and a couple of gas-powered heaters to keep warm.

"When you're used to certain things, you miss them when they're gone," said Kirkland, who's been getting by without hot water and lights at night.

Health officials warn against using gas-powered stoves to heat a home. They can give off fumes that increase the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At least one carbon monoxide death was reported in Louisiana, according to the state Health Department.

North Carolina's largest public school system closed schools again on Wednesday, with the Wake County school system saying on Facebook that it was "due to the continued threat of black ice."

Thousands without power in Nashville

More than 110,000 outages remained in Nashville, Tennessee, and neighboring communities Tuesday.

Omar says Trump's 'hateful rhetoric' causes threats against her to 'skyrocket'

(News Agency) A day after a man charged her at the podium at a town hall in Minneapolis, Rep. Ilhan Omar at a news conference Wednesday pinned the blame on President Donald Trump.

"Blame is very interesting, but facts are more important, and what the facts have shown since I've gotten into elected office is that every time the president of the United States has chosen to use hateful rhetoric to talk about me and the community that I represent, my death threats skyrocket," Omar said.

In Tuesday's incident, police say 55-year-old Anthony Kazmierczak was observed by officers using a syringe to spray an unknown liquid onto the congresswoman. Kazmierczak was arrested and booked into Hennepin County Jail on suspicion of third-degree assault, Minneapolis police said.

Preliminary reports indicate the liquid was non-toxic, Hennepin County Attorney Mary Moriarty said Wednesday.

Asked Wednesday about the attack, Omar said the man who attacked her "was specifically upset that Trump's order to deport Somalis was not yielding enough deportations of Somalis, so he wanted to come get the person he thought was protecting the Somalis?"

Neither the FBI, which took over the investigation on Wednesday, or Minneapolis police have commented on a motive in the attack.

Omar has been the target of verbal attacks from Trump for years. More recently, his attacks have come alongside escalated rhetoric describing the Somali community in Minnesota, the largest in the nation.

In the past several weeks, Trump has called Omar a "fake sleazebag," and called for her to be thrown out of the U.S.

In a phone interview Tuesday evening with ABC News' Senior Political Correspondent Rachel Scott, Trump said he hadn't seen video of the incident and accused Omar, without providing evidence, of possibly staging the attack.

"I don't think about her. I think she's a fraud," Trump said. "She probably had herself sprayed,



knowing her."

Asked Wednesday if she had reservations about public events after Tuesday's incident, Omar replied, "Well, I think my presence here should tell you that the fear and intimidation doesn't work on me."

"The president's rhetoric, the attacks from him since I've gotten

into public office, from the right wing, has always been really to stop me from being in public service, to intimidate me, to make me want to quit. And my only message is it hasn't worked thus far, and it's not going to work in the future," she said.

The incident came amid tensions in Minneapolis between

local officials and the Trump administration over the immigration crackdown in the city that has seen two U.S. citizens killed in shootings involving federal law enforcement.

Seconds before the man charged the podium, Omar called for abolishing Immigration and Customs Enforcement and impeaching Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem.

Afterward, she told reporters that she won't be intimidated. "You know, I've survived more, and I'm definitely going to survive intimidation and whatever these people think that they can throw at me because I'm built that way," she said.

U.S. Capitol Police said Tuesday that threats against

members of Congress increased for the third year in a row. The department said it investigated 14,938 concerning statements, behaviors and communications directed against members of Congress, their families and their staff last year -- compared to 9,474 in 2024.

In a statement about the alleged assault, Capitol Police said in a statement, "Tonight, a man is in custody after he decided to assault a Member of Congress -- an unacceptable decision that will be met with swift justice." The department said it is "working with our federal partners to see this man faces the most serious charges possible to deter this kind of violence in our society."

Mikie Sherrill sworn in as New Jersey governor amid promises to fight for affordability and stand up to Trump

(News Agency) From Camden and Cherry Hill to Trenton and the Jersey Shore, what about life in New Jersey do you want WHY News to cover? Let us know.

Former Navy pilot, federal prosecutor and U.S. Rep. Mikie Sherrill on Tuesday took the oath of office at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark as the 57th governor of New Jersey.

Sherrill is the second woman to hold the position. Christie Todd Whitman was the first woman to be elected governor, in 1993.

Sherrill told WHY News she would freeze utility rates, protect children online, increase government accountability and stand up to President Donald Trump on a number of issues. During a fiery inauguration speech, she compared Trump's behavior with the tyranny of King George III of England during the American Revolution.

"We see a president illegally usurping power, unconstitutionally enacting a tariff regime to make billions for himself and his family, while everyone else sees their costs go higher," she said.

Sherrill suggested that when New Jerseyans went to the polls in November, they recognized what was happening. "Here we demand that people in public service actually serve the public instead of buying themselves planes and cars and extorting money," she said.

She said the Declaration of Independence makes clear that human beings have universal rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. "Not because of who their parents were, but because every human being is endowed with these rights by their creator, not by a king," she said.

Sherrill said New Jersey is offering the nation hope, and she pledged to stand up and fight for

all residents of the state to have the chance to improve their lives.

"I will be damned if in this state at this time we cry any silent tears," she said. "As so many doors are shut [on the federal level] on too many of our friends and neighbors, too many children and seniors who don't have enough to eat."

She stressed strong action is needed. "I'm going to spend every minute trying to make New Jersey more affordable and open doors to opportunity, because that's our history here." Too often, the promises of politicians to open doors of opportunity have been empty. A mother of four, the governor said too many people are working hard but still falling behind. "So let me tell you plainly what my administration stands for: lowering costs, taking care of your kids, making government accountable to the people," she said.

USPS carrier Jason Thompson suspended, threatened with termination for criticizing 'extreme conditions' during Winter Storm Fern

(News Agency) A US Postal Service mail carrier from Ohio claims he was suspended and threatened with termination after a Facebook post criticizing the "extreme" conditions fellow workers were put in during Winter Storm Fern — only to arrive and find that there was nothing to deliver.

"Our letter carriers deliver in heat waves, blizzards, storms, and emergencies — and today they showed up again — only to be placed in harm's way with nothing to do and nowhere to safely operate," Jason Thompson wrote on Facebook Monday.

Thompson arrived at work at the Fairfield

Post Office, 26 miles north of Cincinnati, only to find the parking lot poorly plowed and the delivery trucks buried under "2 to 3 feet of snow," he wrote.

"Carriers are driving in from Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and surrounding areas — risking their lives just to get to work — only to be told there is no mail and no parcels," he revealed. "This is not our fault, this is not our situation to handle," Thompson added, saying other carriers in the area had experienced the same problem. "Why aren't we hiring a professional company to come in and dig all these companies out, instead

you got carriers doing extreme hard work to dig ourselves out," he said, stating carriers are expected to clear their vehicles. Thompson revealed the carriers were told they would have to use their personal sick or annual leave if they wanted to skip the remainder of the workday, despite having nothing to deliver. "This is not how the hardest-working men and women of the USPS should be treated," Thompson charged. "Why isn't there a plan for a level 2 to level 3 snow emergency that the districts can hand out that 'this is what you do in this situation.'"

"Mama, I Want This Car": Mahhi Vij Buys Mini Cooper, Fulfils Daughter's Wish

(News Agency) Mahhi Vij, a television actor, has recently added a swanky car to her garage. In a recent Instagram post, she gave her fans a glimpse of the BMW Mini Cooper that she purchased to kick-start 2026 on a high note. The BMW MINI Cooper S Convertible is priced from Rs 58.50 lakh (ex-showroom) and can go up to around Rs 67-70 lakh on-road, depending on the city.

But Mahhi did not purchase a BMW Mini Cooper on a whim. There is a sweet story behind her ritzy purchase. Believe it or not, the actor bought this car as a gift for her daughter, Tara.

Mahhi Vij Buys A BMW Mini Cooper Worth Rs 60 Lakh

Sharing the story behind the purchase, Mahhi Vij took to Instagram to share, "When my daughter was just four years old, she saw a Mini Cooper and said, 'Mama, one day I want this car.'



At that time, I couldn't afford it - and honestly, I wasn't even sure if I should give my child such a luxury. I kept thinking, 'Is this really necessary?'"

"But dreams don't come with age limits. Wishes don't come with price tags," she added.

"Today, I can afford it. And I realised something - this isn't about luxury at all. This is about her wish. This is about a memory

she will carry in her heart forever. This is about a mother telling her daughter, 'Your dreams matter. And if I can, I will make them come true,'" the actor further wrote.

"So here I am, giving my little girl her favourite car - to spoil her, but to gift her a moment, a story, a memory that she will remember all her life. Our little drives together, our laughter, our time -



this is priceless," Mahhi concluded the post.

BMW Mini Cooper Convertible Features

The BMW Mini Cooper Convertible is a head-turner - a sculpted body, luxury finish, and ultra-comfortable interiors. When the car is on the road, it screams luxury louder than the traffic noise.

It's a four-seater automobile

featuring two doors, a 2-litre turbo engine, a 215-litre boot, and a 9.4-inch OLED infotainment screen. The best part? It can accelerate from 0-100 km/h in just 6.9-7.1 seconds and boasts a 15-18 second electric fabric roof.

Not to mention 'Hey Mini' - an intelligent personal assistant that offers voice control. Add a heated steering wheel and heated seats, and you have a car that will make everyone envious when you drive it.

Mahhi Vij And Jay Bhanushali's Divorce

After 14 years of marriage, Mahhi Vij and Jay Bhanushali announced their divorce in the first week of January 2026. However, rumours about their separation were rife on the internet for quite some time. "There is no villain in this story and no negativity attached to this decision," they noted in a social media post.

What Is Narcissism, The Word Dominating Dating Conversations

(News Agency) "Love doesn't die a natural death. Love has to be killed, either by neglect or narcissism."

It is a famous quote by Frank Salvato, an American author. This one-line quote says more in-depth about toxic relationships than one can summarise in a book.

Any relationship demands respect, love, care, and understanding. However, when one person has a high sense of their own importance, needs excessive attention, and wants everyone to admire them, they often start pushing their partner away without realising it. This is a classic narcissistic personality.

According to a Mayo Clinic report, a narcissistic personality disorder affects many aspects of life, including finances, work, and personal relationships. People with this personality often feel disappointed when they don't get the attention they seek and appear unhappy.

They feel their relationships

are unfulfilling and envy others. Why are we suddenly talking about narcissism? It is among the trending terms dominating modern-day dating conversations. Don't fret! We reached out to experts seeking their opinions on what narcissism is and how to spot red flags in a relationship.

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Don't fret! We reached out to experts seeking their opinions on what narcissism is and how to spot red flags in a relationship.

The founder of Khair by Sarthak, a mental health venture in New Delhi, shared his experience and said that he has come across many patients who have felt their partner or loved one was belittling them and making them feel less important. He mentioned that a narcissistic person can make it seem like their desires are

crucial, and if their partner fails to give them the attention they seek, it threatens the existence of the relationship.

Dr Deepti Kanade Modak, Psychologist at Jupiter Hospital, Pune, further explained that a narcissist may dominate conversations, dismiss their partner's feelings or turn every conflict into a narrative about themselves. Over time, the relationship can begin to feel emotionally draining for the other person.

"They may externalise blame, minimise their partner's concerns or rewrite events to protect their self-image. This can lead to confusion and emotional self-doubt in the partner," she told NDTV.

What Are The Red Flags To Look Out For

Now that you know who a narcissistic person is and how they can manipulate you, it's time to dive into the red flags. Sarthak Paliwal said, "In today's time, people are very quick to label any uncomfortable or

difficult actions as 'red flags' of a relationship. However, when we are on the topic of narcissism, there are some clear red flags that can be highlighted."

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UK Watchdog Moves To Curb Google's Search Engine Dominance, Lets Websites Block AI Overviews



(News Agency) Britain's competition watchdog on Wednesday proposed to allow websites to opt out of having content used by Google's "AI Overviews" feature.

CMA chief executive Sarah Cardell said the proposal, which is out for consultation till February 25, "would give UK businesses and consumers more choice and control over how they interact with Google's search services".

She further said that it "would also provide a fairer deal for content publishers, particularly news organisations, over how their content is used in Google's AI Overviews".

According to AFP, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) in October paved the way for tougher regulation on the matter, under new targeted measures focused on technology giants.

Under the latest proposal by CMA, publishers "be able to opt out of their content being used to power AI features such as AI Overviews or to train AI models outside of Google search".

"Google will also be required to take practical steps to ensure publisher content is properly attributed in AI results," it added. AFP quoted website publishers, particularly media outlets, stating that the AI-generated summaries discourage clicks to publishers' original pages, reducing traffic to their sites and in turn cutting their advertising revenue.

"Google is able to extract valuable data without reward, harming publishers and giving the company an unfair advantage over competitors in the AI model market," said Owen Meredith, chief executive of industry group, News Media Association.

Meanwhile, Google, which is

relied on by over 200,000 businesses for advertising to reach customers, said it was already working on updating its controls "to let sites specifically opt out of search generative AI features".

"Any new controls need to avoid breaking search in a way that leads to a fragmented or confusing

experience for people," the company's principal for product management, Ron Eden, said in a statement. One of the other proposals by CMA is displaying a screen to allow changing a user's default search engine, and rules guaranteeing a fair ranking of results. "These measures will give

publishers—including news and other content producers—stronger bargaining power and support the long-term sustainability of trusted information online," Will Hayter, executive director for digital markets at the CMA, said in a blog post.

Amid Google Lawsuit, 2 In 3 Indians Say They Received Ads Based On Private Voice Conversations

(News Agency) Once again, a new crisis has surfaced when it comes to data privacy with a majority of smartphone users reporting that their private voice and text conversations are being used to trigger targeted advertisements.

A survey report said two in three Indians said they were seeing advertisements based on their private voice conversations.

This comes at a time when major technology firms are facing significant legal consequences for allegedly mishandling user data. Google recently agreed to pay a \$68 million settlement in a class-action lawsuit over allegations that its voice assistant eavesdropped on users and shared private conversations with advertisers.

According to the survey conducted by LocalCircles, the data indicates a sharp rise in such experiences with the percentage of citizens reporting this intrusion increasing from 53 percent to 67 percent over the past four years.

The survey results highlight a significant shift in digital advertising tactics, where users are presented with highly relevant advertisements on websites and apps shortly after discussing specific products or services over the phone. This

phenomenon, often described as "digital eavesdropping", has led to widespread concerns regarding unauthorised behavioural profiling.

WIDESPREAD ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA

The survey data reveals that most individuals grant applications extensive access to their hardware and personal information, often without fully understanding the implications.

It was found that 82 percent of citizens have given phone microphone access to audio/video calling, social media, and recording apps—a figure that has risen from 71 percent in the last 48 months.

Alarming, 12 percent of those surveyed admitted to granting microphone access to all apps on their devices. The reach into personal contact lists is nearly universal. Here are some of the results: 89% of smartphone users in India have given contact list access to WhatsApp. 54% have granted access to Facebook, Instagram, or both. 49% have shared their contacts with Truecaller. 46% have given access to Google apps and various payment apps such as PhonePe and Paytm.

How Earth's atmosphere and climate come together to create a polar vortex

(News Agency) A severe winter storm that brought crippling freezing rain, sleet and snow to a large part of the U.S. in late January 2026 left a mess in states from New Mexico to New England. Hundreds of thousands of people lost power across the South as ice pulled down tree branches and power lines, more than a foot of snow fell in parts of the Midwest and Northeast, and many states faced bitter cold that was expected to linger for days.

The sudden blast may have come as a shock to many Americans after a mostly mild start to winter, but that warmth may have partly contributed to the ferocity of the storm.

As atmospheric and climate scientists, we conduct research

that aims to improve understanding of extreme weather, including what makes it more or less likely to occur and how climate change might or might not play a role.

To understand what Americans are experiencing with this winter blast, we need to look more than 20 miles above the surface of Earth, to the stratospheric polar vortex.

What creates a severe winter storm like this?

Multiple weather factors have to come together to produce such a large and severe storm.

Winter storms typically develop where there are sharp temperature contrasts near the surface and a southward dip in the jet stream, the narrow band of fast-moving air that steers

weather systems. If there is a substantial source of moisture, the storms can produce heavy rain or snow.

In late January, a strong Arctic air mass from the north was creating the temperature contrast with warmer air from the south. Multiple disturbances within the jet stream were acting together to create favorable conditions for precipitation, and the storm system was able to pull moisture from the very warm Gulf of Mexico.

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the storm system was able to pull moisture from the very warm Gulf of Mexico.

Where does the polar vortex come in?

The fastest winds of the jet stream occur just below the top of the troposphere, which is the lowest level of the atmosphere and ends about seven miles above Earth's surface. Weather systems are capped at the top of the troposphere, because the atmosphere above it becomes very stable.

The stratosphere is the next layer up, from about seven miles to about 30 miles. While the stratosphere extends high above weather systems, it can still interact with them through atmospheric waves that move up and down in the atmosphere.

These waves are similar to the waves in the jet stream that cause it to dip southward, but they move vertically instead of horizontally.

The forecast for the January storm showed a close overlap between the southward stretch of the stratospheric polar vortex and the jet stream over the U.S., indicating perfect conditions for cold and snow.

The biggest swings in the jet stream are associated with the most energy. Under the right conditions, that energy can bounce off the polar vortex back down into the troposphere, exaggerating the north-south swings of the jet stream across North America and making severe winter weather more likely.

Proteins before planets: How space ice may have created the 1st building blocks of life

(News Agency) The chemistry that built life on Earth may have begun in deep space, according to a new study. The discovery could help to unravel one of science's central questions: what are the origins of life's molecular building blocks?

Astronomers have detected simple organic molecules drifting through interstellar clouds and preserved in meteorites and comets, indicating that biologically important compounds can form in space and be delivered to planetary surfaces. However, one crucial step has remained unresolved: how amino acids could link together under the harsh conditions of space to form short molecular chains called peptides.

"We already know from earlier experiments that simple amino acids, like glycine, form in interstellar space. But we were interested in discovering if more complex molecules, like peptides, form naturally on the surface of dust grains before those take part in the formation of stars and planets," research team member and Aarhus University researcher Sergio loppolo said in a statement.

loppolo and his colleagues demonstrated that peptides can



actually form inside icy dust grains exposed to radiation under space-like conditions. In laboratory experiments, they produced glycyglycine—the simplest possible dipeptide—by cooling glycine to cryogenic temperatures, of minus 436 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 260 degrees Celsius), replicating the icy mantles that coat cosmic dust grains, and then bombarding the frozen sample with high-energy protons, a stand-in for cosmic rays.

The results reveal a previously unknown pathway for building protein precursors that does not require liquid water—long

thought to be essential—that can operate in the extreme conditions of interstellar space. "All types of amino acids bond into peptides through the same reaction. It is therefore very likely that other peptides naturally form in interstellar space as well," said co-author Alfred Thomas Hopkinson, of Aarhus University. "We haven't looked into this yet, but we are likely to do so in the future."

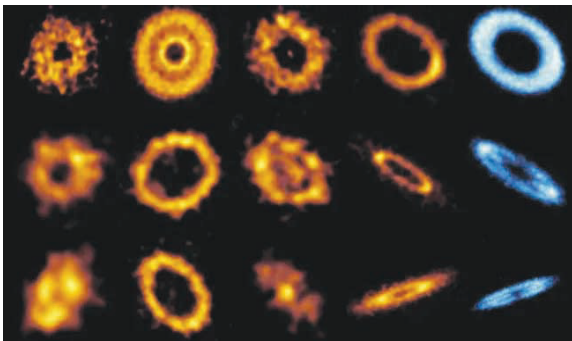
Alongside glycyglycine, the team observed the formation of both ordinary water and a form of water in which hydrogen atoms are replaced by deuterium, an isotope of

hydrogen with an extra neutron, along with a variety of other complex organic molecules.

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Astronomers discover the 'growing pains' of teenage exoplanets



(News Agency) Astronomers discover the 'growing pains' of teenage exoplanets

When the Undertones sang about "Teenage Kicks," they could well have been inadvertently referring to the chaotic and violent "teenage" periods of planetary systems that are shaped by collisions between bodies of various sizes, such as the impact upon Earth by a massive body that created the moon.

Now, using the world's largest radio telescope project, the Atacama Large Millimeter/submillimeter Array (ALMA), astronomers have captured snapshots representing the chaotic "teenage years" of planets forming around infant stars.

The breakthrough, made as part of the Resolve exoKuiper belt Substructures (ARKS) survey being conducted by ALMA, could

not only help scientists better understand the processes that drive the evolution of planetary systems, but it could also help us better understand a turbulent period of our own solar system's history that has, until now, been shrouded in mystery.

"We've often seen the 'baby pictures' of planets forming, but until now, the 'teenage years' have been a missing link," team co-leader Meredith Hughes of Wesleyan University, Connecticut, said in a statement. "This project gives us a new lens for interpreting the craters on the moon, the dynamics of the Kuiper Belt, and the growth of planets big and small. It's like adding the missing pages to the Solar System's family album."

Teenage kicks

Hughes and colleagues used the 66 radio telescopes located in the Atacama desert region of

northern Chile that make up ALMA to observe 24 disks of dusty debris around infant stars, the detritus that remains after planets have formed. "Debris discs represent the collision-dominated phase of the planet formation process," ARKS team member Thomas Henning of the Max Planck Institute for Astronomy (MPIA) said. "With ALMA, we are able to characterise the disc structures pointing to the presence of planets. In parallel, with direct imaging and radial velocity studies, we are searching for young planets in these systems."

Evidence of this period of the solar system's history can be seen in the icy ring of comets beyond the orbit of Neptune known as the Kuiper Belt. These objects were created through massive collisions and planetary migrations that occurred around

the sun billions of years ago, around the same time as Earth's moon was forming. Planet baby pictures are fairly easy to obtain because the gas-rich disks in which they form, protoplanetary disks, are bright. Debris disks like the 24 seen by ALMA are thousands of times fainter, which is why they have proved so elusive for many years. ALMA collected the radio wavelength emissions from dust particles and other molecules in these disks to build a picture of their complex structures, revealing multiple rings, wide and smooth outer halos, and unexpected arcs and clumps. "We're seeing real diversity – not just simple rings, but multi-ringed belts, halos, and strong asymmetries, revealing a dynamic and violent chapter in planetary histories," ARKS team member and University of Exeter researcher Sebastián Marino said.

What Is The 'Devil Weight-Loss Plan', The Extreme Diet Behind A Chinese Woman's 15 Kg Drop In 2 Months



(News Agency) Losing a massive amount of weight in a short span of time may seem like a dream come true for many people, but it can lead to several concerning conditions, such as malnutrition, hormonal imbalances, gallstones and even organ damage. One such case involved a 26-year-old woman from Hangzhou, China. In an attempt to slim down for her best friend's wedding, she pushed herself to lose nearly 15 kg in just two months, but eventually ended up being diagnosed with prediabetes.

How A Chinese Woman Lost 15 Kg In 2 Months Following The 'Devil Weight-Loss Plan'

According to the South China Morning Post, the woman, named Xiaoyu, followed what is described as a "devil weight-loss plan." The approach included cutting back on

staple foods and surviving on minimal portions of vegetables and chicken breast. Xiaoyu also subjected herself to intense workout routines and, at times, ran more than 10 km a day.

This extreme routine delivered visible results, and she reached her target weight of 50 kg just in time for her friend's wedding. However, the initial euphoria was short-lived. She soon began experiencing debilitating symptoms such as persistent fatigue, extreme thirst, hunger, dizziness and heart palpitations.

Xiaoyu sought medical attention at the Endocrinology Department of Hangzhou Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Tests revealed that her fasting blood glucose and two-hour glucose tolerance levels were above normal. Her symptoms met

the criteria for prediabetes.

The doctor said, "She had almost completely eliminated carbohydrates from her diet while engaging in high-intensity exercise. This disrupted insulin secretion, caused significant muscle and water loss, and severely damaged her metabolism." Following the

diagnosis, Xiaoyu made changes to her lifestyle. She adopted a balanced diet and shifted to moderate-intensity aerobic exercise, with limited anaerobic workouts. This revised approach helped her stabilise her weight at a healthier 52.5 kg over the course of three months. Her overall health also underwent a remarkable

transformation, with significant improvements in her physical well-being.

What Is 'Devil Weight-Loss Plan'

As per SCMP, the 'Devil Weight-Loss Plan' primarily refers to a self-designed diet that is not recognised as a legitimate health programme.

Can you build muscle in your 60s? Yes, and it can change how you age

For decades, muscle building has been associated with youth. Many people believe that once you cross 60, muscle loss is inevitable and strength training should be avoided. However, medical experts now strongly challenge this myth. According to senior physicians across internal medicine, cardiology, and orthopaedics, muscle gain after 60 is not only possible, but is essential for healthy ageing.

Age-related muscle loss, known as sarcopenia, affects strength, balance, metabolism, and independence. It is the reason behind chronic injuries that turn fatal for many as well. But with the right exercise, nutrition, and professional guidance, older adults can preserve and even rebuild muscle mass safely.

Understanding Sarcopenia

As we age, muscle mass naturally declines. This process accelerates after the age of 50 and becomes more pronounced in the 60s. Sarcopenia leads to weakness, fatigue, poor balance, and increased risk of falls and fractures.

Adding to the problem is nutrition. Traditional Indian diets are anyway high in carbohydrates and low in quality protein, which further contributes to muscle degeneration. "Muscle gain after 60 is possible, but it requires the right strategy. Ageing leads to sarcopenia, weakening and degeneration of muscles. This can be countered with high-intensity, compound strength training along with adequate protein intake," Dr Atul Kakar, chairperson - internal medicine, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, tells India Today.



Why You Regain Weight After Quitting Intermittent Fasting, A Harvard Doctor Explains

(News Agency) Intermittent fasting has become one of the

most talked-about eating patterns online. From weight loss to longevity, it is often marketed as a simple fix for complex health goals. But before buying into the hype, it helps to understand what it actually is. Intermittent fasting is not about what you eat, but when you eat. It usually involves eating within a fixed time window, like 8 hours a day, or fasting for one or two days a week. While many people try it for quick results, the bigger question remains: Is intermittent fasting sustainable for weight

loss?

That is exactly what Dr Trisha Pasricha (@trishapasricham) addresses in a video shared by The Washington Post on Instagram. Dr Pasricha is a physician at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Centre and an assistant professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. In the video, she breaks down what science actually says about intermittent fasting.

What Intermittent Fasting Really Does

Dr Pasricha explains that intermittent fasting focuses on meal timing. You may eat within

an eight-hour window or fast for one or two days at a time. Research shows it can help with weight loss for a few months. But there is a problem. "It's really hard to sustain, and that weight tends to come back," she says.

Dr Pasricha also points out that studies in humans have not proven that intermittent fasting helps prevent heart disease, cancer, or increases lifespan. So while it may work short-term, the long-term benefits are still unclear.

Why Sustainability Matters

The biggest issue with intermittent fasting is consistency. Strict eating

windows can clash with work schedules, social plans and daily stress. When something feels too rigid, people often quit. And when that happens, weight regain is common.

Two Simple Habits That Work Better

Instead of strict fasting, Dr Pasricha suggests a more flexible approach.

1. Eat Breakfast Early

Have breakfast within an hour of waking up. Keep it high in protein and fibre. "Not sugary breakfast cereal, not pastries," she adds. A quality breakfast helps reduce cravings and afternoon snacking.

2. Stop Eating Before Bedtime

Try to finish meals two to three hours before sleeping. Late-night eating affects how the body burns calories and stores fat, increasing obesity risk.

What Matters More Than Meal Timing

Dr Pasricha sums it up clearly: "Honestly, what we eat is more important than when we eat." Diets rich in fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds – with fewer ultra-processed foods – have the strongest evidence. They may not be trendy, but they work.

Amazon confirms 16,000 job cuts after accidental email

(News Agency) US technology giant Amazon has confirmed it will cut 16,000 jobs - hours after it told staff about a new round of global redundancies in an email apparently sent in error.

The email, which has been seen by the BBC, was sent late on Tuesday and refers to a swathe of employees in the US, Canada and Costa Rica having been laid off as part of an effort to "strengthen the company."

The message was apparently shared by mistake, as it was quickly cancelled.

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'Time to rethink'

Since Amazon founder Jeff Bezos stood down as its chief executive four years ago, his successor Andy Jassy has led

the company through several rounds of cuts.

Jassy has also attempted to bring a more strict work culture to the firm.

In-office work is now mandatory five-days a week, making Amazon one of the only

major tech companies to require its employees to be in the office full-time.

Amazon is also focused on reducing costs, even monitoring corporate mobile phone use by AWS employees, according to a report in Business Insider, in an effort to limit a long-standing \$50 per month reimbursement.

In an email Jassy sent to employees before the Thanksgiving holiday viewed by the BBC, the chief executive said he was thankful for the "challenges at opportunities at work" as "the world is changing at a very rapid rate."

Jassy called this era at Amazon "a time to rethink everything we've ever done."

Earlier on Tuesday, the company announced it would close its roughly 70 remaining Amazon-branded grocery stores, Amazon Fresh and Amazon Go, and expand its Whole Foods Market business. Additional reporting by Mitchell Labiak

Fed holds interest rates steady, taking a pause from rate cuts to assess the economy



(News Agency) The Federal Reserve held interest rates steady Wednesday, as expected, despite pressure from President Trump for much lower borrowing costs.

The central bank has already cut its benchmark interest rate three times since September, making it cheaper to borrow money to buy a car, expand a business or carry a balance on a credit card. But with inflation still above target, most Fed

policymakers voted to hold their target rate unchanged, in a range between 3.5 and 3.75%.

"The unemployment rate has shown some signs of stabilization," policymakers said in a statement. "Inflation remains somewhat elevated."

Fed governors Chris Waller and Stephen Miran dissented, saying they would have preferred to cut the benchmark rate by a quarter percentage point.

President Trump wants much

lower interest rates, and he's waged an unusually aggressive campaign to push the Fed in that direction, even though the central bank is designed to be insulated from political interference.

Trump has tried to fire Fed Governor Lisa Cook, which would allow him to replace her with someone who would support bigger rate cuts. So far, that effort has been blocked by the Supreme Court.

Fed also targets Powell

Trump has also threatened to fire Fed Chairman Jerome Powell. While Powell has generally tried to avoid getting dragged into a conflict with the president, he pushed back earlier this month after the Justice Department served the central bank with subpoenas, as part of an investigation of a cost overruns at the Fed's headquarters.

"Public service sometimes requires standing firm in the face of threats," Powell said in an unusually combative video statement. "This is about whether the Fed will be able to continue to set interest rates based on evidence and economic conditions—or whether instead monetary policy will be directed by political pressure or intimidation."

Powell's term as Fed chair ends in May, so he will likely preside over two more rate-setting meetings. Trump is expected to nominate a new

Fed leader soon. Powell has the option to remain on the Fed's governing board for two more years, which would limit the president's opportunities to install more malleable policymakers on the board.

Concern about a softening job market led the central bank to cut its benchmark rate by a quarter percentage point at each of its last three meetings in September, October and December. Job growth has slowed sharply over the last year, and the unemployment rate has inched up to 4.4%.

A report from the Conference Board Tuesday showed that concerns about job security are weighing on consumer confidence.

But Fed policymakers have to balance their worries about slower job growth with a watchful eye on inflation. Although price hikes have slowed, inflation remains well above the Fed's target of 2%.

Sai Pallavi Replaces Deepika Padukone In Prabhas' Kalki 2? Find Out



(News Agency) Ever since Deepika Padukone's exit from the sequel of Kalki: 2898 AD, everyone is eager to know who will be replacing the actress in the Prabhas starrer. While there is no confirmed name as of now, looks like Sai Pallavi is set to join the movie. If a report by Siasat.com is to be believed, Sai Pallavi might step into the role and is being considered as Deepika's replacement.

Interestingly, Sai Pallavi has several Bollywood projects also lined up. She will be playing the role of Sita in Nitesh Tiwari's Ramayana, which also stars

Ranbir Kapoor and Yash as Ram and Ravan, respectively. Besides this, Sai will also be seen in Ek Din with Aamir Khan's son, Junaid Khan.

Why Was Deepika Padukone Ousted From Kalki 2?

In September 2025, the makers of Prabhas starrer took to their official X handle and announced Deepika's exit from the film. The announcement stated that Deepika is no longer a part of the project because a film like Kalki "deserves commitment".

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Ranveer Singh To Face Arjun Rampal In Dhurandhar 2; Teaser Set To Release On THIS Date

(News Agency) Ranveer Singh starrer Dhurandhar, directed by Aditya Dhar, ruled the box office like a lion. Now, despite the release of Sunny Deol starrer Border 2, the film has maintained a good hold on the box office. The audience can't wait for Dhurandhar 2 to release on the big screen, and every update about the film has skyrocketed the excitement. Now, a new update suggests that makers have locked the release date for Dhurandhar 2's teaser.

As per a Reddit post, Aditya Dhar is eyeing January 31 for the release of the teaser of Dhurandhar 2. As the audience wishes to know more about the second part's plot, the Reddit post claims that while Akshaye Khanna's character has died in the first part of the film, Arjun Rampal will take the place of the main antagonist in the upcoming action thriller.

The Reddit post reads, "There is a lot of chatter on Dhurandhar 2 teaser and those who have seen it say RANVEER IS THE REAL EFFING DEAL. He is in absolute beast mode—ferocious, raw, and brutally intense—and his backstory pulls it forward as the son of the country. Acting at its peak. While Akshaye's character Rehman dies as the bad guy after all the viral jazz, Arjun's character is the next villain in the story that Ranveer's character faces. Whoever has seen the parts is already surprised... The detailing and shift in Ranveer's character is mind-boggling. A monster on the big screen and now,

he's got the Lyari king aura. Oh man!"

"Arjun will be badass and unforgiving, while Hamza stays the centre of it all through both parts now as constant. This time, he is not scared or silent, as Major is his next target. Dhar is cooking



a huge one and Ranveer is the biggest surprise, while Arjun will challenge him but Ranveer kills it. Most 31st Jan is the teaser now, but let's see (What a hottie both are, but Ranveer was the daddy in part one)," the post further reads.

About Dhurandhar 2

Dhurandhar 2 will lock horns with Yash starrer Toxic at the box office, with both films slated to release on March 19. While earlier netizens speculated whether Dhurandhar makers would shift the release date of the second part, Aditya Dhar confirmed that there will be no postponement, and that the film will release on March 19, as revealed earlier.

Border 2 Box Office Day 6: Sunny Deol Film Sees Slight Dip, But Storms Past Rs 230 Cr Mark

(News Agency) Border 2, headlined by Sunny Deol along with Varun Dhawan, Diljit Dosanjh and Ahan Shetty, continues its dominant theatrical run as it completes six days at the Indian box office. The war drama, which released on Friday, January 23, has now grossed the Rs 230 crore mark in India, officially breaking the previous record held by Dhurandhar.

Directed by Anurag Singh, Border 2 serves as a spiritual successor to JP Dutta's 1997 cult classic Border. The film also stars Mona Singh, Sonam Bajwa, Anya Singh and Medha Rana in key roles. Despite receiving mixed reviews from critics, the film has found massive acceptance among audiences, driven by patriotic fervour, nostalgia and Sunny Deol's

commanding screen presence.

Border 2 Sees Expected Dip On Day 6



According to early estimates from trade tracking portal Sacnilk, Border 2 collected approximately Rs 14 crore on Day 6. This marked a drop of nearly 40 percent compared to its previous day's

earnings of Rs 23.31 crore — a decline that trade experts consider routine for a weekday after a

blockbuster opening weekend.

With this, the film's total net domestic collection now stands at around Rs 213 crore in six days, firmly placing it among the biggest Hindi releases of recent times. The

film had already amassed a staggering total in its first five days, setting the stage for a historic run.

Industry insiders remain confident that Border 2 will witness a strong surge once again in its second weekend. Given its sustained buzz and strong word-of-mouth, the film is expected to continue its upward trajectory and could potentially aim for the Rs 500-crore mark in India if momentum holds.

Border 2 shines a spotlight on real-life heroes from the 1971 India-Pakistan war. Varun Dhawan portrays Param Vir Chakra awardee Major Hoshiar Singh Dahiya, while Diljit Dosanjh essays the role of Flying Officer Nirmal Jit Singh Sekhon — the only Indian Air Force officer to receive the Param Vir Chakra. Sunny Deol

plays Lt Col Fateh Singh Kaler, inspired by Major General Hardev Singh Kaler, and Ahan Shetty appears as Lt Cdr M. S. Rawat, representing the Indian Navy's role in the conflict.

The film's music has also struck a chord with audiences. Composer Mithoon has reimagined several iconic tracks from Border, originally composed by Anu Malik. Classics such as Sandese Aate Hai, To Chalun, Hamen Jab Se Mohabbat and Hindustan Hindustan return as Ghar Kab Aaoge, Jaate Hue Lamhon, Mohabbat Ho Gayi Hai and Hindustan Meri Jaan. New tracks including Ishq Da Chehra, Tara Rum Pum Pum, Mitti Ke Bete, Border and Pyaari Lage further add to the film's emotional weight.

Sydney Sweeney Launches Lingerie Line After Controversial Ad Stunt: 'No Explanation, No Apology'



(News Agency) Sydney, in a press release, revealed the concept behind introducing the lingerie brand.

She said, "I was in the 6th grade with DDs. I hated the bra I had to wear. When I bought my first cute bra that actually fit, I wore it to pieces. Designing for different bodies is a huge part of SYRN. I wanted to create a place where women can move between all the different versions of who we are. I love working on cars, I go water skiing, I'll dress up for the red carpet, then go home to snuggle my dogs. I'm not one

thing, no woman is," as quoted by Cosmopolitan.

The Ad Stunt

Sydney Sweeney's promotional stint for SYRN showcased the actress, accompanied by a group of people, climbing the Hollywood Sign and draping bras on one of the letters. They were carrying duffel bags filled with the undergarments. The viral video, originally obtained by TMZ, has now been posted on Sydney's official Instagram handle.

Although Sydney's team reportedly secured a shooting

permit from Film LA, they did not receive approval from the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce — a Los Angeles-based non-profit organisation that governs the legal consequences if the landmark — for climbing, touching or using the sign for commercial purposes. This action could lead to Sydney and her production team.

Kareena Kapoor Stuns In A Rs 5.2 Lakh Dress And Jacket Combo In Abu Dhabi

(News Agency) When it comes to setting trends, no one can beat Kareena Kapoor Khan. The OG style icon is always serving 'Good Looks, Good Looks, and Good Looks'. Did you see her latest glam avatar? Bebo was in Abu Dhabi for the inauguration of a new Malabar Gold and Diamonds store.

As the brand ambassador, Kareena Kapoor arrived in style, dressed to the nines. She made a strong case for layering a dress with a maximalist jacket. Not to mention her clean hairdo and studded jewels that complemented her luxe outfit and made her stand out.

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On the brand's official website, it is called an Opal Set and comes with an exorbitant price

tag of Rs 5,20,000. The white satin dress featured gathered details around the waist. Its body-hugging silhouette contoured the actor's curves and had a seamless flare. It had a halter strap, bare back, and a plunging neckline.

The scallop jacket was, however, the star. It



was embellished with intricate embroidery with silver thread. Full-length sleeves with a slit, padded shoulders, an open front, and a scalloped hem accentuated the look.

Kareena Kapoor's Look For An Event In Abu Dhabi

To complete the look, Kareena Kapoor opted for a sleek bun hairdo. Her centre-parted locks and braided bun instantly added grace to her style.

She wore Aquazzura heels and accessorised her look with a diamond ring and earrings. Adding a bit of drama (because why not?) was her winged eyeliner and mascara on her lashes.

Rihanna, Lauren Sanchez Bezos Attend Dior's Haute Couture Show In Paris

(News Agency) Dior turned the Musée Rodin into a celebrity waiting room — then into a garden — on the first day of Paris Couture Week.

Guests packed into the museum as the start time for the show drifted.

French first lady Brigitte Macron arrived. Lauren Sanchez Bezos swept in. Parker Posey twirled in her trench dress.

And then the whole room, celebrities and editors alike, sat and waited for Rihanna.

When the pop star finally took her seat, the lights dropped on a suspended ceiling hung with a garden of flowers.

Gravity did its quiet work: a bloom loosened and fell to the floor.

It was a fitting opening image

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Dior is one of the main engines of the luxury

conglomerate LVMH, and couture is where a house shows its power.

The collection was pitched as "nature in motion," with technique

treated as living knowledge, not museum display. Anderson followed that logic, reworking fragments of the past into something meant to feel new.

From the start, the palette was disciplined — blacks, whites, and ecru — then punctured by flashes of color and texture. Lines were clean. Draping softened, then snapped back into structure: archetypal couture. At its best, Anderson's

couture had the crispness he has already shown in menswear, and previously at Loewe.

A sublime silken Asian-style coat, strict and elegant, was cut through with black lapels that felt archive-meets-modern. The house's history appeared not as costume but as distortion. The show's oddest and most telling jokes were the pannier gowns: 18th-century volume reimagined as a take on a fanny pack silhouette. It was classic Anderson: take something precious, tilt it, and make the result feel both witty and exact. Micro became macro — flowers cut from light silks, dense embroideries, chiffon, and organza layered like feathers. He also nodded to a broader Dior lineage without leaning on nostalgia.